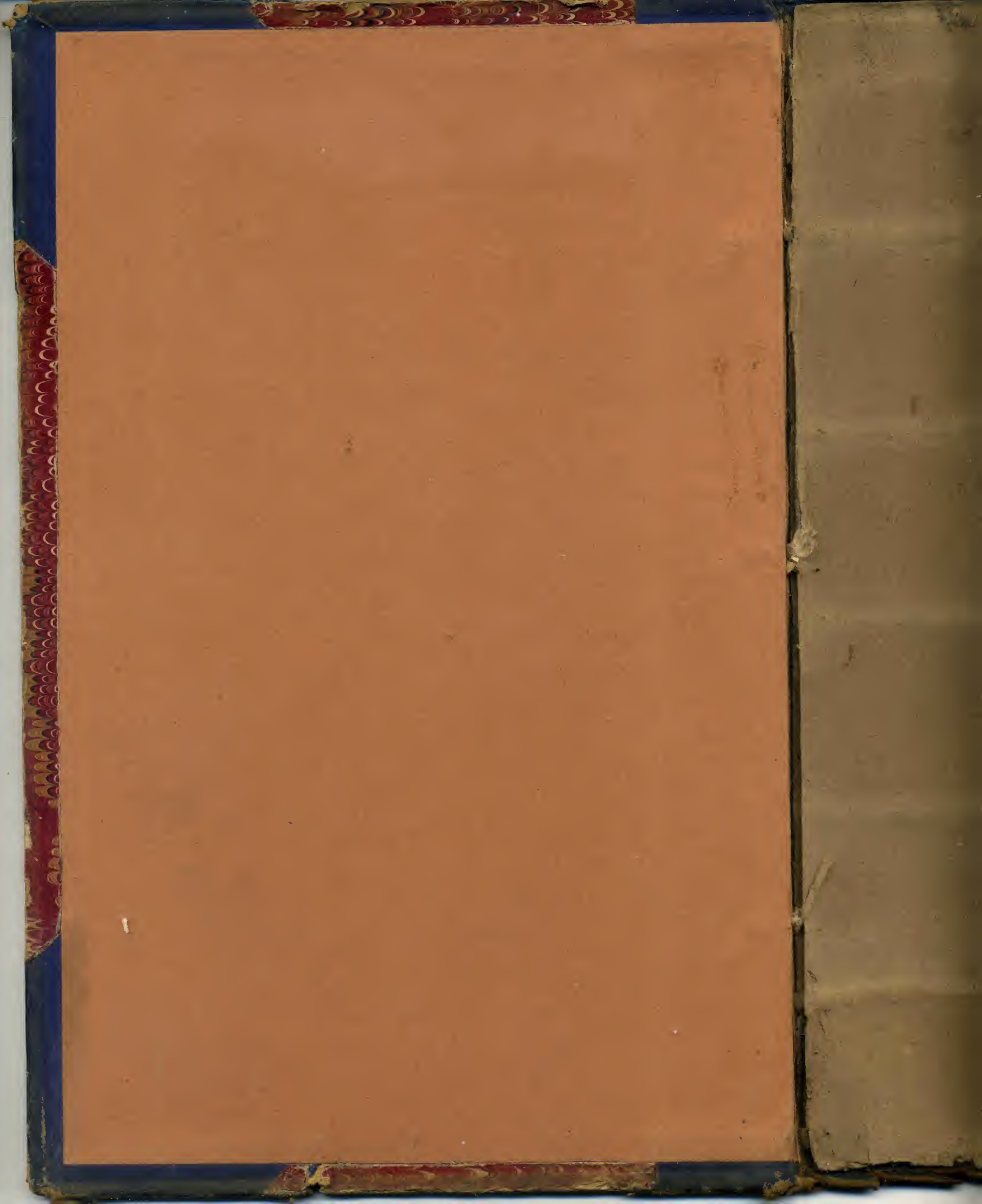
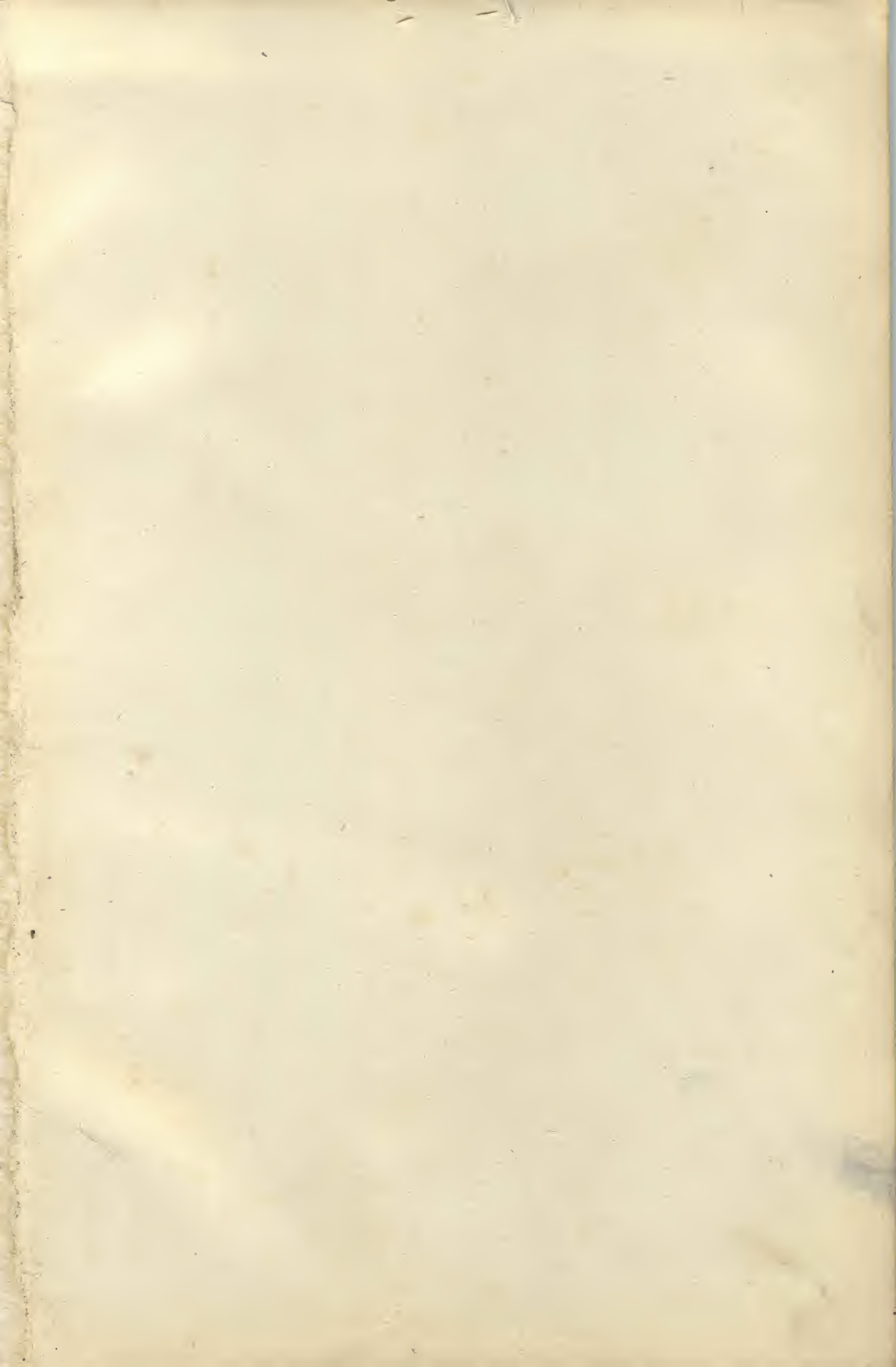


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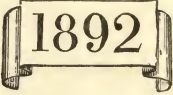


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

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THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

PROLOGUE.

WHO IS EDMUND GRAY?

MR EDWARD DERING, in a rare interval of work, occupied himself with looking into his bank book. Those humble persons whom the City, estimating the moral and spiritual worth of a man by his income, calls 'small,' frequently and anxiously examine their bank books, add up the columns, and check the entries. Mr Dering, who was not a small man, but a big man, or rather, from the City point of view, a biggish man, very seldom looked at his bank book; first because, like other solicitors in large practice, he had clerks and accountants to do that kind of work for him: next because, like many solicitors, while he managed the affairs of other people with unceasing watchfulness, he was apt to neglect his own affairs. Happily, when one has an income of some thousands, private affairs from time to time force themselves upon their owner in the most agreeable manner possible. They obtrude themselves upon him. They insist upon being noticed. They compel him to look after them respectfully: to remove them from the dullness of the bank, and to make them comfortable in investments.

Mr Dering opened the book, therefore, having for the moment nothing else to do, looked at the balance, was satisfied with its appearance, and began working backwards, that is to say, upwards, to read the entries. Presently, he came to one at which he stopped, holding his forefinger on the name.

It was on the right-hand side, the side which to small men is so terrifying, because it always does its best to annihilate the cash balance, and

seems bent upon transforming addition into multiplication, so amazing are the results. The name which Mr Dering read was Edmund Gray. The amount placed in the same line opposite to that name was £720. Therefore, he had drawn a cheque to the order of Edmund Gray for the sum of £720.

Now, a man may be in very great practice indeed; but if, like Mr Dering, he knows the details of every case that is brought into the House, he would certainly remember drawing a cheque for £720, and the reason why it was drawn, and the person for whom it was drawn, especially if the cheque was only three weeks old. Seven hundred and twenty pounds! It is a sum in return for which many and very substantial services must be rendered.

'Edmund Gray!' he murmured. 'Strange! I cannot remember the name of Edmund Gray. Who is Edmund Gray? Why did I give him £720?'

The strange fact that he should forget so large a sum amused him at first. Beside him lay a book which was his private Diary. He opened it and looked back for three months. He could find no mention anywhere of Edmund Gray. To repeat: he knew all the details of every case that came into the House: he signed all the cheques: his memory was as tenacious and as searching as the east wind in April; yet this matter of Edmund Gray and his cheque for £720 he could not recall to his mind by any effort.

There is a certain stage in brain fatigue when

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one cannot remember names: it is the sure and certain symptom of overwork: the wise man recognises the symptom as a merciful warning and obeys it. Mr Dering knew this symptom. 'I must take a holiday,' he said. 'At sixty-seven, one cannot afford to neglect the least loss of memory. Edmund Gray! To forget Edmund Gray—and £720! I must run down to the sea-side for a fortnight's rest.'

He shut up the bank book and tried to go back to his work. But this name came back to him. 'Edmund Gray,' he murmured—'Edmund Gray. Who on earth is this Edmund Gray? Why did he get a cheque for £720?'

The thing ceased to amuse him: it began to irritate him: in two minutes it began to torture him: he leaned back in his chair: he drummed with his fingers on the table: he took up the book and looked at the entry again. He got up and walked about the room—a long lean figure in a tight frock-coat. To walk about the room and to swing your arms often stimulates the memory. In this case, however, no good effect followed. The *nommé* Edmund Gray remained a name and nothing more—the shadow of a name. Mr Dering rapped the table with his paper knife, as if to conjure up that shadow. Futile Superstition! No shadow appeared. But how could the shadow of a name—an unknown name—carry off 720 golden sovereigns?

'I feel as if I am going mad,' he murmured. 'Seven hundred and twenty pounds paid by myself in a single lump, only three weeks ago, and I remember nothing about it! I have no client named Edmund Gray. The money must therefore have been paid by me for some client to this unknown person. Yet it was paid by my cheque, and I don't remember it. Strange! I never forgot such a thing before.'

There was an office bell on the table. He touched it. A clerk—an elderly clerk—an ancient clerk—obeyed the call. He was the clerk who sat in the room outside Mr Dering's office: the clerk who wrote the cheques for the chief to sign, brought back the letters when they had been copied, directed the letters for the post, received visitors, and passed in cards: in fact, the private secretary, stage-manager—we all want a stage-manager in every profession—or confidential clerk. As befits a man of responsibility, he was dressed all in black, his office coat being as shiny as a mirror on the arms and on the shoulders: by long habit it hung in certain folds or curves which never unbent: his face was quite shaven and shorn: all that was left of his white hair was cut short: his eyes were keen and even foxy: his lips were thin: his general expression was one of watchfulness: when he watched his master it was with the attention of a servant: when he watched anybody else it was as one who watches a rogue, and would outwit him, if he could, at his own roguery. In certain commercial walks of the lower kind, where honour and morality consist in the success of attempts to cheat each other, this kind of expression is not uncommon. Whether his expression was good or bad, he was an excellent clerk: he was always at his post at nine in the morning: he never left the office before seven, and, because Mr Dering was a whale for work, he sometimes stayed without a grumble until eight or even

nine. Man and boy, Checkley had been in the office of Dering & Son for fifty-five years, entering as an errand-boy at twelve.

'Checkley,' said his master. 'Look at this bank book. Credit side. Fourth entry. Have you got it?'

'Edmund Gray, £720,' the clerk read.

'Yes. What is that cheque for? Who is Edmund Gray?'

The clerk looked surprised. 'I don't know,' he said.

'Why did I pay that money?'

The clerk shook his head.

'Did you look at the book when you laid it on the table?'

The clerk nodded.

'Well—what did you think of it?'

'I didn't think of it at all. It wasn't one of the cheques you told me to draw about that time ago. If I had thought, I should have supposed it was your private business.'

'I was not aware, Checkley, that I have any private affairs that you do not know.'

'Well—but you might have.'

'True. I might have. Just so. As I haven't—who, I ask you again—who is this Edmund Gray?'

'I don't know.'

'Have you ever heard of any Edmund Gray?'

'Never to my knowledge.'

'This is the first time you have heard that name?' The lawyer persisted.

'The very first time.'

'Consider. Is there any Edmund Gray in connection with any of my clients?'

'Not to my knowledge.'

'Not to your knowledge. Has any Edmund Gray ever been employed about the office?'

'No—certainly not.'

'We have recently been painted and papered and whitewashed and new carpeted at great expense and inconvenience. Did Edmund Gray conduct any of those operations?'

'No.'

'Has the name of Edmund Gray ever been mentioned in any letters that have come here?'

It was notorious in the office that Checkley read all the letters that came, and that he never forgot the contents of any. If you named any letter he would at once tell you what was written in it even if it were twenty years old.

'I have never even heard the name of Edmund Gray in any letter or in any connection whatever,' the clerk replied firmly.

'I put all these questions, Checkley, because I was pretty certain myself from the beginning; but I wanted to make myself quite certain. I thought it might be a trick of failing memory. Now, look at the name carefully'—the clerk screwed up his eyes tightly in order to get a good grip of the name. 'You see I have given him a cheque for £720, only three weeks ago. I am not the kind of man to give away £720 for nothing. Yet I have actually forgotten the whole business.'

Certainly he did not look the kind of man to forget such a simple thing as the giving away of £720. Quite the contrary. His grave face, his iron-gray hair, his firm lips, his keen steady eyes, apart from the methodical regularity with which his papers were arranged before him, all proclaimed that he was very far from being

that kind of man. Very much the reverse, indeed.

'You don't mean to say, sir,' Checkley began, with a change in his face from watchfulness to terror—'you can't mean'—

'I mean this, Checkley. I know of no Edmund Gray; and unless the bank has made a mistake, there has been committed—a—what do they call it in the law-courts?'

The clerk held the bank book in his hand, staring at his master with open eyes. 'What?' he repeated. 'What do they call it? Good Lord! They call it forgery—and for £720! And on you, of all people in the world! And in this office! In our office!—our office! What a dreadful thing, to be sure! Oh, what a dreadful thing to happen! In our office—here!' The clerk seemed unable to express his astonishment.

'First of all, get me the returned cheques.'

The cheques always came back in the pocket of the bank book. Checkley was accustomed to take them out and to file them in their proper place.

Again, Mr Dering neither drew his cheques nor wrote his letters with his own hand. He only signed them. One clerk wrote the letters; another drew the cheques by his instruction and dictation.

Checkley went back to his own room and returned with a bundle of returned drafts. He then looked in the safe—a great fireproof safe—that stood open in one corner of the room, and took out the current cheque book.

'Here it is,' he said. 'Check drawn by you yourself in your own handwriting, and properly signed, payable to order—not crossed—and duly endorsed.—Now you understand why I know nothing about it. Edmund Gray, Esquire, or order. Seven hundred and twenty pounds. Signed Dering & Son. Your own handwriting and your own signature.'

'Let me look.' Mr Dering took the paper and examined it. His eyes hardened as he looked. 'You call this my handwriting, Checkley!'

'I—I—I did think it was,' the clerk stammered. 'Let me look again. And I think so still,' he added more firmly.

'Then you're a Fool. Look again. When did I ever sign like that?'

Mr Dering's handwriting was one of those which are impossible to be read by any except his own clerks, and then only when they know what to expect. Thus, when he drew up instructions in lawyer language, he expressed the important words by an initial, a medial, or a final consonant, and made scratches for all the words between; his clerks, however, understood him very well. If he had written a love letter, or a farce, or a *ballade*, or a story, no one, either clerks or friends, or compositors would have understood anything but a word here and a word there. For his signature, however, that was different. It was the signature of the Firm: it was a signature a hundred and twenty years old: it was an eighteenth-century signature: bold, large, and clear, every letter fully formed: with dots and flourishes, the last letter concluding with a fantasia of penmanship belonging to a time when men knew how to write, belonging to the decorative time of penmanship.

'Two of the dots are out of place,' said Checkley,

'and the flourish isn't quite what it should be. But the cheque itself looks like your hand,' he added stoutly. 'I ought to have seen that there was something wrong about the signature, though it isn't much. I own to that. But the writing is like yours, and I would swear to it still.'

'It isn't my handwriting at all, then. Where is the counterfoil?'

Checkley turned over the counterfoils. 'What is the date?' he asked. 'March the 4th? I can't find it. Here are cheques for the 3d and for the 6th, but none at all for the 4th.'

'Let me look.' Strange! There was no counterfoil. And the numbers did not agree with that on the cheque.

'You haven't got another cheque book, have you?'

'No; I certainly have not.'

Mr Dering sat with the cheque in his hand, looking at it. Then he compared it with a blank cheque. 'Why,' he said, 'this cheque is drawn from an old book—two years old—one of the books before the bank amalgamated and changed its title and the form of the cheques—not much of a change, it is true—but—how could we be such fools, Checkley, as not to see the difference?'

'Then somebody or other must have got hold of an old cheque book. Shameful! To have cheque books lying about for every common rogue to go and steal!'

Mr Dering reflected. Then he looked up and said: 'Look again in the safe. In the left-hand compartment over the drawer, I think you will find an old cheque book. It belonged to a separate account—a Trust. That has been closed. The book should be there.—Ah! There it is.—I wonder now,' the lawyer went on, 'how I came to remember that book? It is more than two years since I last used it or even thought of it. Another trick of memory. We forget nothing, in fact, nothing at all. Give it to me. Strange, that I should remember so slight a thing. Now—here are the cheques, you see—colour the same—lettering the same—size the same—the only difference being the style and title of the Company. The fellow must have got hold of an old book left about, as you say, carelessly. Ah!' His colour changed. 'Here's the very counterfoil we wanted! Look! the number corresponds. The cheque was actually taken from this very book! a book in my own safe! in this very office! Checkley, what does this mean?'

Checkley took the book from his master with a trembling hand, and read feebly the writing of the counterfoil, 'March 4th 1883. Edmund Gray, £720.'

'Lord knows what it means,' he said. 'I never came across such a thing in my life before.'

'Most extraordinary! It is two years since I have given a thought to the existence of that book. Yet I remembered it the moment when it became useful.—Well, Checkley, what have you got to say? Can't you speak?'

'Nothing—nothing. Oh Lord, what should I have to say? If you didn't draw that cheque with your own hand'—

'I did not draw that cheque with my own hand.'

'Then—then it must have been drawn by somebody else's hand.'

'Exactly.'

'Perhaps you dictated it.'

'Don't be a fool, Checkley. Keep your wits together, though this is a new kind of case for you. Criminal law is not exactly in your line. Do you think I should dictate my own handwriting as well as my own words?'

'No. But I could swear—I could indeed—that it is your writing.'

'Let us have no more questions and answers. It is a forgery. It is a forgery. It is not a common forgery. It has been committed in my own office. Who can have done it? Let me think'—he placed the cheque and the old cheque book before him. 'This book has been in my safe for two years. I had forgotten its very existence. The safe is only used for my private papers. I open it every morning myself at ten o'clock. I shut it when I go up-stairs to lunch. I open it again when I return. I close it when I go away. I have not departed from this custom for thirty years. I could no more sit in this room with the safe shut—I could no more go away with the safe open—than I could walk the streets in my shirt sleeves. Therefore, not only has the forgery been committed by some one who has had access to my safe, by some one who has stolen the cheque in my very presence and before my eyes. This consideration should narrow the field.' He looked at the cheque again. 'It is dated March the 4th. The date may mean nothing. But it was presented on the 5th. Who came to my room on the 4th or the days preceding? Go and find out.'

Checkley retired and brought back his journal. 'You saw on the 4th'—He read the list of callers.

'That doesn't help,' said Mr Dering.

'On the 1st, 2d, 3d, and 4th you had Mr Arundel working with you here every day from ten till twelve.'

'Mr Arundel. Yes, I remember. Anybody else?'

'Nobody else.'

'You forget yourself, Checkley,' Mr Dering said. 'You were, as usual, in and out at different times.'

'Oh Lord! sir—I hope you don't think'—The old clerk stammered, turning pale.

'I think nothing. I want to find out. Go to the bank. See the manager. Let him tell you if he can find out by whom the cheque was cashed. If in notes—it must have been in notes—let those notes be instantly stopped. It is not crossed, so that we must not expect anything so simple as the Clearing House. Go at once and find out exactly what happened.'

This happened at about half-past ten. The bank was no more than five minutes' walk. Yet it was twelve o'clock when the clerk returned.

'Well, what have you found out?' asked the master.

'I have found out a great deal,' Checkley began eagerly. 'First, I saw the manager, and I saw the pay clerk. The cheque was handed in by a commissionaire. Everybody trusts a commissionaire. The pay clerk knows your signature, and thought it was all right. I showed the cheque to the manager. He knows your handwriting, and he says he would swear that the cheque was drawn by you yourself. So I am not such a fool as you think.'

'Go on.'

'The commissionaire told the pay clerk that he was ordered to take it all in ten-pound notes. He took them, put them in his pouch, and walked away. He was a one-armed man, and took a long time over the job, and didn't seem a bit in a hurry.'

'About the notes?'

'The manager will stop them at once. But he says that if the thing was done by an old hand, there must be confederates in it, and there will be trouble. However, the notes are stopped. That's done. Then I went on to the commissionaires' barracks in the Strand. The sergeant very soon found the man, and I had a talk with him. He was employed by an old gentleman, he says, staying at the Cecil Hotel, Strand. The old gentleman sent him to the bank with instructions to get the money in ten-pound notes; and very particular he was with him about not losing any of them on the way. He didn't seem a bit in a hurry either. Took the notes from the man and laid them in a pocket-book. It was in the coffee-room, and half-a-dozen other gentlemen were there at the same time. But this gentleman seemed alone.'

'Humph! A pretty cool business, upon my word! No hurry about it. Plenty of time. That was because they knew that the old cheque book would not be found and examined.'

'Why did they write the cheque on the counterfoil? Why did they put the cheque book back again—after they had taken it out?'

'I don't know. The workings of a forger's brain are not within the compass of my experiences. Go on, Checkley.'

'The commissionaire says that he is certain he would know the gentleman again.'

'Very good indeed, if we can only find the gentleman.'

'I then went on to the Cecil Hotel and saw the head waiter of the coffee-room. He remembered the commissionaire being sent for: he saw the bundle of bank-notes brought back from the bank, and he remembers the old gentleman very well. Says he should certainly know him again.'

'Did he describe him?'

'There didn't seem anything particular to describe. He was of average height, so to speak, dressed in gray trousers and a black frock-coat, and was gray-haired. Much as if I was to describe you.'

'Oh! The notes are stopped. Yet in three weeks there has been ample time to get them all changed. Every note may have been changed into gold in three weeks. An elderly gentleman: gray hair: average height: that tells us nothing. Checkley, the thing has been done by some one who had, or still has, access to my safe. Perhaps, in some way or other, keys have been procured. In that case'—He stepped over to the safe and opened a drawer. 'See, Checkley; this drawer is untouched: it is full of jewellery and things which belonged to my mother. Nothing touched. Here is a bag of spade guineas again—nothing taken. What do you say to that? If the forger had possessed keys, he would, first of all, clear out the things which he could turn into money without any difficulty and very little risk. Nothing taken except that cheque, and

the cheque book replaced. What do you say to that? Eh?'

'I don't know what to say. I'm struck stupid. I never heard of such a thing before.'

'Nor I. Why, it must have been done in this room, while the safe was open, while I was actually present. That is the only solution possible. Again, who has been in this room?'

'All the callers—I read their names to you—your clients.'

'They all sit in that chair. They never leave that chair so long as they are with me.' He indicated the chair which stood at the corner of the lawyer's great table at his left hand. Now the safe was in the far corner, on the other side of the room. 'They could not possibly—Checkley, the only two who could possibly have access to that safe in office hours are yourself and Mr Arundel.'

'Good heavens! sir—you can't believe—you can't actually think'—

'I believe nothing. I told you so before. I think nothing. I want the facts.'

JUTE IN TRANSIT.

It is now but a few years short of a century since the directors of the East India Company received the first consignment of jute sent to this country. The consignment was a small one—in fact it took the shape of a single bale. The manifest alludes to it as 'the jute of the natives,' a description clearly indicative of the specimen bale being regarded rather in the light of a vegetable curiosity than as a fibre of any commercial value to western civilisation. It is matter of wonderment that the East India Company were so slow in recognising the true value of the jute fibre. They were usually but too keenly alive to the adaptability of Indian native products to British markets. The policy which asserted—

Ours is the harvest, where the Indians mow;
We plough the deep, and reap where others sow,

would never have sanctioned the leaving unexploited such a source of wealth. But the brittleness of the fibre of 'the jute of the natives' was long held an insuperable barrier to its taking any important place among the woven fabrics of British industry. Yet sugar, rice, and pepper had been imported into this country enclosed in gunny bags, woven from jute, ever since commercial relations had been established with India and the East.

About the year 1830, however, the suitability of jute fibre for the manufacture of coarse carpet and bagging was effectually demonstrated, and since that date the jute-trade has increased by leaps and bounds, until it has attained its present enormous dimensions. As is well known, Dundee is at once the great jute-port and also the principal centre of the manufacture of those articles in which jute is the chief constituent. It can hardly claim, however, to be the pioneer of the British jute industry, as some years prior to 1833, the year which saw the inception of the Dundee industry, a factory for coarse carpets of jute was in working at Abingdon. The business done, however, could only have been very tri-

fling, as it was not until 1829 that the Customs authorities assigned a separate heading to jute on their list of imports. The total quantity, however, imported in that year only amounted to three hundred and sixty-four hundredweight! Since that date, jute cargoes have rapidly increased, until at the present time the sea-carriage of jute finds employment for a very considerable section of the vessels of our mercantile marine. While our trade in jute has been in the main marked by steady increase, there are two periods in its history which interfered, the one beneficially, the other adversely, with its rate of development. The Crimean War caused a diminution in the imports of flax into this country, and jute was requisitioned to supply some of the goods formerly manufactured from the coarser qualities of flax. The American civil war of 1861-63 deprived the British jute factories of one of their chief markets; for the exportation of cotton from the United States having practically ceased, there was consequently no demand for the coarse bagging which the Dundee mills had long supplied for enveloping the cotton bales. Even this check, however, severely as it was felt at the time, was not an unmixed evil, for it led to the employment of jute in new branches of textile industry.

In discussing the question of the transit of jute, it must be remembered that the sea-voyage forms but a part of the vicissitudes to which it is subjected while *en route* from its native fields to the British factories.

The jute-plant thrives best upon an alluvial soil and under a hot and moist climate. Such a condition of things is best obtained on the banks of rivers; and as these inland waterways afford a ready means of communication with the coast, the land contiguous to them is usually selected for the sowing of jute. The seed is sown from March to May, and the harvest is reaped from August to October, and is best secured when the plant is in flower, as the fibre becomes hard and brittle if the plant is allowed to seed. The reaping is accomplished with a sickle or bill-hook, and then follows a process very much resembling that of retting in the preparation of flax. The jute in some cases is carried at once to a ditch or other reservoir of water and allowed to soak, the soaking process taking on the average a fortnight to accomplish satisfactorily. The most successful jute raisers adopt the plan of stacking the jute before soaking, the fibre resulting from this more tedious method being, it is stated, of a far superior quality to that obtained by carrying the jute to the water as soon as it is cut. The fibre is easily detached from the stalk, and afterwards sun-dried. It is then packed and pressed, bought by the traders, and conveyed to the coast, where, if the pressing is not satisfactory, it is redone, each bale weighing on the average four hundred pounds. The cost of production is extremely low, and each acre will yield with ordinary care something like thirteen to fourteen hundredweight. The principal factor determining the acreage sown with jute each season would seem to be the price of the other native products that the same soil would produce during the preceding season. Thus, if a planter saw from the market price of rice that he was likely to realise a higher remuneration

from that crop than jute, a certain acreage would be withdrawn for rice cultivation.

It is gratifying to British industry to know that nine-tenths of the jute exported from India comes to British ports. The proportion of exported jute carried in British vessels is even in excess of this fraction, so that Great Britain and her mighty dependency practically enjoy the monopoly of the world's trade in jute and its products.

Among the vessels employed in the sea-carriage of jute are to be found the finest sailing-vessels afloat, and competition is keen among them as to the possession of the record for fast jute-carrying. The specific gravity of jute even when tightly compressed is not very high, and the consequence is a jute cargo renders a vessel, in nautical phraseology, 'lively.' It is nevertheless a popular cargo with seamen; and sailing-vessels employed in the jute-trade experience, by reason of the time they leave Calcutta for home, and home for India again, climatic conditions which are very favourable when compared with those obtaining in other trades. The year 1890 marked the largest importation of jute direct from India into Dundee. No fewer than seventy-seven vessels arrived from Calcutta and Chittagong. Their united tonnage amounted to 151,957, and they carried into the port of Tay 1,260,019 bales of jute. In 1889, eighty-one vessels arrived, but their tonnage was only 149,896 tons, and their importations of jute 1,205,730 bales. Thus there is an increase in favour of 1890 of 2061 tons and 54,289 bales. Of the seventy-seven vessels from India, thirty-six sailing-ships and twenty-two steamers were from Calcutta; and sixteen sailing-vessels and three steamers from Chittagong. The voyage from Calcutta to Dundee via the Cape of Good Hope is a lengthy one; yet the average passage of the fifty-two sailing-ships was but one hundred and twenty-five days! The smartest passage was made by the *Gowanburn*, which accomplished the run in ninety-seven days. The *Earl of Shaftesbury* and the *County of Selkirk* took two days more; while the longest passage of all extended to one hundred and ninety days. Of the steam jute-carriers the fastest voyage was made in thirty-four days. Statistics for the year 1891 will doubtless show a material increase in the tonnage of the vessels and the amount of their cargoes, the movement in favour of large sailing-vessels influencing the sea-carriage of jute as well as other trades.

Such large shipments as those we have alluded to above cannot be carried over sea without incurring risk of fire and other damage. The energetic action of the different sections of merchants interested in jute has, however, reduced these risks very much. Fires on jute-ships are not nearly so common as they were in the early stages of the trade's history. They may happen either at the port of loading, any point on the voyage, or at the discharging port. Occasionally an outbreak of fire on board a jute-ship may get the upper hand and burn the ship out; but such complete disasters are happily of very rare occurrence. A catastrophe of this type, however, overtook the *Dalswinton*, fifteen hundred and fifty-four tons, while homeward-bound from India in December 1889 with a cargo of jute. The master of the vessel feared that his ship was too light,

and accordingly he put into the harbour of Galle to 'stiffen' her by discharging some jute and taking on board some stone ballast. Smoke was discovered coming from some bales of jute; and although all the fire-extinguishing power of Galle was requisitioned to quench the flames, all efforts were ineffectual, and the cargo was totally consumed, nothing being left but the shell of the vessel. The district judge, who held an exhaustive inquiry into the cause of the disaster, and carefully sifted all the procurable evidence, expressed his verdict in the following terms: 'I have no doubt that the fire was caused by spontaneous combustion in a highly inflammable cargo.'

Many fires on jute-ships are traceable, no doubt, to accidental causes, carelessness, exposure of greasy waste, &c. But to prove the exact cause to which an outbreak of fire in a jute cargo is due is a very difficult matter indeed. That spontaneous combustion is a fire-producing agent in damp jute there is strong presumptive evidence to show; but exact knowledge as to the chemical conditions under which this combustion occurs is far from finality. Shipmasters who have long been engaged in the jute-trade believe it is responsible for most of the fires on jute-ships; and these are the persons possessed of most practical knowledge on the subject. Some little while back, a meeting was held at the International Shipmasters' Club, Calcutta, to discuss the questions of the stowage of jute and fires on jute-ships. The captains who took part in the discussion were experienced men, well acquainted with the details of the sea-transit of jute—most of them, in fact, commanded sailing-vessels which were lying at Calcutta awaiting jute cargoes. One of the conclusions which the meeting was unanimous in expressing was that cargoes shipped between the first of August and the first of November were more likely to show damage than jute shipped after that date. 'Cuttings' and 'rejections' were a more dangerous cargo than ordinary jute. Cuttings are the woody ends of the jute-plant; and rejections are the lowest class of fibre, which can only be used in the manufacture of the coarsest of jute products. As stated above, the jute harvest extends from August to October, so that jute shipped during the period deprecated by the shipmaster must be hurriedly harvested and ineffectually dried. The moisture must of necessity damage the bale, as in the close hold of a ship free evaporation cannot take place. Cuttings would naturally necessitate a more thorough drying than jute; and where due care is not exercised, damage and risk of fire are inevitable. The early shipments of jute, too, are often cut too early—in fact, the jute is 'green;' and with these cargoes heating is very likely to ensue. Jute of this nature has every facility afforded it, so to speak, of taking fire. In many cases it is carried from the harvest-field to the jute presses in uncovered boats or 'trucks,' is exposed to occasional heavy showers and a scorching sun. In this condition it is pressed, and the heat, to express the matter nautically, 'banked up' in it. The friction on shipboard, accelerated by bad stowage, may supply the extra heat necessary to produce an outbreak of fire.

Jute bales have been known to burst into

flames when discharged from a vessel's hold ; and it has been noticed that in such cases the fire surged along the bales, producing great heat, and passing from one bunch of looser fibres to another. Further, it has been repeatedly remarked that damp jute 'rolls and crumbles to a powder.' Of course jute in this state is extremely liable to take fire. A thorough circulation of air throughout the ship seems to be a consummation to be aimed at by all interested in the carriage of jute ; and practical men maintain that this is best effected by leaving a space between the top of the cargo and the lower edge of the beams. In order, however, that the damage to jute cargoes may be reduced to a minimum, the best method of stowage and ventilation must be settled upon, and that plan must be carried out by all vessels in the trade as far as their structural qualities will allow. Merchants are willing to do their share by offering a bonus to vessels carrying out their suggestions ; but it is not until hearty co-operation between the jute planter or his agents, the shipowner, the shipmaster, and the merchant is secured, that the dangers incident to the transit of jute will be reduced to a minimum.

We have briefly alluded to the demands of the United States for jute-packing. Attempts have been made over and over again to acclimatise the jute-plant to America ; but the native jute industry makes little headway, and the States is still mainly dependent upon Indian-grown jute. A more dangerous attempt has been made, however, than this to wrest a portion of the jute-trade from India. Early in the spring of 1881 there were exhibited in Dundee some samples of jute grown in Egypt. Those qualified to judge of the value of these specimens expressed the following verdict : 'Reports on quality are varied, but, considering it is a first attempt, it is on the whole satisfactory. It proves beyond a doubt that Egypt is capable of producing this material ; and for the trade of the district this is a matter of great importance, as having the fibre grown nearer at hand will enable our manufacturers to compete more successfully in all markets with the Indian mills.'

India's position as a jute-raising country is, however, unaltered, her soil, her climate, and the cheapness of her human labour, placing her beyond reach of any rival. The amount of gunny cloth and bags which the native mills produce is enormous. Ten million yards of cloth and one hundred million gunny bags are an astounding quantity ; yet the jute products of India are vastly in excess of this amount. Even the old gunny bags and the poorest quality of jute fibres are put to a useful purpose, and utilised in the manufacture of rough paper.

British industry and British capital have imprinted their mark upon the jute industries of India, many of the mills being practically British speculations ; and the improvements in the raising of jute, and the mechanisms used in its preparation and manufacture, are mainly due to the invigorating infusion of British enterprise and scientific knowledge. There is something very striking in the sharing of the jute-trade of the world between England and India. The old Sanskrit word for the plant *Corchorus capsularis* was 'jhot.' The ancient dwellers in the valley

of the Ganges used its tender shoots as a pot-herb ; they wove from its long fibres most textile fabrics of domestic use. They even established a foreign trade in gunny cloth and gunny bags. But the knowledge of the plant and its uses was for long unknown to the commerce of Western Europe. Now, the western branch of the great Indo-European family of nations uses jute or jhot as familiarly as did the Hindus of old. It has become with us a household word. The world grows smaller. The inhabitants of the brightest jewel in the British crown are brought into closer contact with their brethren in Britain ; and not the least factor in linking together the eastern and western families of the Aryan race is the humble plant the 'jute of the natives.'

SUNSTRUCK.*

A NOVELETTE.

By GEORGE MANVILLE FENN.

CHAPTER I.

Bang !

'Hullo ! had you that time, you blood-sucking wretch.'

'*Ping-ing-ing—um-um-um !*'

'Missed him, by George ! Oh dear ! how hot it is !'

Then silence in the black darkness of the officers' cabin of His Majesty King George III.'s sloop of war, *The Queen*, sailing slowly among the paradise-like islands of the West Indies.

Then, *ping-ing-ing* again, the shrill hum of a mosquito, followed by the tiny trumpets of two more of the virulent insects, one in a higher, the other in a lower pitch than the first heard.

'Hang 'em ! I believe a cloud of the little demons came on board this afternoon from that confounded mangrove swamp.—Jack !'

No answer.

'Jack !'

Still no reply.

'Jack ! Why don't you speak ?'

'I'll speak to some purpose directly,' said another voice. 'Why can't you let a man sleep ?'

'I'll let you sleep, if they'll let me sleep ; but I don't see any fun in tossing about here all night while you are snoring.'

'Well, what do you want ?'

'To talk.'

'And I want to sleep.—Good-night.'

'I say, don't be selfish, Jack. Is it near morning ?'

'No ; we haven't been down an hour.'

'I say, though, do you smell cooking ?'

'Eh ? No. Why ?'

'Because I feel as if I were being stewed.'

'Bother !—Good-night.'

'Pretty sort of a messmate you are. I wish to goodness the mosquitoes worried you as they do me.—I say, Jack.'

No answer.

'Lieutenant John Manton !'

'Lieutenant William Burns, the heat down here is terrific. I am utterly wearied out, and so

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sleepy. I can hardly move; but if you say another word to me, I'll get up and douse you.'

'Will you? Do—do—there's a good fellow! Get one of the men to dip a fresh bucket of water for you. Oh, joyful news!'

Craunch!

A dull heavy shock which made the sloop quiver, and a long low grinding noise that had but one meaning in those seas, and made the two young officers leap from their cots and begin hurrying on a few clothes, as, over a buzz of excited cries, orders, and the noise of hurrying feet, came the roll of the drum, beating to quarters; while, when the young men reached the deck, it was to pass the drummer making the parchment throb just as he had leaped out from his hammock, and clothed now in the broad pipe-clayed sling, his drum, and nothing else.

Sea perfectly calm, the land invisible, and the ship motionless, the long gentle heavy swell over which she had been riding, now breaking gently against the larboard bows. Overhead, the great soft mellow stars burning; below and all around, apparently lying on the ocean, a slight mist.

In a very short time every man was in his place, the proper officers had descended to sound the well, the various crews stood by ready to man the boats, and pending orders, and the report which might mean life or death, the saving of a gallant ship or her sinking beneath their feet, the captain spoke hurriedly to his officers, who learned that the first lieutenant who was in charge had only left the deck to make his report, the lead had been cast to find no soundings, and the sloop was just forging slowly ahead in the lightest of breezes when she struck.

'Not your fault, Morrison,' said the captain quickly. 'There's no rock laid down in the chart anywhere here, and we must be miles from land.'

'I'm afraid not, sir. We've got into some swift current, and'—

'Hah!' exclaimed the captain, as the carpenter came up. 'Well?'

Every head was craned forward, every sense strained to catch the report, and a thrill of excitement ran along the deck as the man said in his hoarse, sawdusty voice: 'Well 'bout dry, sir. She's not making a drop.'

Against discipline, but a loud cheer more like a yell of delight rose from the excited crew; and as silence once more reigned, fresh orders were given, and all knew that they must wait for morning, men forming the biggest watch ever known upon that deck.

'Just as all seemed so calm and peaceful, Will,' said Lieutenant Manton, as the two young men stood trying to penetrate the mist which lay thickly off the starboard side.

'Yes: a queer life, ours,' said Burns. 'Think we are near the land?'

'Yes, I fancy so: much nearer than we supposed.'

'Think we shall save the ship?'

'Hah!' ejaculated Manton, 'I hope so; but we must be on sharp coral, and Morrison says we went on nearly at high-water. We shall see.'

Morning seemed as if it would never come; but when the sun rose at last, and began to dissipate the mist, they caught sight first of the top of a mountain—a gracefully curved and beauti-

fully wooded cone, cut off slopingly at the top; and by degrees, as the mist passed away from its sides, there, in a blue haze shot with green and gold, lay precipice, gully, and patch of wondrous verdure, all veined by silvery falls till there lay clear in the morning sun the brilliantly coloured shores of a lovely tropic island sparsely dotted with houses, and here and there one which seemed to be the centre of some plantation.

'Not a bad place to settle down in, Jack, if we lose the ship.'

'Hang it, man!' cried his brother-officer, flushing; 'don't talk so coolly of losing your ship. Any one would think you wished her to go to the bottom.'

'I don't, lad,' said the young man, gazing longingly at the lovely island so near at hand; 'but I shouldn't mind having a month ashore.'

CHAPTER II.

It was about the same hour that Renée Greville threw back her casement to admit the soft cool breeze from off the sea, and as the jalousies creaked there was the sharp rattle of a chain somewhere near, and a deep-toned bay, such as could only have come from a bloodhound's throat.

'Morning, Nep. Good dog, then,' cried Renée.

There was a short answering bark, the rattle of the chain again, and a canine silence as the girl gazed over the veranda on the wealth of tropic foliage and flower in the great garden which surrounded the house and whose blossoms were still drenched with the heavy night-dew.

As she stood there, her little white hands were busy putting the finishing touches to her long fair hair; while her bright gray eyes sparkled, and a pleasant look of animation came into her sweet English face as she listened to a sweetly musical voice in the plantation, a hundred yards away, singing a weirdly strange ditty, which was repeated softly, line by line, in chorus by a score or so of voices. So peculiar and catching was the melody that the girl's lips parted, and quite to herself she too sang the song, whose rather childish English words had been wedded to the wild strain that had in all probability been brought over in some slave-ship from the west coast of Africa.

'An' Juno lub her lubber when a moon shine clear,'

sang Renée, the air and words having been familiar to her ear since she was a tiny child, taken by her black nurse down among the slaves toiling in the cane-rows or in the coffee plantations.

Then, after a little busy manipulation of her fair hair:

'Josee, dear, do get up.'

She looked toward an inner door of her dainty room as she spoke; but there was no reply.

'Oh Josee, you tiresome girl, how can you lie sleeping on such a lovely morning! Josee, it's nearly breakfast-time. Papa won't like it if you are not down.'

'When a moon shine clear,'

she sang in her sweet young thrilling voice. 'Now for a flower for my hair, and one for dear old Dad.'

She went to the window again, and reached out to where a passion-flower trailed up over the broad veranda and climbed up the jalousies of her own room, spreading a profusion of its blossoms, all brilliant scarlet, with purple markings in the centre; and she was in the act of picking a partly opened bloom, when her lips parted, and she uttered a half-suppressed 'Oh!' and stood leaning out, gazing at where, on the glassy sea, over which faint wreaths of mist still floated, lay His Majesty's ship, motionless, with her sails now furled.

'Here, quick, Josee,' she cried. 'Come and see.'

Almost at the same moment there was a step in the wide passage beyond the door, and a bluff cheery voice shouted: 'Hi! girls! Wake up! Here's a man-o'-war close in. Renée, have you had the glass? I had it last in my room to watch the men. See the ship?'

'Yes; I've been looking at it,' said Renée, opening her door.

'Come and look again, then,' said the bluff-looking, deeply bronzed man, whose crisp fair hair was cut closely to his well-shaped head, in direct opposition to the fashion of the period with its perukes and queues. 'You don't see a king's ship every day, my girl, and it's a treat after all.—Come, Josephine.'

There was no answer, but a scuffling noise suggested that the bearer of the name was dressing hurriedly. Then the door closed behind Renée, who was standing directly after at a broad window with her father, who was using the glass.

'What have they come here for, I wonder?' he said, as he held it to his eye. 'Want water, and fresh vegetables, I suppose, and— Why, Renée, my girl,' he continued excitedly, 'they've run on the Gray Corals, and she's fast.'

'Run on the rocks, papa!—Not wrecked?'

'Not yet, my dear; but if they don't get her off before the first breeze rises, she'll never sail another knot.—Here, ahoy, there!' he roared, with his hands to his mouth. 'Negus—Priam—where are you all?'

A tall muscular negro came hurrying round from the garden and looked.

'Get three men and the gig directly.'

'St massah,' cried the black, and he went off at a trot.

'Going out to the ship, papa?' said the girl.

'Yes, child; to see whether I've forgotten all my old training.'

'I'll see to your breakfast,' cried Renée.

'No; I'm going now;' and kissing the girl hastily, he descended to the cool open hall, caught up a straw hat, and hurried out.

Ten minutes later, as Renée stood at the window, joined now by a very dark, creamy-complexioned girl, whose eyes and wavy hair told plainly of the blood intermingled in her veins, they could see the water flashing as the light gig in which Renée's father was seated sped over the glassy sea, propelled by the muscular arms of four stout black rowers, who pulled with a regular man-o'-war stroke.

'Oh Josee,' cried Renée, with the tears in her eyes; 'isn't it dreadful?'

'Dreadful?' said the dark girl dreamily.

'Yes: that beautiful ship fast on the rocks. Papa thinks it will be a wreck.'

'Well, they must build another,' said the girl, slowly and languidly.

'Josee!'

'What does it matter? No one is drowned, and it is something to think about. It is so dull and miserable here.'

'Why, Josee, dear,' cried Renée, throwing her arms about the girl's neck and kissing her. 'You are as bad now as you used to be when a child—always cross till you have had your breakfast.'

'I am not cross,' said the girl, knitting her dark brows; and a curiously stern look coming over her handsome face; 'only sick of it all.'

'Josee!'

'I am, I tell you—sick of it. You despise me; your father only tolerates me out of charity; I'm so contemptible that the very slaves look down upon me. I am not a white; I'm not even black. I wish I were dead—I wish I were'—

She stopped short as she saw the tears falling fast down Renée's cheeks, and in an instant the look of languid indifference and bitterness gave place to a wild excitement.

'Renée, Renée,' she sobbed, as she threw herself on her knees and embraced her, 'don't—don't cry, dear. You do—I know you do—love me; it is like killing me to see you cry. What a wretch—what an ungrateful wretch I am!'

'Hush, hush, Josee, darling,' whispered Renée, sinking down by her to embrace and kiss her fondly, their light and dark hair intermingling as the tears fell fast. 'There; I will not cry; but it does hurt me to hear you talk like that. And it is so unjust.'

'Yes: I suppose it is; but you cannot tell what I feel.'

'I know what you ought to feel,' said Renée, kissing the ripe full lips as the girl clung to her. 'You know papa said we were to be like sisters, and I have tried to be so dear, always.'

'Yes, always; but I cannot help it. I don't know how it is, but I am sick of everything.'

'In a home like this, dear!' said Renée, reproachfully.

'Yes, even in a home like this,' said the girl, with the sombre look once more clouding her handsome face. 'I am weary of the flowers; their scent sickens me. I hate the fruit; it all seems to cloy. I hate'—

'Don't say you hate us, Josee, dearest,' cried Renée, laying her peachy cheek against her companion's of soft olive.

'Hate you?' cried the girl with a passionate sob. 'Nothing could make me hate you.'

'Nothing?'

'Nothing, Renée, dear; I hate myself.'

'Oh Josee,' whispered Renée, 'how can you talk so?'

'Because I am half one of a despised race.'

'It is not true,' said Renée with spirit. 'You cannot even say that of your dead mother. Papa has often told me that she was a beautiful quadroon lady, whom his friend loved; while you'—

'I am one who envies the poor black women who are your father's slaves.'

'You do not, for you are my dearest sister, and you shall not speak like this. But, Josee,' cried Renée suddenly, 'why do you go and talk so much to old Aunt Miramis as you do?'

The girl started as if she had been stung,

but recovering herself, she cried with forced gaiety: 'Because she has always been kind to me, I suppose.'

'She has not, dear; she has always sneered at you, I know.'

'Oh, then, because they say she is a witch, I suppose. I want to know what is to come to pass, Renée. I want my future told.'

CHAPTER III.

The boat soon reached the side of the sloop, and, after a challenge, its owner was allowed to climb on deck, where he was met by Manton.

'You wish to see the captain?' said the latter, in answer to the visitor's demand. 'Better send a message, sir. He is hardly likely to attend to you now.'

'I want no attention, sir,' said the visitor authoritatively. 'I am an old sailor. I saw from my windows the condition your ship is in. Tell your commanding officer that Captain Greville, R.N., has come to offer his assistance to lighten the vessel. It is your only chance. Tell him he can have fifty or a hundred men.'

The young officer's manner changed, and he saluted the speaker, hurried off, and returned to ask their visitor to come on the quarter-deck, where Captain Lance was standing with the first lieutenant, superintending the change of position of the guns so as to careen the ship.

'Glad to see you, Captain Greville,' he said, holding out his hand. 'Very good of you to come and help; but I think we shall be off soon with the loss of a little false keel. There is no leak.'

'You are counting on the tide,' said Captain Greville sharply. 'It is a vain hope, sir. We only have a rise here of a couple of feet, and you must have taken the ground at high-water. There is a terrific current out yonder, and it brought you in.'

Captain Lance gave an impatient stamp.

'Nothing else for it, sir. I should lower every boat at once and land my guns and shot first.'

'And not wait to see what the next tide will do?'

'I have been here twenty years,' said Captain Greville, 'as a planter, and I know the weather at this time of year. The sea is like a lake now. In an hour it may be so that no boat can live. The rocks upon which you have run your ship are like knives. Take my word for it, there is not a moment to lose.'

'I do take your word for it, sir,' said Captain Lance. 'We will lighten her at once.'

'And I will get together four boats and about a hundred men to help.'

'But they are not used to handling heavy stores.'

'Well, sir,' said Captain Greville, smiling, 'we consider our sugar-casks and rum-punches pretty heavy articles to move. At anyrate they can relieve your lads of the rowing. I have hardly a man who cannot row like one of a long-boat's crew. I will go back at once, and I need hardly say that my house is at your disposal. I am only a planter now, but am rejoiced to serve under the old colours once more. For the present, good-day.'

'I say, Jack,' whispered Lieutenant Burns to

his friend, 'always our luck. His house at our disposal, and we must work like niggers here.'

'And with niggers there,' said Manton. 'Come, lad. We have got to save the ship.'

THE MYSTERIES OF THE MULASTHANUM.

NOTHING interests the ordinary human mind more than mystery. Only breathe the word 'mysterious,' and the attention is at once riveted, the curiosity awakened. The mystery which enshrouds the Hindu temple, with its jealously guarded shrine and secret rites, fascinates the traveller. He may stand at the open doors and peer into its murky, windowless depths, but he may not set foot across the threshold. Dire would be the consequences if he did, for the English Government protects the rights of its Hindu subjects. There is very little to be seen, after all, in that peep. The air is thick with the smoke of burning camphor and incense, to say nothing of the dust of ages. No cleansing broom ever touches wall or roof; no towel ever removes the layers of dust from cornice or carving. No light, except that which penetrates from the open door, illuminates the hall. The lamps only serve to dazzle the eye; their rays scarcely reach the black image in whose honour they burn. And there is a close unwholesome smell emanating from the mysterious chamber which is not inviting. Nothing is to be gathered of the secret doings within the walls of the Mulasthanum by that wondering gaze. The traveller turns to the idlers loafing about the courts of the temple.

'What is inside there?' he asks.

'The Swami,' answers the phlegmatic Hindu.

'What is done there?'

'Nothing. The Swami sleeps.'

That is all the information the most inquisitive of travellers will gather, question and ask as he may.

Yet, silent as the Asiatic is upon the ceremonies of his temple, he cannot keep his secret. Here and there disclosures are made through litigation and prosecutions. A fraudulent trustee, a claim to certain religious rights, a disorderly religious procession followed by riots and breaches of the peace, bring the temple affairs under the searching eye of the law; and the mysteries of the Mulasthanum are unfolded. They are not very intricate, nor are they creditable to the honour and morality of the temple adherents.

Before touching, however, on the rites and ceremonies, it will be as well to describe the building. The Hindu temple of any size or pretension is a complex institution. It is a group of buildings enclosed within one or more walls. It possesses certain privileges, granted by native rulers in days gone by, and still respected by the present Government. It enjoys what may almost be termed a royal revenue from houses, lands, and offerings; and it possesses hoards of treasure in jewels, gold and silver vessels, and coins. The property is in the hands of trustees, who are elected or who claim an hereditary right to the office. These have power over an enormous wealth. Honesty is not the strong characteristic of the Oriental. Under unscrupulous trustees,

valuable jewels have disappeared, or been replaced with glass. Pots of silver and gold coins have been refilled with copper. Rich lands have been let at a nominal rent to their relatives; and offerings intended for the temple have been appropriated personally. Occasionally, a trustee is prosecuted for his dishonest practices; but it is not often that he is punished. There is so much hard swearing in his favour that he successfully evades the law. He is also aided indirectly by the indifference of the worshipper; the latter gives, not to benefit the temple, but to benefit himself. His sins pass with his money to the Brahman receiver, and his object is fully accomplished in the mere act of giving; it matters little to him how the trustee applies the gift.

The erection of the Hindu temple is the work of a slow system of evolution. Some holy man perhaps dies on the spot, or he has an ecstatic vision of the god in one of the incarnations. The place is invested with sanctity, and an image set up to the deity. The landowner straightway builds a small shelter over it, to propitiate the god in his favour. The ground round the edifice is next enclosed within a fence. By-and-by the shed is removed, and something more pretentious and lasting erected. The Dewan or prime minister of the province makes a pilgrimage to the shrine, and leaves a rich offering in the hands of the Brahmans who have instituted themselves as receivers, trustees, and ministrants. More pilgrims come; offerings in kind as well as in jewels and money pour in, and new buildings are erected. Courts, halls, galleries, a tank, pillared platforms, walls, gateways, and towers, slowly grow around the shrine—the centre-point of the edifice. Other shrines of affiliated deities may group themselves near the original, but the Mulasthanum is always the same. It holds the image of the deity to whom the temple is dedicated, and it is the scene of daily ceremonies. At all risks, it must be jealously guarded against the intrusion of any but the Twice-born. When Clive took the temple of Srieungham—the largest in Southern India, and a powerful stronghold in those days—two thousand fierce Rajputs stood before the door of the Mulasthanum, declaring that the Europeans should only pass in over their dead bodies. Their superstitions were respected, and Clive left the fanatics in undisturbed possession. In preserving the integrity of the sacred shrine the Hindu has something more to consider than his religious scruples. The restitution of the divine or mantric essence is a very expensive and intricate process, requiring large sums of money for its different rites. At Vellore there is a handsome temple which was desecrated years ago by the Mohammedans. They killed a cow in the Mulasthanum. The building now stands empty and unoccupied; and the European may go into outer and inner court as he pleases. The Mulasthanum is a small hall, richly decorated with carving. It contains nothing but a stone dais, on the face of which is a tortoise in outline. The image rested formerly on the tortoise. There is a small gutter round the platform, which conducted the sacred water—used for the ablutions of the idol—into a reservoir outside. Pilgrims drank of this water eagerly, in belief of its miraculous powers of healing and purification. The temple would probably be used again by Hindu worshippers, if money

were forthcoming sufficient to restore the divine essence.

The idol is not usually made of wood or stone. It is moulded in an amalgam of five metals: gold, silver, brass, copper, and lead. In size it is smaller than the human figure. It is not called a 'Swami' until the mantric essence has been infused into it by the proper ceremonies. These are performed by the Brahmans, who claim the power of placing the essence in any object, animate or inanimate, that they choose. Sometimes the object is a man, the chief trustee or 'Moktesoor.' He is then said to be divine, and is called 'Swami'; and, moreover, is worshipped as god. The daily ritual which concerns only the idol takes place inside the shrine at intervals during the day. No worshippers are present except those who are taking part in the function. The image is tended in every minute particular, as though it were a living human being. Nothing is omitted. It is washed with water from the sacred tank; it is dressed and fed. It is supposed to take pleasure in the company of the dancing girls; it sleeps and wakes, and finally is put to bed. During its toilet, hymns of praise are sung, lamps are lighted, camphor and incense burnt, and the tomtom is frequently introduced. Part of the revenue of the temple pays for all this, and a great many Brahmans find their occupation and their living in it.

The ritual of the festivals is much more imposing. The image is covered with plates of gold and loaded with jewels. It is carried in procession upon a huge car, surmounted with a throne of silver. It may now appear before the eyes of all, and it makes a slow and magnificent journey round the outer courts of the temple—which are open to all castes—and through the town. Offerings in kind and in money and jewels are received. The dancing girls are to be seen, their charms enhanced by rich silk and gold; they are the daughters and wives of the god, and the children of the devil. The value of their charms goes to swell the offertory considerably.

But chief of all in the big festival is the Moktesoor—now the Swami—in whose body is hidden the divine essence. His every action, however lustful, is holy. He cannot sin, for he is god; he, too, moves slowly along, and the masses prostrate themselves before him. For several days at a time he personates the deity, and his harvest is great. During this period he assumes what he considers a god-like demeanour. His movements are slow and lethargic; he affects to take no notice whatever of individuals; he receives the adoration and worship offered to him with lofty indifference; he is tended like the idol, and does nothing for himself. It would be beneath his dignity as a god to stir a finger to help himself. He is usually carried on a palanquin raised on bearers' shoulders; and if he walks, a richly embroidered canopy is held over his head by young Brahmans, who have qualified themselves for the honour by the rigid performance of rites.

The question naturally arises, How far do these people believe in themselves? What faith have they in their religion as it is now practised? An educated man who has had some intercourse with Europeans will not scruple to deny his belief in

the images, and in the outward and costly formalities attendant on their worship, if he is speaking with a European. He will talk of idols as symbols; and he will try to represent his religion according as it is written in his philosophical books, and not as it is practised. He will quietly ignore the immoralities of the dancing girls, and the license allowed to the 'guru' when he is travelling amongst his disciples; or, if obliged to admit that these evils exist, he will speak of them as incrustations not materially affecting doctrine itself. He will seem by his conversation ripe for reformation and almost ready for conversion. But he has two sides to his character. He is one man abroad, and another in the bosom of his family. As a native paper puts it, he roars like a lion at a public meeting; but in the presence of his women-folk at home he is the meekest of meek little jackals. Amongst the worshippers, it is the women who hold so tenaciously to the superstitions of their religion. It is by their decree that the men attend these festivals; it is at their suggestion that the gifts are made; it is with their consent that the men obtain religious license for deeds not in accordance with Christian morality—deeds not mentioned in their own sacred books. The powerful attractions offered to the weakest side of human nature, together with the play upon his fearful superstitious mind, hold the heathen worshipper closely to his creed.

As for the Brahman, his very existence rests on his religion. It is his support, his livelihood; it is his grand source of wealth. The princely revenues of the temples are more than sufficient to ensure a jealous preservation of the Mulas-thanums and their mysteries by the favoured Twice-born, whatever may be their convictions.

THE IRONCLAD BUSHRANGERS.

AUSTRALIA has furnished many startling tales of the careers of numerous criminals who have at various times carried on the profession of 'bush-ranging;' but none of more intense interest than that of the notorious 'Kelly gang.' This quartet of desperadoes for a considerable length of time set the law, government, and police of New South Wales and Victoria at complete defiance. A reward of eight thousand pounds was offered without avail for their apprehension; and despite the incessant efforts of the police of the two colonies, the four youths who composed 'the gang' evaded punishment for two years, and cost these two governments in all the enormous sum of one hundred and fifteen thousand pounds!

Ned Kelly, 'the last of the bushrangers,' was born at Wallan-Wallan in 1854. At an early age he took to criminal courses, and was a known horse-stealer from his youth. His brother Dan was born in 1861, and was a thorough specimen of a juvenile scoundrel. Steve Hart (born in 1860) was likewise a professional horse-thief. Joe Byrne was born in 1857, and also in his young days commenced his evil ways.

These four composed the band; and in 1878, when they first became notorious, the leader, Ned Kelly, was only in his twenty-fourth year;

and the others were lads, two of them still in their teens. The origin of the outbreak was as follows: In April 1878 a police-officer named Fitzpatrick was sent to arrest Dan Kelly at his mother's house at Greta. While in the house, a scuffle took place, and Ned Kelly shot Fitzpatrick in the wrist. Mrs Kelly and several others were convicted of abetting the outrage; but Ned and Dan took to the bush, and nothing was heard of them for several months. In October, a party of police, under the command of Sergeant Kennedy, set out to scour the Wombat Ranges, where they had information the Kellys were hiding. The party camped out the first night; and next morning Kennedy, accompanied by another officer named Scanlan, went off to search the hills. The other two officers remained in camp. About two o'clock, the two men were suddenly saluted with a command to 'throw their hands up.' On looking round, they discovered four rifles aimed at them. One of the police, McIntyre, being unarmed, at once obeyed. His companion drew his revolver and made for a tree for shelter; but before he could get behind it, he was shot dead. The murderers then came forward, and McIntyre recognised them as the two Kellys with Hart and Byrne. Securing all the arms in the camp, the outlaws at once made preparations for the reception of the other officers. McIntyre was placed in a conspicuous situation, while the bushrangers remained out of sight. Soon afterwards, Kennedy and Scanlan rode up. McIntyre called out, as ordered: 'Sergeant, you had better surrender, as we have been captured.' Ned Kelly at the same time cried 'Hands up.' Grasping the situation in a moment, the officers sprang from their horses. Scanlan was shot dead ere he reached the ground. Kennedy got safely down, and got behind his horse, opening fire upon his assailants. The horse, however, bolted, and rushing past McIntyre, he jumped into the saddle and galloped off. Kennedy was now left alone to fight the four outlaws. No one knows what really then occurred, or how long the police-officer continued the unequal struggle. But he had to succumb at last; and his body was afterwards found a quarter of a mile away, riddled with bullets.

McIntyre meantime rode off as fast as his horse could carry him. He got safely to Mansfield, and gave the alarm. As may be imagined, the news of the sanguinary outbreak created intense consternation throughout the colonies. A reward of one thousand pounds was offered for the capture of the gang, and every possible means adopted for their speedy apprehension.

About noon on the 18th of December a man named Fitzgerald, employed on a station near the small township of Euroa, was accosted by an individual who had the appearance of an ordinary bushman. On finding out that the manager, Mr Macauley, was from home, he beckoned three others out of the bush; and the party at once proceeded to the homestead. Mrs Fitzgerald, who was in charge, demanded who they were

and what they wanted. One of the party at once said: 'I am Ned Kelly, and we want food for ourselves and our horses.' Fitzgerald then came in, and was met with the same demand, emphasised by the production of a revolver. Shortly afterwards, the station hands began to drop in to dinner. Every one as he arrived was seized, and all shut up together in a detached storehouse. About five o'clock Mr Macauley, the manager, arrived. He was at once covered by the revolvers of the outlaws and ordered to 'bail up.' Resistance being useless, he at once surrendered. The next arrival was a travelling merchant with a wagon of clothing and other articles. He was also 'bailed up' and locked up with the rest.

Euroa was a small town about three miles from the station. It had then about three hundred inhabitants, and is on the main line of railway from Melbourne to Sydney. Next morning the outlaws openly declared their intention of robbing the bank at Euroa. Four men returning to town were also captured that day, and added to the already numerous company of prisoners. The next step of the gang was to destroy telegraphic communication, and they proceeded to cut down the posts and wires of the line, which was carried along the railway close to the farm-buildings. While engaged at this work, a party of four railway 'gangers' came up. They also were shut up in the storehouse, which then contained some twenty men! At half-past three, Ned and Dan Kelly, accompanied by Steve Hart, set off for the town. They had taken advantage of the hawk's stock of clothing to rig themselves out in a highly respectable style. The two Kellys each drove a light cart, and Hart rode behind on horseback. Joe Byrne was left in sole charge of the prisoners. He was heavily armed, and kept a close watch to see that no one got off to give the alarm. While thus occupied, a train came up and stopped opposite the station. The breakdown in the telegraph was noticed, and a repairer got off to make matters right. He came up to the homestead for assistance, when Byrne at once 'drew a bead' on him, searched him for arms, and locked him up with the others!

Meantime, the other three desperadoes had reached Euroa. Ned Kelly drew up his cart at the bank door on the main street, while his brother and Hart went to the back. It being after hours, it was a short time ere the door was opened; but on Kelly's declaring he had a cheque of Mr Macauley's to cash, he was admitted. Instead of a cheque, Ned presented a revolver at the astonished clerk, who at once succumbed. Hart at the same time entered from the back and secured all the firearms on the premises. Kelly next entered the room of the manager, Mr Scott, and he also surrendered at discretion. Leaving him under Hart's care, Ned ransacked the bank, obtaining some three to four hundred pounds in cash. The accountant was then ordered to open the safe, from which Kelly took fifteen hundred pounds in notes, three hundred pounds in gold, ninety pounds in silver, and some thirty ounces of gold-dust.

Their object having been accomplished, it was now time for the gang to depart. However, to prevent an alarm being prematurely raised, it

was necessary to take all the inmates of the bank along with them. This was a formidable task, the household consisting of Mr and Mrs Scott, her mother, seven children, two maid-servants, and two clerks. This being more than the two wagons could accommodate, Mr Scott's buggy was got out. Into it Mrs Scott and the children were packed, the former driving. The others were divided between the two carts, and the procession drove off. Steve Hart rode alongside and kept a watchful eye on the prisoners.

On their arrival at the station the men were put in the storehouse with the others, the women and children being allowed the run of the place. Having divided their spoil, the four outlaws partook of a hearty meal and at last rode off. Mr Scott hurried back to Euroa. He got there about midnight, and found the inhabitants still in blissful ignorance of the robbery in their midst.

Again, despite the efforts of the police, the gang got clear off. The reward was increased to four thousand pounds, but without avail.

About two months elapsed ere the gang was again heard of. On the 11th of February 1879 the bank at Jerilderie was 'stuck up' and robbed. The police-station is a short way outside the town. At midnight on the 9th the two officers in charge were aroused by some one calling that there was a great row in the town and their presence demanded at once. On opening the door, the two constables were seized by four armed men, whom they immediately recognised to be the notorious 'Kelly gang.' They were disarmed and ignominiously locked up in their own watch-house. Next morning, Sunday, they found out that one of the officers' wives was in the habit of going into town and preparing the little church for service. Knowing her non-appearance might occasion inquiries being made, Joe Byrne made her accompany him to town, perform her usual duties, and return with him. At eleven o'clock next forenoon the four set out for the town, the two Kellys on foot and in police uniforms, Hart and Byrne on horseback. They first went to the *Royal Hotel*, which they had resolved should form their base of operations. They walked boldly in, proclaimed who they were, and taking advantage of the confusion caused by their appearance, at once secured possession of the premises. The landlord, servants, and all others in the house were marched into one room and locked in. Joe Byrne then proceeded to the bank. This office was in the charge of three gentlemen—Mr Jarleton, the manager; Mr Liding, the accountant; and Mr Mackin, the clerk. Mr Liding was the only one of the three in the office, and on Byrne entering, was at once ordered to 'bail up!' Ned and Byrne rummaged the office and got some seven hundred pounds in all. Not satisfied with this, they compelled the manager to open the safe, where fourteen hundred and fifty pounds more were obtained. About six o'clock the outlaws departed, Byrne leading a packhorse with the plunder. They safely crossed the Murray River, and got back unmolested to their retreat in the mountains of Victoria.

The utmost consternation now reigned throughout the two colonies. The Governments along with the banks increased the reward for the

capture of the brigands to the sum of eight thousand pounds. One of their principal 'agents' was a young fellow named Aaron Sherritt, and overtures were now made to him to induce him to put the police on the right track. Aaron was shy at first; but after a time he agreed to do what he could. Many believed he was only 'humbugging' the police; but the sequel proved he was in earnest. Being a sweetheart of a sister of Joe Byrne's, he was supposed to be well acquainted with the gang's movements. Old Mrs Byrne resided in a solitary dwelling among the hills. Here, sooner or later, Sherritt declared the bushrangers would come; and it was determined to watch the place night and day. A strong party of police under Superintendent Hare took up a position amongst the rocks above Mrs Byrne's house. Great care was taken to avoid the danger of their presence being known, and for many weeks the officers lay there, enduring severe discomforts and hardships. The nights were intensely cold; but a fire could not be lit; and the only food they had was bread and tinned meats. Old Mrs Byrne at last had her suspicions aroused; her watchful eye detected the glitter of an empty meat-can amongst the rocks; and creeping through the bush, she walked right into the camp, which had consequently to be abandoned.

Aaron Sherritt now cut his connection with the Byrnes and married another young woman. He took up house, however, in the same locality. A German named Wicks lived near him; and on the 26th of June 1880 Wicks received a visit from Joe Byrne and Dan Kelly. They handcuffed him, and made him go with them to Sherritt's house. On their arrival there he was ordered to call Aaron out on the pretence that he had lost his way. The ruse was successful, and Sherritt opened the door. Joe Byrne then stepped forward and fired at him. He retreated within doors; but Byrne sprang forward, and firing a second time, Sherritt fell dead on the floor. It was on Saturday night that Sherritt was shot; and early on the Sunday morning a railway repairer named Reardon, at Glenrowan, was awakened by Ned Kelly and Steve Hart and ordered to dress himself immediately. He obeyed, and was then made to summon several others of the men; and the whole were made to get their tools and march down the line. When they arrived at a part where the track ran along the top of a high embankment, they were ordered to tear up the rails! Knowing that as soon as the murder of Sherritt became known, a strong force of police would be despatched to the scene of the outrage, they had resolved to sacrifice the lives of the whole party! No regular trains ran on Sunday, and the special would, they expected, come along at full speed, and be thrown over the embankment without a moment's warning. The workmen protested against being employed in such devilish work; but no heed was taken of their entreaties. Under pain of instant death and with loaded pistols at their heads, they were compelled to obey, and the rails were lifted.

All the workmen were marched off to the *Glenrowan Hotel* (a small wooden building), and there kept under strict surveillance. Dan Kelly and Byrne now appeared on the scene, having gal-

loped across country from Beechworth, after their murderous work there. The four now perambulated the little hamlet; the inhabitants were all ordered up to the hotel, where in all there were sixty-three people including the police-officer of the village. Meantime, news of Sherritt's murder had reached the authorities, and, as the outlaws anticipated, a special train was despatched for Beechworth with a large force of police and trackers. This train reached Glenrowan about eleven at night, having been delayed on the road. It was not intended to stop there; but when about a mile from the station, a danger signal was seen in front. On drawing up, this proved to be the schoolmaster of the place with a candle and a scarlet scarf in front of it. He had managed to elude the vigilance of the bushrangers, and at once hurried down the line, just in time to stop the train. This was the first news the police had of the gang's presence at Glenrowan.

Within the hotel there was intense excitement when the sound of the approaching train was heard. The gang prepared to sally forth to witness the success of their villainous project, and in the confusion the imprisoned constable managed to escape. He at once ran down to the station when he heard the train stop. On his way he met Mr Hare and the police hurrying up to the hotel. All was in total darkness when they got in sight. The officers cautiously approached, and when Superintendent Hare was about sixteen yards from the house, a shot was fired from the veranda. The bullet hit Mr Hare in the left hand, rendering it useless. Other shots followed, and the police energetically replied. Once, above the din, the voice of Ned Kelly was heard shouting: 'Fire away, you beggars; you can do us no harm!' His meaning was unknown at the time, but was explained afterwards. Up to this time the police were unaware of any persons being within the buildings besides the outlaws. But now, when the bullets were crashing through the frail walls, they began to take effect on the prisoners. Several persons were wounded, and the shrieks of the women and children were added to the uproar. The bushrangers, finding the fire of their assailants getting heavier, now left the veranda and retreated inside. More police now arrived from Benalla and Wangaratta. A heavy volley was fired into the hotel, and this—as was known afterwards—proved fatal to Joe Byrne, who was shot in the groin, and died in agony. The police kept up a careful watch throughout the night, to prevent any of the gang escaping under cover of darkness. Just as dawn was breaking a fresh sensation arose. A tall figure emerged from the gloom and stalked slowly and calmly into the thick of the police. The latter, not knowing who the new-comer was, paused, and when within easy distance, the man opened fire upon them with his revolver. Now began a combat almost indescribable in its character. Nine policemen surrounded their solitary foe and emptied their firearms at him from a few yards' distance. He was repeatedly hit, and seen to stagger, but with a derisive laugh, he continued to return their fire. For half an hour the unequal fight went on—one man with a revolver against nine with rifles! At length one of the officers changed his tactics, and stepping close up

to him, fired two shots into his legs. Then at last the man fell; but even when brought to the ground he continued the fight. A rush was then made upon him, and he was disarmed.

This proved to be Ned Kelly, the chief of the gang; and the secret of his boldness was now discovered. His head, chest, back, and sides were protected by sheets of iron! He was speedily stripped of his armour and conveyed to the station, where he was found to be wounded in two places in the left arm, two in the right leg, and also in the right foot. His armour showed he had been also hit seventeen times by the police bullets.

Dan Kelly and Steve Hart were now left in the hotel. Most of the townspeople had been afraid to leave; but they now made a rush out, perfectly terror-stricken, and imploring the police not to shoot them. After this, an incessant fire was kept up by the police. For a time the outlaws replied, but about one o'clock it was noticed they discontinued firing. The police at this time were at their wits' end, and telegraphed to Melbourne for a fieldpiece to be sent up to batter the place down! This was actually despatched by train; but its services were not required. It was ultimately resolved to set fire to the building. A strong fusillade was again directed upon the hotel, to cover the operations, and a bundle of straw was placed against the boards and set fire to. The flame soon took hold; and then a cry got up that there was a wounded man inside who had been unable to leave with the others. All this time no sign of the two bushrangers was seen or heard. A clergyman, Father Tierney, volunteered to try to save the wounded man, and while he courageously entered at the front, several policemen rushed in at the back. In a few seconds they reappeared from amidst the smoke bearing the man between them. They also brought out the dead body of Joe Byrne. But besides, they had important news to tell. The other two outlaws—Dan Kelly and Steve Hart—were found lying dead on the floor. Whether they had been shot by the police, or taken their own lives to avoid capture, is unknown. The flames now quickly spread, and in a short time the place was burned to the ground. The charred remains of the bushrangers were afterwards recovered. Each of them, like their chief, was incased in armour. Ned Kelly's suit weighed ninety-seven pounds, and had been rudely constructed out of ploughshares.

Thus, at last, the Kelly gang was put an end to, the last scene being of a thoroughly sensational and unexpected character. Had the plan of destroying the train with the police been successful, it was the intention of the gang to ride to Benalla and rob the banks there. These plans were carefully thought out; and to avoid interference with their nefarious work, a keg of powder and fuse was prepared with which to blow up the Benalla Bridge, and so cut off communication with the other side of the river.

Ned Kelly recovered of his wounds, and was condemned and hanged at Melbourne. His old mother's last words to him were: 'See you die like a Kelly!' His bravado, however, deserted him at the last, and he showed anything but a bold front on the scaffold.

Those of our readers desiring fuller particulars

of the 'Kelly gang' and other records of crime in the Australian colonies are referred to Superintendent Hare's book, *The Last of the Bushrangers*, recently published in London.

RAILWAYS IN THE FUTURE.

RAILWAYS, though instituted more than fifty years ago, are still in their infancy, and there is no denying the fact that this infant institution has progressed beyond the anticipations of the original promoters of the great trunk lines. Year by year some marked improvement is visible, either in the matter of speed or comfort; and though there is finality in all things, it does not appear that the present generation will witness the absolute perfection of railway travelling. Our fathers were satisfied with travelling two hundred miles in ten hours; they grumbled not at the hard straight-backed third-class carriage; and the flickering light in the roof-lamps, clouded with smoke and dirt, was borne with an equanimity hardly credited at the present day; yet in less than a quarter of a century the slow parliamentary train for long distances is all but extinct; the third-class passenger can now travel his two hundred miles in five hours by any train in a comfortable cushioned carriage; and at night, the electric light or gas enables him to read with pleasure, and gives the compartment a bright and cheerful aspect. The third-class passenger, who was once treated as of no consequence, and for whom anything was considered good enough, is now the chief consideration with railway directors. The masses are gradually and surely becoming the arbiters of what shall be and what shall not be. As far as comfort and speed are concerned, there is little cause of complaint at the present day; but the public are not satisfied with other matters; they have agitated for cheaper rates for their merchandise, and when that concession is granted, there will be a move for the reduction in passenger fares.

The zone system, adopted with success in Hungary, is already advocated for trial in this country; and there has even been a scheme propounded for free railway travelling; but neither of these suggestions could be carried out while railways are in the hands of several companies, each working their line as it suits them best. Whether the Board of Trade can force the hands of the companies in the matter of reduction in rates and fares, remains to be seen; but there must be a limit to that interference, or the only alternative will be for the State to take over the railways and work them itself. There is a growing feeling that this will eventually be done, and the only strong argument against such a scheme is, that through want of competition there would be a lack of energy and improvement in the service generally that would militate against the public advantage. If this were to be so, that argument would be sufficient to settle the question.

The case of the German railways being taken over by the State is given as an instance where the public have suffered in the matter of general

facilities by the change, although it is admitted that from a pecuniary point of view the working has been most satisfactory. But the British public will hardly take such an example as sufficient evidence against the advisability of the transfer of our railways to the State. There is a power in this country that can and has ruled the State, a power that centuries of parliamentary government has made supreme—Public Opinion. In Germany, the voice of the people is little more than a whisper, and consequently it seldom reaches the powers that be; and when it does, there is no force at the back of it to give the rulers a hint that it would be policy to give it some attention. The consequence is that the German Government manage their railways without the criticism of the public or of bodies of shareholders.

With us it would be different; and we have in the Post-office an example of splendid efficacy in state management of a great public business without the aid of competition. Any neglect or bad management in that service is made the subject of a question in the House of Commons, where there are always sufficient members present of a progressive turn of mind to add their voice in favour of improvement. It would be the same if our railways were managed by the Government. Such a change would result in many advantages to the public. The working expenses would drop at least twenty-five per cent., and the profits, after the Government dividend on the Railway Consols had been paid, would go towards reducing rates and fares. The zone or any other system which necessitates the railways being under one management could then be worked permanently or on trial. Cheaper travelling is sure to come in the future; but with the working expenses so high as they now are, railway directors cannot see their way to make a change which would involve them in trouble with the shareholders.

Like all great changes in this country, whether religious, political, or commercial, this one must bide its time till the public are ready for it and pronounce in its favour; and though years may elapse before it takes place, yet the change will certainly come about eventually. Railway officials from the highest to the lowest would probably prefer to be servants of the State rather than of a public company; as Civil servants, they would expect to find that promotion would be by merit, and not by favour, as it largely is at the present time; long hours would then be the exception, not the rule; and Sunday duty would be paid for, which it is not at present, except under certain conditions. All servants in the passenger department of our railways are paid at the rate of seven days a week, so that theoretically they should work every Sunday to earn a full week's wage; but this arrangement is gradually being replaced by a more considerate one which allows every servant to be off duty at least one Sunday in every two. It is an old adage that says, 'Those who live longest will see most;' and before the present generation of railway men have passed away, they will have much to be thankful for, as compared with the conditions of the service which obtained in their early days.

We have not been in the habit of copying the

Americans in railway matters, and it was never thought that the ways of American railways would suit the British taste; but there is gradually growing up a change in this opinion. We have tried the Pullman cars, and they are becoming more popular with us: and it is not improbable that one company will decide for the future to build all their carriages on that principle. When, years ago, the second class was abolished on the Midland Railway, it was generally thought that a mistake was made, and that in time the old order of classes would have to be reverted to; but we see now that other companies are following in the same direction, and it is even mooted in certain quarters that it is the intention of one railway company to do away with classes altogether. If this is so, it is not at all improbable that our railways in the future will be worked on the same lines as are the American railways. This would break down the reserve and exclusiveness which is peculiar to the British traveller, and do much towards making liberty, equality, and fraternity something more than a theoretical doctrine in this aristocratic country.

CONSTANT.

I GIVE you back your word again;
Why should I hold it now?
Why should I see you try in vain
To keep a plighted vow?
And so to-day I say good-bye
Without reproach or tear,
Without one sob or bitter cry
To tell that you were dear.

And just because my love has grown
No whit more weak or cold,
I make no angry plaint or moan
Nor speak of days of old;
But yet I will not have you say,
Because I give no blame,
That if you're weak and false to-day,
That I may be the same.

Not so. Together bound are we,
Bound by a golden chain;
No words you speak can set me free,
Nor ease my bitter pain.
You need not think the love that grew
And strengthened day by day
Within my trustful heart for you,
I now can cast away.

And if it chance the world should be
Unfeeling or unkind:
Should fickle fortune turn and flee,
And leave you far behind:
Should all your summer friends depart,
In cold and proud disdain:
My love shall live safe in my heart,
Should you need it again.

M. ROCK.

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INFIRMITY AND OLD-AGE PENSIONS.

MUCH is likely to be heard ere long of schemes now being matured by leading British statesmen for a national system of Pensions for Old Age. An influential Committee of both Houses of Parliament has the subject in hand; and meantime the Foreign Office has obtained from Her Majesty's representatives in the European capitals a series of valuable Reports respecting assistance afforded or facilities given by foreign Governments to similar movements. No such assistance is given in Austria-Hungary, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Spain, or Turkey; but France, Germany, Denmark, Russia, and several other countries have extensive schemes, either in immediate prospect or already in operation.

In Germany, the law of compulsory insurance against old age and infirmity—passed in June 1889—completes the programme of legislation for improving the condition of the working-classes which was set forth in the Imperial Rescript of the 17th of November 1881. It affects a portion of the population numbering more than thirteen millions, giving them an inalienable legal claim to support in cases of infirmity and in old age. The insurance is compulsory in all industrial occupations upon persons of both sexes over sixteen years of age. Clerks, trade employees, and tradesmen's apprentices who do not earn more than one hundred pounds per annum also participate; but, oddly enough, assistants and apprentices in apothecaries' shops are excluded. Exemption from compulsory insurance is granted to persons who work for food, clothes, and lodging only, and receive no pay, or who are only in temporary employment. The pension for old age varies from £5, 6s. 4d. to £9, 11s. per annum, and is granted to every insured person who has completed the seventieth year of his age, irrespective of his ability to earn a livelihood, provided that he does not already draw a pension for infirmity. The latter ranges from £5, 11s. to over £20, and is given, irrespective of age, to any person who is permanently

incapacitated from earning his living. The pension can be refused if the infirmity has been brought on wilfully or in the act of committing a crime. A person is considered infirm if unable to earn more than about one-third of his usual wage. Habitual drunkards may be made to receive their pensions entirely in kind. In such cases the pension is paid to the parish authorities, who supply the person concerned with his food, clothing, &c. In order to establish a claim to a pension under the German law, contributions, regulated by the amount of earnings, must be paid for a prescribed period. The means of paying pensions are obtained by fixed contributions from the Imperial Treasury added to regular payments on the part of the employers and employed. Side by side with this system there continues in operation the law which compels miners to become members of approved friendly societies.

In France there is still before the Chamber of Deputies a Bill in which the Government proposes an enormous development of the system of providing for old age. After 1848 a great number of projects for the benefit of the poorer workmen were brought forward; the 'right to labour and to State assistance' having been formally recognised by the Constitution. Amongst the more practical of the many well-intentioned but often hastily-evolved schemes was that of a 'Caisse de Retraite pour la Vieillesse,' which was carefully elaborated by the Labour Committee. Its object was to receive the very small deposits that labouring men were enabled to make—sums too small for the insurance companies to accept, owing to the cost and inconvenience of the largely increased clerical labour which the keeping of these small accounts would entail. The Caisse was not originally intended in any way to usurp the functions of ordinary insurance offices. The advantage granted by the State was only designed for the benefit of those who had neither the resources, experience, nor leisure to look for and find a safe and remunerative investment of their savings. The development of this

system was slow and chequered, owing to limitations introduced from time to time, on account of an excessive rate of interest not only attracting the wrong class of depositors, but also involving the State in serious loss. Deposits may be made in favour of any person over three years of age; but in the case of minors the authority of a parent or guardian is necessary. Each deposit gives the right to an annuity which is immediately fixed; and there is no obligation to continue payments at stated intervals. Deposits can be made at any time in variable sums. The depositor must mention the age at which he wishes to enjoy his pension; the age must not be less than fifty. After fixing one age for the pension on one deposit, he may name another for the pension on another. By three months' notice before the date of the term when the pension becomes due, the payment may be deferred with the view of increasing its ultimate amount; but after the age of sixty-five the pension must be taken. Payments are received in all sums from a franc upwards, without fractions of francs. The maximum annuity for one person is fifty-eight pounds, and deposits of more than forty pounds cannot be made in one year. The total value of the pensions granted since the institution of the Caisse des Retraites has been £1,956,943 to 251,084 persons; of these latter, 166,937 are still alive, receiving pensions amounting to £1,268,907. In a new and more extended scheme now under examination by the Commission du Travail, the Government propose to impose a maximum contribution of a halfpenny or a penny per day on each salary, putting an equal charge on the employer of labour. Thirty years of halfpenny payments per day would produce, at the four per cent. now in force, a pension of £7, 2s.; of a penny per day, £14, 4s. It is proposed in the Bill before the Chambers that the State should add two-thirds of the amount deposited by the workmen and their employers. Every person of French nationality receiving a salary will be assumed to take the benefit of the proposed law, unless he make a declaration to the contrary before the mayor; and without such declaration every employer will be bound to deduct a halfpenny at least, or a penny at most, from the daily wage he gives, supplemented by a like sum of his own. If a workman has deposited a sum from twenty-five years—the age at which these payments begin—to fifty-five years of age, then at fifty-six years of age, and till the end of his days, he will be in receipt of his pension. In order to encourage the employment of French labour, masters who employ foreign workmen will have to pay a penny per day for each such foreigner to a fund which is for the benefit of French workmen.

A novel and highly interesting experiment in the same direction is now being made in Denmark. Not many months ago the Danish government proposed to put a new tax upon lager beer. To this the Radicals replied that, if the poor man's beer was to be taxed, the poor man ought in some way to get the advantage; and for this purpose they proposed an old-age pension scheme. The Government persisted in their beer tax, but took over the pension scheme, and made it even more Radical, inasmuch as under their plan no

contributions were to be required. Instead of contributions, they have devised an ingenious test, which makes it a necessary qualification for a pension that the applicant shall not have had recourse to the poor-law or been convicted of vagrancy during the ten years preceding the age of sixty. If he has a clean record in this respect, he may, on completing his sixtieth year and on showing proof of necessitous circumstances, lay claim to a pension of about ten pounds a year. The decision rests with the Communal Councils; and whatever funds are required, in addition to the money provided by the beer tax, will have to be found locally.

In Belgium, the legislature has recently voted, under the Budget for 1891, a credit of twenty thousand francs for giving bonuses of encouragement to recognised Mutual-help Societies, in order to facilitate the affiliation of their members to the State fund for retirement. Pensions to old workmen and their widows are granted by most of the Miners' Relief Societies throughout Belgium.

In Greece, a tax of a hundredth part of a drachma is levied on the net produce of mines, in order to form a reserve fund to assist workmen and their families in case of accident.

In Italy, the subject of State intervention in favour of pensions in cases of illness, incapacity to work, and old age, has been discussed in both the Italian Cabinet and also in the Chamber, where a project of law with that view has recently been submitted by the Ministry. It is proposed that the capital shall be derived from the sums subscribed by the workmen, increased partly by the net profits of the Postal Savings-banks, by the shares of predeceased members, &c. After twenty years from the first subscription, these amounts would be transformed into annuities and redivided per head.

Russia has made several attempts to solve the same problem; and in Switzerland an additional Article to the Constitution was voted last year by the Federal Assembly, and subsequently adopted by the people at the Referendum, empowering the Confederation to legislate on the subject of compulsory insurance against accidents and illness; but it is not the present intention of the Federal Government to include in their promised measure any scheme of insurance for old age and infirmity.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

PROLOGUE (*continued*).

THE room was long rather than square, lit by two large windows, overlooking the gardens of New Square, Lincoln's Inn. The lawyer sat with his back to the fire, protected by a cane-screen, before a large table. On his left hand, at the corner of the table, stood the clients' chair: on his right hand, between the two windows, was a small table with a couple of drawers in it. And in the corner, to the left of any one writing at the small table,

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and on the right hand of the lawyer, was the open safe already mentioned. There were two doors, one communicating with the clerk's room, the other opening directly on the stairs. The latter was locked on the inside.

'Call Mr Arundel,' said the chief.

While Checkley was gone, he walked to the window and observed that any one sitting at the table could, by merely reaching out, take anything from the safe and put it back again unobserved, if he himself happened to be occupied or looking another way. His grave face became dark. He returned to his own chair, and sat thinking, while his face grew darker and his eyes harder, until Mr Arundel appeared.

Athelstan Arundel was at this time a recently admitted member of the respectable but too numerous family of solicitors. He was between two and three and twenty years of age, a tall and handsome young fellow, of a good manly type. He was an ex-articled clerk of the House, and had just been appointed a Managing Clerk until something could be found for him. The Arundels were a City family of some importance: perhaps something in a City Firm might presently be achieved by the united influence of family and money. Meantime, here he was, at work, earning a salary and gaining experience. Checkley—for his part, who was as jealous of his master as only an old servant, or a young mistress, has the right to be—had imagined symptoms or indications of a growing preference or favour towards this young gentleman on the part of Mr Dering. Certainly, he had Mr Arundel in his own office a good deal, and gave him work of a most confidential character. Besides, Mr Dering was Executor and Trustee for young Arundel's mother, and he had been an old friend and school-fellow of his father, and had known the young man and his two sisters from infancy.

'Mr Arundel,' the lawyer began. At his own house, he addressed his ward by his Christian name: in the office, as managing clerk, he prefixed the courtesy title. 'An extremely disagreeable thing has happened here. Nothing short of a forgery.—Don't interrupt me, if you please'—for the young man looked as if he was about to practise his interjections.—'It is a most surprising thing, I admit. You needn't say so, however. That wastes time. A Forgery. On the 5th of this month, three weeks ago, a cheque, apparently in my handwriting, and with my signature, so skilfully executed as to deceive even Checkley and the Manager of the Bank, was presented at my bank and duly cashed. The amount is—large—£720—and the sum was paid across the counter in ten-pound notes, which are now stopped—if there are any left.' He kept his eyes fixed on the young man, whose face betrayed no other emotion than that of natural surprise. 'We shall doubtless trace these notes, and, through them of course, the forger. We have already ascertained who presented the cheque. You follow?'

'Certainly. There has been a forgery. The forged cheque has been cashed. The notes are stopped. Have you any clue to the forgery—any suspicions?'

'As yet, none. We are only beginning to collect the facts.' The lawyer spoke in the coldest and most austere manner. 'I am laying them, one by one, before you.'

Young Arundel bowed.

'Observe, then, that the forged cheque belongs to a cheque book which has been lying, forgotten by me, in this safe for two years. Here is the book. Turn to the last counterfoil. Here is the cheque, the forged cheque, which corresponds. You see?'

'Perfectly. The book has been in the safe for two years. It has been taken out by some one—presumably the forger—the cheque has been forged: the counterfoil filled up: and the book replaced. Why was all this trouble taken? If the man had got the cheque, why did he fill up the counterfoil? Why did he return the book? I beg your pardon.'

'Your questions are pertinent. I come to the next point. The safe is never opened but by myself. It is open so long as I am in the room and at no other time.'

'Certainly. I know that.'

'Very well. The man who took out the cheque book, forged the cheque, and replaced the book, must have done it in my very presence.'

'Oh! Could not some one—somehow—have got a key?'

'I thought of that. It is possible. But the drawers are full of valuables, jewellery—curios—all kinds of things which could easily be turned into money. And they were not touched. Now, had the safe been opened by a key, these things would certainly have vanished.'

'So it would seem.'

'These are the main facts, Mr Arundel. Oh! one more. We have found the messenger who cashed the cheque. Perhaps there are one or two other points of more or less importance. There is only one more point I wish to bring before you. Of course—I make no charge—I insinuate none. But this must be remembered—there are only two persons who have had access to this safe in such a manner as to make it possible for them to take anything out of it—Checkley'—

'No—no—no,' cried the old man.

'And you yourself. At the time of the robbery, you were working at that table with the safe open and within reach of your left hand. This is a fact, mind—one of the facts of the case—not a charge.'

'What?' cried the young man, his cheek aflame—'you mean'—

'I mean nothing—nothing at all. I want you—and Checkley—who alone have used this room, not counting callers who sat in that chair—to know the facts.'

'The facts—yes—of course—the facts. Well'—he spoke rapidly and a little incoherently—'it is true that I worked here—but—oh! it is absurd. I know nothing of any cheque book lying in your safe. I was working at this table'—he went to the table—'sitting in this chair. How could I get up and search about in a safe for an unknown and unsuspected cheque book before your very eyes?'

'I do not know. It seems impossible. I only desire you to consider, with me, the facts.'

Had Mr Dering spoken just a little less coldly, with just a little less dryness in his manner, what followed would perhaps have been different.

'Yes—the facts,' repeated the young man.

'Well—let us get at the facts. The chief fact is that whoever took that cheque and filled it up must have known the existence of that cheque book more than two years old.'

'It would seem so.'

'Who could know about that old cheque book? Only one who had been about your office more than two years, or one who had had opportunities of examining the safe. Now, you sat there—I sat here'—he seated himself, only turning the chair round. 'How is it possible for a man sitting here to take anything out of that safe without your seeing him? How is it possible for him, without your knowledge, to examine slowly and carefully the contents of the safe?'

'Everything is possible,' said Mr Dering, still coldly. 'Let us not argue on possibilities. We have certain facts before us. By the help of these, I shall hope to find out others.'

'At five o'clock every day I put the work in the drawer of this table and I go away.' He opened the drawer, as if to illustrate this unimportant fact. He saw in it two or three pieces of paper with writing on them. He took them out. 'Good Heavens!' he cried. 'They are imitations of your handwriting.'

Checkley crossed the room swiftly, snatched them from him, and laid them before his master. 'Imitations of your handwriting,' he said. 'Imitations—exercises in forgery—practice makes perfect. Found in the drawer. Now!'

Mr Dering looked at the papers and laid them beside the forged cheque. 'An additional fact,' he said. 'These are certainly imitations. The probable conclusion is that they were made by the same hand that forged this cheque.'

'Found in the drawer,' said Checkley, 'used by Mr Arundel. Never by me. Ah! The only two, are we? These imitations will prove that I'm not in it.'

'The fact that these imitations are found in the drawer,' said Mr Dering, 'is a fact which may or may not be important.'

'What?' cried the young man, flaring up. 'You think that I made those imitations?'

'I do not permit myself—yet—to make any conclusions at all. Everything, however, is possible.'

Then this foolish young man lost his temper and his head.

'You have known me all my life,' he cried. 'You have known me and all my people. Yet at the first moment you are ready to believe that I have committed a most abominable forgery! You—my father's oldest friend—my mother's Trustee! My own Guardian! You!'

'Pardon me. There are certain facts in this case. I have laid them before you. I have shown'—

'To suspect me,' Arundel repeated, 'and all the time another man—that man—your clerk—who knows everything ever done in this office, is in and about the place all day long.'

'The imitations,' said Checkley quietly, 'were found in his own drawer—by himself.'

'Who put them there? Who made them? You—villain and scoundrel!'

'Stop, stop,' said Mr Dering coldly. 'We go too fast. Let us first prove our facts. We will then proceed to conclusions.'

'Well, sir, you clearly believe that I forged

your name and robbed you of all this money. I have not got ten pounds in the world; but that is not, I suppose, a fact which bears on the case. You think I have seven hundred pounds somewhere. Very good. Think so, if you please. Meanwhile, I am not going to stay in the service of a man who is capable of thinking such a thing. I leave your service—at once. Get some one else to serve you—somebody who likes being charged with forgery and theft.' He flung himself out of the room and banged the door behind him.

'He has run away,' said Checkley. 'Actually, run away at the very outset! What do you think now?'

'I do not think. We shall, I daresay, find out the truth in due course. Meantime, these documents will remain in my keeping.'

'Only, I hope, sir,' the clerk began, 'that after what you've just seen and heard, after such insolence and running away and all'—

'Don't be an ass, Checkley. So far as appearances go, no one could get at the safe except you and Arundel. So far as the ascertained facts go, there is nothing to connect either of you with the thing. He is a foolish young man; and if he is innocent, which we must, I suppose, believe—but his look did not convey the idea of robust faith—he will come back when he has cooled down.'

'The imitations of your handwriting in his drawer'—

'The man who forged the cheque,' said Mr Dering, 'whoever he was, could easily have written those imitations. I shall see that hot-headed boy's mother, and bring him to reason.—Now, Checkley, we will resume work. And not a word of this business, if you please, outside. You have yourself to think of as well, remember. You, as well as that boy, have access to the safe. Enough—enough.'

Athelstan Arundel walked home all the way, foaming and raging. No omnibus, cab, or conveyance ever built could contain a young man in such a rage. His mother lived at Pembroke Square, which is four good measured miles from Lincoln's Inn. He walked the whole way, walking through crowds, and under the noses of dray-horses, carriage-horses, and cart-horses, without taking the least notice of them. When he reached home, he dashed into the drawing-room, where he found his two sisters—Hilda and Elsie—one of them a girl of eighteen, the other of thirteen. With flaming cheeks and fiery eyes, he delivered himself of his story: he hurled it at their heads: he called upon them to share his indignation, and to join with him in scorn and contempt of the man—their supposed best friend, Trustee, Guardian, Adviser—their father's best friend—who had done this thing—who had accused him, on the bare evidence of two or three circumstantial facts, of such a crime!

There is something magnetic in all great emotions: one proof of their reality is that they are magnetic. It is only an actor who can endow an assumed emotion with magnetism. Elsie, the younger girl, fell into a corresponding sympathy of wrath: she was equal to the occasion: passion for passion, she joined him and fed the flame. But—for all persons are not magnetic—the elder sister remained cold. From time to

time she wanted to know exactly what Mr Dering had said: this her brother was too angry to remember: she was pained and puzzled: she neither soothed him nor sympathised with him.

Then the mother returned, and the whole story was told again, Elsie assisting. Now, Mrs Arundel was a woman of great sense: a practical woman: a woman of keen judgment. She prided herself upon the possession of these qualities, which are not supposed to be especially feminine. She heard the story with disturbed face and knitted brow.

'Surely,' she said, 'what you tell me, Athelstan, is beyond belief. Mr Dering, of all men, to accuse you—you—of such a thing! It is impossible.'

'I wish it was impossible. He accuses me of forging that cheque for £720. He says that while I was working in his office for him, a fortnight ago, I took a certain cheque book out of the safe, forged his writing on a cheque, and returned the cheque book. This is what he says. Do you call that accusing, or don't you?'

'Certainly. If he says that. But how can he—Mr Dering—the most exact and careful of men? I will drive to Lincoln's Inn at once and find out. My dear boy, pray calm yourself. There is—there must be—some terrible mistake.'

She went immediately; and she had a long interview with the solicitor.

Mr Dering was evidently much disturbed by what had happened. He did not receive her as he usually received his clients, sitting in his arm-chair. He pushed back the chair and stood up, leaning a hand on the back of it, a tall, thin, erect figure, gray-haired, austere of face. There was little to reassure the mother in that face. The very trouble of it made her heart sink.

'I certainly have not accused Athelstan,' he said. 'It is, however, quite true that there has been a robbery here, and that of a large sum of money—no less than £720.'

'But what has that to do with my boy?'

'We have made a few preliminary inquiries. I will do for you, Mrs Arundel, what I did for your son, and you shall yourself understand what connection those inquiries have with him.'

He proceeded coldly and without comment to set forth the case so far as he had got at the facts. As he went on, the mother's heart became as heavy as lead. Before he finished, she was certain. There is, you see, a way of presenting a case without comment which is more efficacious than any amount of talk; and Mrs Arundel plainly perceived—which was indeed the case—that the lawyer had by this time little doubt in his own mind that her son had done this thing.

'I thought it right,' he continued, 'to lay before him these facts at the outset. If he is innocent, I thought, he will be the better able to prove his innocence, and perhaps to find the guilty person. If he is guilty, he may be led to confession or restitution. The facts about the cheque book and the safe are very clear. I am certain that the safe has not been opened by any other key. The only persons who have had access to it are Checkley and your son Athelstan. As for Checkley—he couldn't do it, he could not possibly do it. The thing is quite beyond him.'

Mrs Arundel groaned. 'This is terrible,' she said.

'Meantime, the notes are numbered: they may be traced: they are stopped: we shall certainly find the criminal by means of those notes.'

'Mr Dering'—Mrs Arundel rose and laid her hand on his—'you are our very old friend. Tell me—if this wretched boy goes away—if he gives back the money that remains—if I find the rest—will there be—any further—investigation?'

'To compound a felony is a crime. It is, however, one of those crimes which men sometimes commit without repentance or shame. My dear lady, if he will confess and restore—we shall see.'

Mrs Arundel drove home again. She came away fully persuaded in her own mind that her son—her only son—and none other, must be that guilty person. She knew Mr Dering's room well: she had sat there hundreds of times: she knew the safe: she knew old Checkley. She perceived the enormous improbability of this ancient clerk's doing such a thing. She knew, again, what temptations assail a young man in London: she saw what her Trustee thought of it: and she jumped to the conclusion that her son—and none other—was the guilty person. She even saw how he must have done it: she saw the quick look while Mr Dering's back was turned: the snatching of the cheque book: the quick replacing it. Her very keenness of judgment helped her to the conviction. Women less clever would have been slower to believe. Shameful, miserable termination of all her hopes for her boy's career! But that she could think of afterwards. For the moment the only thing was to get the boy away—to induce him to confess—and to get him away.

He was calmer when she got home, but he was still talking about the thing: he would wait till the right man was discovered: then he would have old Dering on his knees. The thing would be set right in a few days. He had no fear of any delay. He was quite certain that it was Checkley—that old villain. Oh! He couldn't do it by himself, of course—nobody could believe that of him. He had accomplices—confederates—behind him. Checkley's part of the job was to steal the cheque book and give it to his confederates and share the swag.

ROMANCE OF THE TELEGRAPH.

A CERTAIN romantic interest has clung to the telegraph from the beginning, in spite of its utilitarian character. The idea of two friends corresponding at a distance by means of two magnetic needles having a sympathy in their movements was emitted by John Battista Porta, the Neapolitan philosopher, in the sixteenth century, and took hold of the popular imagination. Addison has an amusing paper in the 'Spectator,' in which he represents two lovers conversing with each other in secret by the sympathetic stone. A veil of mystery still hangs around the first plan for an electric telegraph, communicated to the 'Scots Magazine' for 1753 by one 'C. M.' of Renfrew. Even the name of this obscure and modest genius is doubtful; but it is probable that he was Charles Morrison, a

native of Greenock, who was trained as a surgeon. At this period only the electricity developed by friction was available for the purpose, and being of a refractory nature, there was no practical result.

But after Volta had invented the chemical generator or voltaic pile in the first year of our century, and Oersted, in 1820, had discovered the influence of the electric current on a magnetic needle, the illustrious Laplace suggested to Ampère, the famous electrician, that a working telegraph might be produced if currents were conveyed to a distance by wires, and made to deflect magnetic needles, one for every letter of the alphabet. This was in the year 1820; but it was not until sixteen years later that the idea was put in practice. In 1836 Mr William Fothergill Cooke, an officer of the Madras army, at home on furlough, was travelling in Germany, and chanced to see at the university of Heidelberg, in the early part of March, an experimental telegraph, fitted up between the study and the lecture theatre of the Professor of Natural Philosophy. It was based on the principle of Laplace and Ampère, and consisted of two electric circuits and a pair of magnetic needles which responded to the interruptions of the current. Mr Cooke was struck with this device; but it was only during his journey from Heidelberg to Frankfort on the 17th of the month, while reading Mrs Mary Somerville's book on the *Correlation of the Physical Sciences*, that the notion of his practical telegraph flashed upon his mind. Sanguine of success, he abandoned his earlier pursuits and devoted all his energies to realise his invention. The following year he associated himself with Professor Wheatstone; a joint patent was procured; and the Cooke and Wheatstone needle telegraph was erected between the Euston Square and Camden Town stations of the London and Birmingham Railway. To test the working of the instruments through a longer distance, several miles of wire were suspended in the carriage-shed at Euston, and included in the circuit. All being ready, the trial was made on the evening of the 25th of July 1837, a memorable date. Some friends of the inventors were present, including Mr George Stephenson and Mr Isambard Brunel, the celebrated engineers. Mr Cooke, with these, was stationed at Camden Town, and Mr Wheatstone at Euston Square. The latter struck the key and signalled the first message. Instantly the answer came on the vibrating needles, and their hopes were realised. 'Never,' said Professor Wheatstone—'never did I feel such a tumultuous sensation before, as when, all alone in the still room, I heard the needles click; and as I spelled the words I felt all the magnitude of the invention, now proved to be practical beyond cavil or dispute.'

It was in 1832, during a voyage from Havre to New York in the packet *Sully*, that Mr S. F. B. Morse, then an artist, conceived the idea of the electro-magnetic marking telegraph, and drew a design for it in his sketch-book. But it was not until the beginning of 1838 that he and his colleague, Mr Alfred Vail, succeeded in getting the apparatus to work. Judge Vail, the father of Alfred, and proprietor of the Speedwell iron-works, had found the money for the experiments; but as time went on and no result was achieved,

he became disheartened, and perhaps annoyed at the sarcasms of his neighbours, so that the inventors were afraid to meet him. 'I recall vividly,' says Mr Baxter, 'even after the lapse of so many years, the proud moment when Alfred said to me, "William, go up to the house and invite father to come down and see the telegraph-machine work." I did not stop to don my coat, although it was the 6th of January, but ran in my shop-clothes as fast as I possibly could. It was just after dinner when I knocked at the door of the house, and was ushered into the sitting-room. The judge had on his broad-brimmed hat and surtout, as if prepared to go out; but he sat before the fireplace, leaning his head on his cane, apparently in deep meditation. As I entered his room he looked up and said, "Well, William?" and I answered: "Mr Alfred and Mr Morse sent me to invite you to come down to the room and see the telegraph-machine work." He started up, as if the importance of the message impressed him deeply; and in a few minutes we were standing in the experimental room. After a short explanation, he called for a piece of paper, and writing upon it the words, "A patient waiter is no loser," he handed it to Alfred, saying, "If you can send this, and Mr Morse can read it at the other end, I shall be convinced." The message was received by Morse at the other end, and handed to the judge, who, at this unexpected triumph, was overcome by his emotions.'

The introduction of the telegraph by land or sea has been attended with numerous adventures, especially in wild countries, but few of these have been recorded. One of the most romantic expeditions was that of the Western Union Telegraph Company of America, who in 1865 projected an overland telegraph from the United States to Europe via Behring Strait. Parties were sent out to explore the route and build the line through British Columbia, Alaska, and Siberia as far as the Amur River; and during the three years of the work they encountered many hardships and privations. One of a band was lost in the thick woods of Vancouver Island, and though he could hear the bugle calls of the searching-party, he was too exhausted to respond. On the fourth day of his wandering he wrote his will in pencil on his pocket-handkerchief; but soon afterwards he stumbled on the trail, where some hunters found him lying insensible. Another, while chasing cariboo on the Upper Fraser River, was lost for two weeks. In climbing a tree to spy his position, a branch gave way, and he fell to the ground. Stunned and bruised, he lay there for two days, then managed to reach the bank of the Fraser. He constructed a raft of logs and floated down the current; but after a time the raft stuck on a bar and afterwards floated away without him. By following the stream he at length came to a clearing in the forest, and was saved by Chinese settlers. For twelve days he had lived on the bulbs of the gamass, a species of lily, and on berries gathered amongst the trees. In Siberia, during winter, one at least of the expedition was frozen to death on the steppes, and others nearly starved for want of provisions.

Working the telegraph, though in general monotonous, is frequently enlivened by an interesting or exciting message. Such, for example,

was the despatch received in Washington, United States, on the morning of the 3d of April 1865, which announced the fall of Richmond and the termination of the great rebellion. About half-past nine, while Mr William E. Kettles, a boy operator of fifteen, was engaged in the Washington office attending to the service of the line which ran to Fortress Monroe, he was startled by a call from there to 'Turn down for Richmond, quick!' With trembling fingers he obeyed, and in another moment the signal from Richmond flashed along the wire. 'Do you get me well?' they said. 'I do: go ahead,' was the reply.—'All right. Here is the first message for four years—Richmond, Va., April 3d, 1865. Hon. E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War; we entered Richmond at eight o'clock this morning.—G. Weitzel, Brigadier-General, commanding.'

Kettles copied the message, he knew not how, and rushed with it into the room of General Eckert, Assistant Secretary of War, where he found President Lincoln conversing in a low tone with Mr Tinker, a cipher clerk. As Kettles handed the despatch to Tinker, the President, catching sight of its purport, bounded from the room, with a hop, skip, and jump, exclaiming, 'Clear the track!' and made for the door of Secretary Stanton. The tidings flew like wildfire; and soon the operating room was filled with officers of state, and the building was besieged by an enthusiastic crowd, who demanded a speech from the distinguished Kettles.

The telegraph played an important part in the American Civil War, and many daring deeds were perpetrated in cutting the wires or 'tapping' them to filch the messages. Some of the operators of the military service were so expert as to receive the messages on their tongues by the 'taste' of the current. In the Franco-German War of 1870 the uhlans in particular played havoc with the French wires. On arriving at a village they would ride up to the telegraph office, cut the connections, and carry off the apparatus, or else employ it to deceive the enemy. They were outwitted, however, on one occasion, and by a woman. Mademoiselle Juliette Dodu, a girl of eighteen, was director of the telegraph station at Pithiviers, where she lived with her mother, when the Prussians entered the town. They took possession of the station, and turning out the two women, confined them to their dwelling on a higher floor. It happened that the wire from the office in running to the pole on the roof passed by the door of the girl's room, and she conceived the idea of tapping the Prussian messages. She had contrived to keep a telegraph instrument, and by means of a derivation from the wire was able to carry out her purpose. Important telegrams of the enemy were thus obtained, and secretly communicated to the sub-prefect of the town, who conveyed them across the Prussian lines to the French commander.

Mademoiselle Dodu and her mother were both arrested, and the proofs of their guilt were soon discovered. They were brought before a court-martial, and speedily condemned to death; but the sentence had to be confirmed by the commander of the corps d'armée, Prince Frederick Charles, who, having spoken with Mademoiselle Dodu on several occasions, desired her to be produced. He inquired her motive in committing

so grave a breach of what are called the 'laws of war.' The girl replied: 'Je suis Française' (I am a Frenchwoman). The Prince confirmed the sentence; but happily, before it was executed, the news of the armistice arrived and saved her life. In 1878 this telegraphic heroine was in charge of the post-office at Montreuil, near Vincennes; and on the 13th of August she was decorated with the Legion of Honour by Marshal MacMahon, President of the Republic.

The ignorance and superstition of natives unacquainted with Western civilisation have been a fruitful source of incident, both comical and tragical, in telegraph experience. In China, when the telegraph line was built at Foochow from the pagoda to the foreign settlement, the people broke it every night, believing it would spoil the 'fung-shui' or good-luck of the district, and the mandarins winked at the destruction.

The Arabs, as a rule, have taken kindly to the telegraph, partly, it is thought, because the word is readily understood by them, 'tel' meaning wire, and 'araph' to know, in Arabic, so that 'telaraph' becomes to learn by wire. The Indians at the Baird fishing-station on McCloud River, California, call the telephone 'Klesch-teen' or the 'Speaking Spirit,' and regard it as a 'great medicine.' The red men have been taught by the cunning Yankees to respect the telegraph. When the overland line across the prairies was completed between Fort Kearney and Laramie, Mr Creighton invited the chief of the Arapahoes at Fort Kearney to hold a palaver with his friend the chief of the Sioux at Fort Laramie. The two Indians exchanged telegrams, and were deeply impressed with the fact. Mr Creighton said the telegraph was the voice of the Manitou or Great Spirit; and to carry conviction, he suggested that they should meet each other half way along the line, which was about five hundred miles in length. The chiefs started on horseback, met, and compared notes. The story spread among the tribes; and ever after, it is said, the line and instruments were unmolested, though the linesmen might be killed and the stations threatened.

The duty of a linesman is to keep the wire in repair, and in wild countries it is frequently a hazardous occupation. In journeying along the line many miles from the distant station, he is sometimes picked off by the lurking savage, or drowned in crossing some swollen creek. In 1867 Mr W. Thompson, a repairer of the Union Pacific Railway Company, was travelling on a hand-car with five others, beyond the Plum Creek Station, looking out for a break in the line, when they were suddenly fired on by a band of Indians. Thompson was shot and scalped, and left for dead. But not long afterwards he walked into the station bringing the scalp in his hand. It had been dropped by one of the Indians, and picked up by its owner. According to our authority (the 'Telegrapher' for August 31, 1867), a doctor of Omaha was of opinion that he might be able to replace it!

The Australian blacks, who are so low in the scale of humanity, have proved very hostile to the telegraph. They are apt to cut the wire to tip their spears with it, and break the insulators to make scrapers of the sharp edges.

Some of the stations on the great overland wire which crosses the continent from Adelaide on the south coast to Port Darwin on the north, where it meets the cables from Europe, are built in the manner of a fortress. Such is the station at Barrow's Creek, about twelve hundred miles north of Adelaide, which was the scene of a desperate attack by the natives in 1874. This lonely outpost of civilisation stands on the bank of a stony creek in the middle of a wide plain, covered with dried grass and stunted bushes, broken with patches of sombre forest or tangled scrub, and the blue range of some low hills fading in the distance. The buildings were of rough-hewn stone, loopholed for musketry, and roofed with iron. They formed three sides of a square, embracing a courtyard, which was closed by a massive gate, the only entrance to the station. The place was garrisoned by a staff of eight, including Mr Stapleton, the telegraph master, six operators, linesmen or servants, and a native boy christened Frank.

Mr James L. Stapleton, or 'Stape' as he was familiarly called, had been a free operator in America for over twenty years, roving from line to line as whim or opportunity directed, now plying his 'key' in the airiest of costumes amid the jungles of the tropics and the haunts of the dreaded 'vomito'; again shivering in furs beside his 'speaker' among the snows of the north, from the Panama and Aspinwall line to the Grand Trunk of Canada. In 1858 he wandered to Australia, and worked on the Victorian lines for ten years. At length he was appointed to the charge of the maintenance station at Barrow's Creek; and leaving his wife in North Adelaide, departed for the interior, hoping to spend his days in rest and quiet there.

About eight o'clock on Sunday evening, February 22, 1874, all the staff were outside the station, enjoying the pure air of the plains and the mellow light of the sunset. One or two are said to have been bathing in the creek; while others were smoking their pipes and chatting with the 'boy' Frank, whom they proposed to send up the line on horseback with one of the linesmen, when a large band of natives suddenly showed themselves at the eastern corner of the station, and launched a volley of spears at them. Being unarmed, they sprang to their feet, and made a rush for the entrance to the fort, but ere they could reach it were scattered by another shower of weapons. Retreat being cut off, they ran round the building, thinking the blacks would follow them. The ruse succeeded; and at the next venture they gained the courtyard and shut the gate. Though several were wounded, they were all inside except the boy Frank, who, however, was saved by being dragged in through one of the barred windows in the front of the station. Those who were able armed themselves with rifles, and three shots were fired through the openings at the body of natives where they assembled, some twenty yards distant. These drew off hastily, but gathered again at a point a hundred yards off, when two other shots were fired at them. All was quiet during the night; but about seven o'clock next morning the blacks were seen to approach again, all armed, and evidently bent on a fresh attack. But they were

dispersed by four rifle-shots while they were yet at a distance of five hundred yards. An examination of the injured showed that Mr Stapleton had been deeply gashed with a spear in the left side, and also cut in the left thigh. John Frank, a linesman, had been speared on the right side, the blade traversing his heart and the tip protruding from his back in a downward slant. He died as soon as he entered the kitchen of the fort. Flint, an operator, was speared in the upper part of the leg to the very bone; Gason, a police trooper, was also injured; and the boy Frank had a hurt below the right collar-bone, a spear-cut between two of his left ribs, and his right hand badly torn. Stapleton's condition was critical, and a telegram was sent to Adelaide, describing the nature of his injuries and asking for medical advice. This was done by Mr Flint, although he was bed-ridden and suffering intense pain. Dr Gosse of Adelaide prescribed by telegraph; but the remedies proved ineffectual. When Stapleton was sinking fast, his wife came to the telegraph office at South Adelaide to communicate with her dying husband, who on his part whispered his last wishes to the wounded operator at Barrow's Creek; and thus, although separated by twelve hundred miles of scrub and desert, these two exchanged a solemn and sad farewell. Stapleton was buried next day, the 24th of February, while the natives sullenly watched the rites from a distance.

Disease is a more fatal enemy to the telegraph clerk than the savage. His calling often takes him into climes and localities to which his constitution is unsuited. In the hotter countries, for example, hundreds of operators have succumbed to the malaria or yellow fever. During the fall of 1878, an epidemic of yellow fever broke out in the Southern States of America, in particular at Key West, New Orleans, and Granada. Business was entirely suspended; there was an exodus of the rich; but the poor whites and the blacks were rendered destitute and unable to flee from the scourge. Fever and starvation went hand in hand. In such a condition of things the telegraph is the only mode of communication between the infected districts and the outer world, the only means of getting medical aid and supplies, or of directing doctors and the officers of public health. A few of the telegraph clerks took fright, and fled to the north on this occasion; but most of them continued at their posts, and volunteers supplied the places of those who deserted or died in the execution of their arduous duties; for at such a time the work is redoubled, and the operator, exhausted in mind and body by the continual strain, is very liable to catch the fever. In Granada at one time all the telegraphists succumbed to the pestilence except Mr William W. Redding, a railway operator, who, being left alone, was the sole link between the stricken community and their sympathising countrymen. The traffic of the town itself was great; but he managed by incessant labour to sustain it and to send reports of its condition to the 'New York Times' and the 'Cincinnati Inquirer.' At the end of one of his despatches to the 'Inquirer' he expressed a fear that he could not write coherently, as the room in which he worked contained four persons down with the fever, and one corpse. These were his wife, his

mother, and two sisters; the corpse was that of his child. At last, however, he was seized, and died—as true a hero as ever lost his life upon the field of battle.

More recently, when the yellow fever broke out in Florida in the autumn of 1888, a young lady named Miss Mamie Davis kept her post in the Telephone Exchange of Jacksonville when all the other operators were stricken with the disease. She sat at the switch-board from morning till night, snatching hurried bites of food between the calls for doctors, undertakers, ambulances, and so forth, and apparently without thinking that she was doing anything unusual or brave.

Overwork itself has claimed its victims in America, where competition is perhaps more severe than in the government telegraphs of Europe. In 1884 an operator known as 'Ned Cummins,' and employed in a Virginian office, was receiving a press report, when he signalled to the sending operator at the other end of the line: 'Been spitting blood lately—take it easy.' Directly afterwards he fell from his chair dead; but there was no delay in the press report, for another took his place and wired the sending clerk: 'Cummins just died; I'm his substitute. Go ahead after "address"—that being the last word written by Cummins when he was called away.

About the same time another operator, 'Monk Monroe,' finding himself while in the midst of his work stricken with the blindness of death, had just time to signal on the wire, 'Send a doctor; I'm going up the hill.' He was found 'relieved' for ever, with his hand still resting on the key.

SUNSTRUCK.*

CHAPTER IV.

DAYS of hard work beneath the torrid sun, and nights without rest, when freeman and bondman toiled together beneath the dim light of many lanterns. Gun and shot and heavy stores were landed; but the ship stuck fast, as if her keel were firmly wedged in the rocks.

Then the whole crew, reinforced by a hundred of the blacks from the plantation, ran from side to side, to the great delight of the slaves, to whom the rhythmic motion seemed a kind of dance, to which they set up one of their weird choruses, caught by the Jacks at once, and trolled out with all the force of their powerful lungs; but that night and another passed. The ship had not moved.

'*Nil des.*, captain,' said Greville. 'The weather has held right and we may do it yet.'

'But I am beginning to despair, sir,' said the captain wearily.

'Let's see what to-morrow brings forth,' said Greville.

It brought forth what neither expected.

Burns, who was working literally like a slave, side by side with Manton in the hot sun, helping

the men to get up ballast from the hold, suddenly dropped as if he had received a bullet.

The doctor was hurried to the poor fellow's side, and pronounced the attack to be due to over-exertion in the heat.

Both the captains came; and the doctor gave orders for the stricken man to be carried below, when Greville interposed.

'No, no, captain,' he said; 'it is like condemning the poor fellow to death. The heat and noise will increase his fever. Let him be carried ashore to my house. Two of the women on the estate are excellent nurses.'

Captain Lance glanced at the doctor, who nodded.

'It will be the saving of his life,' he said.

'I don't like trespassing on you further, Mr Greville.'

'Captain Greville, if you please,' said the planter stiffly.

'Captain Greville. But if you will have the poor fellow for a day or two.'

'I shall be hurt if you do not send him,' was the reply.

The result was that the captain's gig was manned, and it became Manton's duty to see his friend safely up to the plantation house, the surgeon being one of the party.

'Is he very bad, doctor?' said Manton as they were rowed over the sea, which shone like hot metal.

'Very bad, poor lad. You see the exertion has been terrible. He has not spared himself a bit.'

'Officers must set a good example,' said Manton sadly; and then, noting for the first time the figure of one of the plantation blacks in the bows, he flushed a little, and said sharply: 'Hullo, my man, getting away from the work?'

'Mass' Cap'n say Negus go up to house tell um get room ready.'

'I beg his pardon,' said Manton; 'I misjudged him.—Poor old Will! you mustn't let him slip through your fingers, doctor.'

'I shall do my best, and I counsel you to take warning and be careful. The work under this sun is too much. Why, the very birds and insects get into the shade, while we human beings keep on toiling regardless of the heat.—Ah, here we are,' he continued as the boat's bow grated on the sand. 'How are we to get him up? Ah! Good gracious! Why, the side of the boat literally burned my hand.'

'We will get him carefully on to this sail,' said Manton, as the black went off at a trot for the house. 'Three men on each side to hold the canvas. He'll ride easily enough then.'

'Capital!' said the doctor; and he stood looking on as the young lieutenant was tenderly lifted out of the boat and placed upon the spread-out sail where it had been stretched upon the sands.

'Now, my lads, lift—all together,' said Manton. 'Keep step. Go slowly.—No, no, my lad,' he continued, as he bent down; 'take hold this way. That's right. Now together. Lift. Forward.—That sand glows like fire, doctor,' he added. 'Seemed quite to scorch my face.'

'Why, Manton, man—what is it? Hold up!'

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'Yes,' said the young man thickly, 'sand—glows—I—what?—my head—feels'—

He made a sudden snatch at vacancy, reeled, and was saved from falling by the surgeon lowering him down on a patch of green growth just beyond the sand.

'Is he ill too, sir?' said one of the men respectfully, for they had halted as soon as they saw their officer down.

'Ill too, my lads,' said the surgeon bitterly. 'Struck down. We cannot leave him here till we get the other up.'

'No, sir,' said the man; 'we can take him too.'

'Impossible.'

'Not it, sir, if we lay 'em crostways. There's three on us to each; and if we says we will, we will; eh, messmets?'

'Ay, ay,' came in a low deep growl, full of willingness to help; and a few minutes after they were going slowly up toward the house with their double load; but it was lightened before they were half-way there, for the messenger came back with another stalwart black, the negroes each seizing a side of the sail; and a few minutes later they reached the shade of the broad veranda, and then bore the two sick men into the dark, cool hall, a couple of elderly black women coming forward to meet them, but only to stop as Renée and Josephine stepped out from one of the side-rooms.

The doctor started, and took off his hat.

'I beg pardon,' he stammered; 'I was not aware.'

'The room is ready,' said Renée.

'Thank you, my dear young lady, thank you; but, unfortunately, another of our officers has been taken ill on the road.'

'Another room shall be prepared directly,' said Renée quietly. 'Josee, dear, will you ask?—'

She did not finish her sentence, being struck by her companion's manner, for Josephine had snatched a vessel of cold water from a table in the hall, soaked her handkerchief therein, and was bending down now over Manton, with a look in her eyes entirely fresh. But the next minute she seemed to realise what was required, and hurried away to see to the preparation of another room.

'Humph!' muttered the doctor; 'he said he had good nurses up at the house. If I were down, and had such nurses as these, I should never want to get well.—Eh? I beg your pardon,' he added with some confusion, for Renée had spoken.

'I said, would you tell your men to carry the gentlemen to their rooms?'

'Yes, yes; thank you. Of course,' cried the doctor.—'Now, my lads, carefully. One at a time.'

'Hah!' he muttered, half an hour later, as he looked down at his patients in their tastefully arranged, well-ventilated bedrooms. 'Very nice. Ten times the chance of getting better; but—but—Oh, dear me! I'm rather afraid of this arrangement turning out all wrong.'

CHAPTER V.

A ship is always called 'she,' and there are plenty of unkind misogynists who sneeringly say it is because a vessel is as capricious as a woman.

Certainly the sloop of war wedged in the coral rock a quarter of a mile from the shore was capricious enough. Everything had been done in the way of lightening her; the crew and their black auxiliaries had tramped and danced from side to side, and the two captains stood together one glorious evening gazing at each other in despair. They had become very friendly; for Captain Greville, in spite of his long absence from the sea, had proved himself to be a ripe sailor; and Captain Lance had soon thrown aside all punctilio, and gladly availed himself of plenty of sound advice.

'No, sir,' said Greville, 'I can do no more. I am at my wits' end. It is piteous, though. Such a fine vessel and quite uninjured. Lance, I'm sorry for you.'

'It's maddening,' said the latter. 'Wrecked my ship in a calm. They'll never give me another.'

'No; I'm afraid not,' said Greville. 'You'll have to do as I do: turn planter.'

'If we could only have got an anchor down, and the capstan manned.'

'Yes. But impossible; there are goodness knows how many hundred fathoms below us here. We ought to have got her off. The weather, too, has been perfect. Give the men a rest for a few hours, and let's see if we cannot hit out some other plan.—Here; I have it. Let's get the guns aboard again all aft, and fire a salvo. That might start her, and—Hurrah! Cheer, my lads, cheer!'

The men responded with a wild shout, in which the blacks took part, for, as the two captains were speaking, the swell, which had for days past been rolling in so gently, pressed slowly and heavily against the stern of the ship, and seemed to glide under her; she careened over a little to starboard, and then lifted and slowly drifted off into deep water, her masts describing an arc across the sky.

The next moment the two officers had grasped hands.

'Greville,' said Captain Lance, in a voice full of emotion, 'you have saved me, my ship, and my future prospects as an officer. Now, then, what is to be done?'

'Get your guns and stores on board, man,' said Greville bluntly.

'Of course, but I mean about you. Shall you claim salvage?'

'Of course not.'

'Then the government must'—

'Leave me alone,' said Greville interrupting. 'What! do you want them to give me a command?'

'Yes: why not?'

'No: that's all over. I'm afraid I was not a good officer. My fate went another way. I'm happy enough here with my two dear girls and my black people.'

'Yes, but you must have some reward.'

'Give it me then—the thanks of a brother-officer.'

'You've had that from the first. But your men?'

'My blacks? Get the work done, man; and then rig up an awning all over the deck, give them a hearty meal, and then make the fiddler strike up, and let them dance and sing. I'll

give your boys a treat ashore.—There, get your boats out and sound for an anchorage. You'll get one under the shelter of that headland. I'm as glad as an old sailor can be who has had the pleasure of saving one of the king's ships.'

That night *The Queen* lay snugly at anchor; and the next morning the boats began going to and fro to embark guns, ammunition, and stores once more. Then in due course followed the entertainments to the blacks and the sailors, and the announcement that the ship would continue her journey farther south.

Captain Greville was on board on the eve previous to their setting sail, when the doctor came up to make his report after being ashore.

'Well,' said the captain; 'how are your patients?'

'The two lads who were hurt by the slipping of that gun are getting on well. They are coming aboard to-night as soon as it's a bit cooler.'

'Yes; but Manton and Burns?' said Captain Lance impatiently.

'They are getting better. The crisis is past, and it is only a question of nursing now.'

'That's right,' said the captain; and Greville raised his brows and looked sharply from one to the other. 'Take the gig to-night and some bedding, and superintend the poor fellows being brought aboard.'

'What for?' said Greville bluntly. 'Do you want to begin your voyage with a couple of funerals at sea?'

'My dear sir!'

'Well, I'm right,' said Greville. 'The poor fellows are mere shadows. It would kill them if they were moved.—Wouldn't it, doctor?'

'In a few hours,' said the doctor decisively.

'Tut—tut—tut—tut!' ejaculated Captain Lance. 'What am I to do? I can't sail without my officers.'

'You would have to if they died,' said Greville. 'There; go on, and call for them as you come back from the south. Going right down to the Falklands, aren't you?'

'Yes; but those two poor lads!'

'They'll be all right. I think we can nurse them back to health.'

'But it is not fair to leave them on your hands, Greville.'

'Nonsense! Then I'll keep account of the cost, and send you in a bill.'

'You will?' cried Captain Lance eagerly.

'No; I won't, man. Hang it all! I thought we two were getting to be quite friends.'

'And so we are,' cried Captain Lance.—'But, doctor, what do you say?'

'That it is their only chance of life.'

'And about medical assistance? I can't leave you.'

'Bah!' said the doctor shortly. 'They don't want me.'

No one noticed his peculiar intonation, and matters were arranged so that the sick men should stay.

Next morning, as John Manton lay on his couch in the shaded room, he heard the gun fired soon after the captain and his brother-officers had been to say farewell.

'Look out, nurse,' he said to the ugly black

woman seated near his head; and his voice sounded very weak and strange.

'S, massah,' said the woman; and she went to the window. 'All de big white sail hang down, and de ship go sail along, and de boys shout.'

'Ah!' sighed Manton; 'and I am so weak. Go and tell Mr Burns that the ship has sailed, and that we are left behind—perhaps to die,' he added to himself.

The woman went into the adjoining room, and returned at the end of a minute.

'Why have you been so long?' said Manton, in a querulous whisper.

'Massah Burn say um want lilly drink o' water, sah.'

'Well?'

'An' I give um lil drop o' coolum drink.'

'Yes, yes; but did you tell him the ship had sailed?'

'S, massah.'

'And what did he say?'

'Say noting, massah. Can't say. All so weak. Only make lil whisper.'

'Well, you heard him?' said Manton feebly.

'Oh yes, massah; but massah no talk so much. Not good for um head.'

'But tell me what he said, and I will not speak.'

'Massah Burn whisper very small 'deed, and um say close in my ear, when I tell um ship sail away: "Berry good job too."'

CHAPTER VI.

Breakfast-time at the plantation, and Josephine busy in front of a glass, pinning a brilliant scarlet flower just at the side of her glossy black hair. She was very simply dressed in flowing creamy drapery, which showed her lithe figure to perfection.

'How late she is!' muttered the girl, as she glanced at her handsome face, and a faint tinge, the result of her satisfaction, sprang to her warmly hued cheeks.

At that moment, while her back was turned, Renée entered, and stopped short, smilingly watching as she saw how her companion was engaged.

'Why, Josee,' she cried, 'down so soon!'

'Yes, of course,' cried the girl. 'Have you not always been scolding me for being late?'

'Morning, girls,' said Captain Greville, entering through the French window. 'That's right: I want my breakfast.'

He kissed them both tenderly, Josephine last, and holding her with one arm as he patted her cheek.

'That's right, my dear,' he said. 'Glad to see you look so much brighter. You quite fidgeted me a little while ago. I was afraid you were going to be ill.'

'It was very hot then,' she said hurriedly.

'Nay, it was unusually cool,' said the captain, laughing. 'Why, girls, I must take you to the old country some day, and let you see really cold weather with ice and snow.'

He took his seat at the table, and noticed that his adopted child was as attentive to his wants as Renée.

'What is the news about the patients?' he said.

'Aunt 'Miramis says they have both had an excellent night,' said Josee eagerly.

'You have seen her this morning?'

'Yes, I just saw her and asked,' said Josephine quickly.—'Give me some more coffee, Renée, dear.—Papa, you are not making a good breakfast.'

'Oh yes, I am, child.—Well, that's good news about the sailor boys. I want to have them fit for service by the time *The Queen* comes back. 'Miramis is an excellent nurse, but somehow she is a woman I rather mistrust.'

'But she is very good and kind,' cried Josephine quickly. 'It is her manner that is against her.'

'I do not mind her manner,' said Renée quietly. 'She always seems to me insincere.'

'Ah well, never mind,' said the captain, 'so long as she does her duty.'

He took out a letter which had reached him a day or two before, and began reading it as he sipped his coffee. It was for the third or fourth time, for letters were rarities in those days at such an out-of-the-way island; and as he read, the girls kept silence, only exchanging glances twice, when Josephine looked at Renée furtively, and then flushed as if in resentment at being watched. On the second occasion, she turned away angrily, and Renée seemed pained, gazing at her adopted sister appealingly, and then sighing; and her thoughtful young face grew troubled, as she saw how Josephine kept her eyes averted.

As soon as the breakfast was over, the latter left the table and went out into the garden.

Directly they were alone, Greville said quietly: 'You have noticed how Josee has altered during the last week or two?'

'Oh yes, papa, and it has troubled me.'

'Troubled? Because she seems so animated and gay?'

'Yes, dear.'

'Oh, nonsense, child! *Femme souvent varie*. You are as changeable as she is. I am glad to see it.—Well, this will not do. I must get in the saddle and ride round before the sun gets too hot. I'll go up and see the sailors, though. I think I shall have them down and out in the garden.'

'Yes, papa,' said Renée, with rather a troubled air.

'Yes, my dear, I shall lock up the medicine chest now, and prescribe fresh air. Lucky for them I'm such a quack. One can't go on doctoring one's people all these years without knowing a little about our ailments. I did save your life, pet.'

'Yes, dear,' said Renée, clinging to him; 'but I never knew how bad I was.'

'No, I suppose not. And then you responded by saving mine.'

'Oh no, papa.'

'But I say, oh yes.—Well, I'll go up now.'

The captain went up to Burns's room to find that gentleman carrying on a conversation with his nurse; and drawing back unseen, he went into the next room, and then stopped short in astonishment.

'Josee, my child!' he exclaimed.

'Yes, papa dear, I have just brought Mr Manton

a bunch of these fresh flowers,' said the girl hastily.

'Yes, Captain Greville,' said Manton from the couch upon which he lay looking very white and thin. 'I don't know how I am ever to express my thanks for all the kindness I receive here.—Thank you very much for the flowers, Miss Maine. 'Miramis shall put them in water. I never knew how much pleasure flowers could give till I was sick like this.'

'Oh, it is nothing,' said the girl hastily, and she hurried away.

Greville's brow cleared as Josephine left the room, and he drew a chair to the side of the couch.

'Well, patient,' he said, 'how are you? Come,' he continued, laying his hand upon Manton's forehead, 'pleasantly cool. No headache?'

'Oh no, sir; only so dreadfully weak.'

'We'll soon get over that. You shall have help. Two of the boys shall carry you, and we'll have you down in the garden every day.'

'Ah!' exclaimed Manton, flushing. 'When shall we begin?'

'This morning—almost directly. I'll go and see my other patient, and then have arrangements made, and easy-chairs placed under the big ceiba.' Then, nodding pleasantly, he strode toward the other room.

'Shan't find Renée supplying flowers there, shall I?' he thought. 'No: rubbish! Only an impulsive girl's desire to show kindness.'

'Well, patient,' he said, rather boisterously, as he entered Burns's room, to find that the lady in attendance was the black woman Semiramis—'well, patient, how are you?'

'Well, doctor, how am I?' said the young man, holding out his hand.

'Him berry bad, sah, and no get bit better,' said the woman volubly. 'Um no take notice what nurse say. Um do all as um like, and 'Miramis no use here 'tall a 'tall.'

'Oh yes, you are, old lady,' cried Burns; 'only you do want to coddle a man up rather too much.—I say, Captain Greville, it's very hard work lying here. When can you give me leave to go ashore—I mean, down below?'

'This morning,' said Greville, smiling.

'Then I shall be well in a week. I'm better already with the thoughts of it. But is old Manton coming too?'

'Yes: you shall both be carried down.'

'Here, 'Miramis, bring your stuff. I'll take it or anything else now.—Why, my dear host and doctor, this news is the best medicine I have swallowed yet.'

'I'm glad of it, my lad,' said Greville, smiling at the young man's light-hearted way.

'Thank ye; but, I say—you are too good to us: taking all this interest in a couple of strangers.'

'Oh no! not strangers,' said Greville, smiling. 'I have been a planter all these years; but I am still a sailor at heart, and your coming brought back the days when I was a frank young lieutenant like you, with plenty of the middies' berth clinging to me. I'm only too glad to welcome a couple of honourable English gentlemen to my house; so be quite at ease. My servants are yours for the time you are here. I only ask one favour of you.'

'Yes, sir. What is that?'

'Get well as soon as you can—not that I want you to go, but because I would rather have hale guests than sick.'

LA MALMAISON.

O'er all there hung a shadow and a fear;
A sense of mystery the spirit haunted.

VERY few tourists visit the dismantled Château and forsaken Park where, more than seventy years ago, the Empress Joséphine ended her eventful life, and where but a few years earlier Napoleon spent the only happy days of his restless existence. A few Americans annually cross the weed-covered court, a much larger number of Parisian *bourgeois* picnic-makers duly spend their summer Sunday afternoons in making merry over bread and wine on the mossy turf of the once well-trimmed lawns; but for the rest, the bats and the moles share the property with the speculative builder, whose myrmidons make the overhanging woods resound with hideous and discordant clamour of axe and hammer.

Guide-books rarely mention Malmaison. Even Murray and Baedeker each devote to it but a very small space, almost, one would think, as if by accident. For a few moments, then, and before the shadows of oblivion fall over the château, and while yet enough remains of the Park to make it still worth a pilgrimage, let us draw a picture of what it once was and what it now is.

The brightest days of Malmaison were between 1798 and 1810. In the former year the property was secured to Joséphine, wife of Napoleon Bonaparte, in her own right. Previous to this period, it had successively belonged to the Crown, and a private individual named Lécontenx, who had considerably enlarged the domain, and from whom it was purchased for one hundred and sixty thousand francs by Madame Bonaparte. It was destined to see the rise and fall of the great General, and played a more conspicuous part in his career than either St Cloud, Compiègne, Fontainebleau, or the Tuileries, all of which are more or less associated with his name. It was in the silence of the dark woods of Malmaison, far removed from court and courtiers, and so unsuggestive of either, that the greatest campaigns of Napoleon were planned. It was during his residence here that the Directory was overthrown and he became First Consul; and it was Malmaison that witnessed the sad scenes, when, from an unworthy ambition, the First Consul decided to annul the marriage with his faithful wife Joséphine, and to marry the almost child-wife, Maria Louisa of Austria.

The play-hours of the great Napoleon, few as they were, may be said to have been spent only at Malmaison. He was intensely fond of its retirement, and his tastes were singularly simple and home-like, when away from the grim work of conquest. Joséphine, as the wife of the First Consul, was not an accomplished scholar in the etiquette of that position, much less in that of an imperial court. She was no artist; she was no musician. Her usual occupation consisted of crewel-work for covering her furniture; and in this she enlisted the services of the ladies

who visited her. Napoleon—until persuaded by others that his wife was not capable of fulfilling the duties of Empress—was himself delighted with this simplicity. He would sit by the hour in her society in those long evenings at Malmaison, attracted, as were all others, by a sweetness and quiet dignity such as few women of the 'Directoire' period possessed. She was fond of and excelled in 'tric-trac' (backgammon), and Napoleon would often join in the play with her. 'While at Malmaison,' his secretary records, 'Napoleon was a veritable father in the midst of his family circle. His abnegation of grandeur, his simple and unaffected manner, and the gracious familiarity of Madame Bonaparte, formed an inexpressible charm. The Premier Consul would enjoy being read to, though he rarely read himself. The one thing to which he would never listen was poetry. "It is a poor science," said he.'

Joséphine's favourite employment—it was more than a diversion—was horticulture. She was not in any sense a scientist. She loved nature for Nature's sake, and her hot-houses and gardens were her long and lasting delight. In those days, such pleasures were costly; and more than once after her divorce, complaints were made that she overdrew her rather large annuity. Napoleon was himself liberal, but the State interfered, and on one occasion he was compelled to delegate a minister to warn her of the consequences of her horticultural extravagance.

The character of this beautiful woman was beyond all praise. Napoleon's excessive ambition was the main source of all the evils associated with his name. He was not vicious, like some of the kings of France in the two previous centuries. Joséphine had but to contend with an insatiable craze for power in her leonine husband. While in her presence, the Premier Consul was advised and directed by her, unconsciously to himself. But when away on his campaigns, his instincts prevailed. On one of his journeys to Italy, Joséphine showed her wisdom in not leaving him. She accompanied him through day and night stages the whole way, enduring with heroic patience and fortitude privations that only old soldiers were used to. Her whole life was one long sacrifice, one noble record of self-abnegation.

The years from 1810 to 1814 were sad and mournful. They were associated wholly with the enforced retirement of Joséphine, and ended with her premature death. From the moment that Napoleon quitted his noble wife, the tide of his prosperity began to ebb. Great victories were discounted by great disasters, until the failure of his Russian campaign compelled his abdication at Fontainebleau on the 4th of April 1814, exactly four years after his marriage with Maria Louisa. For ten months during his exile in Elba, France loses his figure; and again he is hailed as Emperor in the reign of the Hundred Days. On the disaster at Waterloo, he once more finds a refuge at Malmaison, wifeless and almost friendless. His faithful consort Joséphine, as constant when his divorced as when his acknowledged wife, had passed away just a year before this return. The Empress Maria Louisa had already gone back to her father's court at Vienna, a voluntary hostage of the Allies, where her affec-

tion for Napoleon, if she possessed any, was being rapidly transferred to a certain Count Nipperg, whosemorganatic wife she afterwards became. Her little son, 'le Roi de Rome,' subsequently 'Duc de Reichstadt,' had also been transferred to the care of his Austrian grandfather.

These last few days of Napoleon at Malmaison will ever remain the most marked in its history. Deeply attached to his step-children—the offspring of Joséphine by her first marriage—as much for their mother's sake as for their own intrinsic worth, he found in Hortense Beauharnais the only woman left to console him in the time of his trouble. She herself was fresh in her grief at the loss of her beloved mother; he, in turmoil of soul at the loss of everything—crown, power, and even the affections of the people. His one-time traitor, Fouché, had usurped authority, or obtained it by foul means, and had found his opportunity of revenge by refusing to publish a proclamation in the *Moniteur* which Napoleon had addressed to the army! Nemesis was indeed on his footsteps, her very shadow thrown over all. The promptitude which characterised the General's action in critical moments forsook him now; but Malmaison, hallowed by the sanctified memory of Joséphine, alone seemed to soothe his crushed and wounded spirit.

His secretary, Baron Minéval, records this period in these words: 'I see before me Malmaison, where had shone the aurora of his greatness, and which to him must have recalled the sweetest and bitterest of remembrances. I cannot approach this château without emotion: I again see him clothed with power, and crowned with an aureole of a great personal glory, passing the time in this delightful retreat, with charming society, the most amiable and the best of women—the embodiments of every grace; surrounded by the members of his family and some faithful servants, and partaking in their joys; seeking, among the rich foliage of the gardens and park, relaxation from work; or scattering broadcast the treasures of his fertile imagination in easy converse, sometimes serious, sometimes joyful, but always full of original and profound thoughts. He had a select table, but the salon was open to all. The venerable Archbishop was received with a deference due to his sacred calling, and treated with filial affection. Kings and princes came to salute his Imperial Majesty. The rupture of a union formed on mutual affection, and dissolved entirely through political reasons, had estranged Napoleon from Malmaison, which in days gone by had been the scene of confidences the most solemn and of affections the most pure, and had thrown him into a new theatre of pompous courts which left little but bitter chagrin. A premature death had taken away the Empress, who was so great an ornament, just at the moment when the crown had fallen from her consort's head. Napoleon returned to bid a last adieu to the tomb of his first—and the only—wife of his choice. He was received in his adversity by his adopted daughter, Queen Hortense, whose generous and filial care consoled his troubled days. I see before me the faithful courtiers prepared to run all chances of his misfortune even now for their illustrious chief. The Duke of Rovigo, energetic and devoted, whose personal adhesion to Napoleon had always

been so useful; General Bertrand and his wife, truest in adversity; Monsieur and Madame de Montholon, who, like General Bertrand, voluntarily shared in his exile; Gourgaud, chivalrous and imaginative; Las Cases and his little son; and Marchand, whose only recompense was the title he received of "friend of Napoleon."

On the 29th of June 1815, the Prussians closed round Argenteuil and Châton, the neighbouring villages to Reuil, near to which is situated Malmaison. Not a moment more could be left to chance. At half-past five in the evening General Becker presented himself before the ex-emperor: 'Sire, all is ready.' The great man replied not a word. He crossed the Hall into the Park, weeping. He bade adieu to all present. His beloved Hortense he tenderly embraced; then, with one last look at the château and all its surroundings, silently waved a last farewell. Alone he crossed the Park to a retired gate, where, entering a carriage, he directed his journey towards Rochefort, purposing from that seaport to take ship for the United States; but instead of this, sixteen days later he surrendered himself to Captain Maitland of the *Bellerophon*, claiming, as a last chance, the protection of British laws! A few days after, Malmaison was possessed by the allied armies.

The rest of its history is brief and decadent. On the Restoration, Prince Eugène, the brother of and on behalf of Queen Hortense, resold much of the Park and most of the pictures, while the remainder were sent to his seat at Munich, a few only of the relics finding their way to the museums of Versailles or the Louvre. In 1826 a Swedish banker bought the property, and held it until his death in 1842. It was then purchased by Maria Christina, and occupied by her for a short time upon her abdication of the Regency of Spain; and subsequently was sold by her to Napoleon III., who made it a sort of show-place until 1870. During the siege of Paris, the shells from Mont Valerien directed to the outposts of the German army encamped round Bongival, caused it some damage.

And what is left to-day to remind us of the past? Reuil is a large village, containing a handsome *mairie*, cavalry barracks, and numerous appendages to the army service. The village square encloses the church, with its tall and graceful spire, surmounted by an exceptionally long vane, on which Chanticleer, the winged symbol of Gaul, presides. In the church itself, built by Lacroix, by order of Napoleon III., is much to remind one of the Bonaparte family. Here is preserved, untouched by the hands of violence, all that was most prized by the last Emperor—the tomb of his mother Hortense, and of her mother the Empress Joséphine. The style of the church is mixed; externally not pleasing. The interior is better harmonised. On the right of the high altar is the tomb of Joséphine, the work of Gilet and Dubuc, and over it an exquisite statue by Cartélier. The Empress is represented kneeling. Beneath is the simple inscription, 'A JOSÉPHINE, EUGÈNE et HORTENSE, 1825.' At right angles with this tomb, and facing the nave, is that of the father of the Empress, the Count Tascher de la Pagerie; while opposite, and facing the tomb of Joséphine, on the left of the altar, is a monumental group

erected to the memory of Queen Hortense by her son, Louis Napoleon. It is the work of Bartolini. The Queen kneels on a cushion, her guardian angel hovering over her. Beneath is inscribed, 'LA REINE HORTENSE, son fils NAPOLEON III.' Below this group of statuary, and reached by a door and a flight of steps, is the actual tomb of Hortense, situated in a small chamber, and lit with a large bronze lamp. It is in beautiful preservation, only crumbling slightly in one or two places. We asked the old verger if any of the members of the family ever came to visit it and see to repairs. The answer was sadly given that they *could* not! The inscription on the tomb is a long one, and need not be here quoted, as it is but a list of titles and family history. Hortense Beauharnais was married on the 3d of March 1802 to Louis Napoleon, king of Holland, and died at his castle of Arenenberg, October 5, 1837. This made her also sister-in-law, as she was previously step-daughter, to Napoleon I.

But the church contains other remembrances. The bas-relief in bronze of Christ at the Tomb, removed from the little chapel of Malmaison, forms the façade of the high altar. And an oak-carved chair, presented by Louis Napoleon, on which is inscribed the number of the 'plébiscite' calling him from Republican to Imperial power—7,500,000.—But more artistically valuable and beautiful is the organ, a perfect piece of carving, on which appear these words in gold letters: 'Ouvrage du Sculpteur Florentin Baccio d'Agnolo, exécuté à la fin du XV^e S. pour l'église Sainte Marie Nouvelle de Florence, est un don de Napoleon III. (1863).'

The roads in the old quarters of the village are mostly lime avenues, the trees being generally trimmed in two sides of a square, so that the branches from either line of trees almost meet in the centre, and form a protection from sun and rain alike for the roadway, even more than the path. The same clear and distinct iron plates bearing the name of the avenue—or 'Boulevard,' as it is here written—are still affixed to the walls, as in the days of Louis Philippe, if not earlier. Taking a succession of these roads from the square, is reached one at right angles—the 'Avenue de la Malmaison,' in these October days resplendent in the richest tints of green and gold, for the trees on either side are planes, far more lovely in autumn than at any other period of the year. At the upper extremity and termination of the avenue are three gates: those to the left lead to private property; those in front to the Park only; while those on the right open directly on the 'cour d'honneur' of the château. The gates are fastened, and on a tattered poster affixed to a board, one reads: 'Adjudication en la Chambre de Notaire de Paris sise Place du Châtelet, par de Ministre M. Dufoure, l'un deux, le Mardi, 5 Juin 1888, à midi, du Château historique de la Malmaison,' &c. And then over the lower part of this condemnatory notice, which is by it half obliterated, is another: 'Le bureau de Ventes des Terraines de la Malmaison est dans le Château.'

Rattling the chains that held the rusting gates together, brought out on our visit a girl, not the neat little daughter of the *conciERGE* to a mansion, but the offspring of the broker's man, the man, in fact, in possession. She rather reluctantly un-

fastened the gates, assisted by that key which generally proves irresistible, and we crossed the weed-covered court. The château lies immediately in front, not where a similar building in England would have been placed, among the woods or more retired parts of the Park. A few straggling creepers hang over the walls of the garden adjoining; but not a leaf is found to cover the nakedness of the building itself, which, being architecturally unpicturesque, sorely stands in need of Nature's garb of green. By a side-door we entered. Desolation everywhere! Beyond a coverless billiard table, no furniture visible. The plaster falling from the ceiling, the few remaining oak panels half torn from the walls, and even the chapel outraged and in dismal ruins. On the upper floors, if anything, the state of things was worse. On the broken doors are written military orders, for during a period of five years subsequent to the war, the château was converted into barracks. The bedroom of Napoleon I. is a small apartment seventeen feet square. The view from it is not extensive, for the elevation is low, and surrounded by the well-timbered Park. One cedar of Lebanon stands guard on the lawn beneath the windows. Adjoining this room, and connected by an antechamber, is the bedroom of Joséphine. It is oval. The decorations have all, save the ceiling, vanished. There, in distemper, appear the remains of what was once a blue sky. The walls of the château are unusually free from the pencilled autographs of the great unknown, or the senseless comments of ignorant tourists; but here we found one and one only. It ran thus: 'Dieu permettez qu'un Napoleon vienne au plutôt restaurer cette maison que des . . . laissent tomber en ruine.'

We walked through the scores of tiny apartments, less even in dimension than those of the 'Triansons,' and, though the girl objected, we mounted to the topmost story, in the hope of obtaining a view over the Park. In this we were disappointed, for the windows were skylights, and only used by the bats. One of these little brethren we dislodged, and, as he seemed in a state of semi-torpor, placed him on a window ledge where the warm October sun might restore his vitality. There were scores of these little creatures suspended from the roof, and, from what we could see, they had not received a visitor for many a long day.

We descended to the Park, but were not allowed to enter the gardens, where the trees were mostly planted by Joséphine; for they have long since passed into private hands. That part of the estate as yet unabsorbed by the tasteless builder is still beautiful, and the 'Temple de l'Amour,' where Napoleon is said to have planned many of his campaigns, yet exists, and a tiny cascade in front of it ever musically falling into a pool beneath. There is still left sufficient to make a charming residence for some appreciative purchaser, who need not be excessively wealthy to maintain it.

But what is more delightful than the Park, are the overhanging woods, through which wind the greenest of green lanes. The beech-trees—far from common in Seine-et-Oise—are here growing in perfection; and oaks, conifers, birch and mountain-ash reach an unusual size. The

bridle-roads are deep in moss, over which trail the wild strawberry and bramble, whose leaves are as brilliant in decay as those of the Virginian creeper. The magpie screams as he settles on the highest branches of the elms; the large migratory locust and the dragon-flies flit over the green sward, and the grasshoppers chirp around one's feet. All else is silence—the silence of a dead and almost forgotten past!

NICKEL AND NICKEL-STEEL.

NICKEL has of late come into considerable prominence, not so much through its own intrinsic qualities, as through the alloy it is capable of forming with the important material, steel. Nickel-steel has for some little time past occupied the close attention of our most eminent metallurgists; and whilst already occupying a recognised position in applied science, both scientifically and commercially, bids fair to develop into considerable importance, and to provide all those engaged in constructional work of every class with a material of very superior strength, elasticity, and durability. In view of the importance attaching to nickel-steel, we now purpose laying before our readers some brief account of nickel itself; and then to conclude our remarks with some notice of the new alloy formed with steel.

So far back as 1751, nickel was discovered by Cronstedt, who, afterwards finding it largely in 'Kupfer-nickel,' gave it the name it now bears, Kupfer-nickel, or 'Goblin Copper,' being a term of contempt applied by miners to a certain class of copper ore which is 'tricky'—namely, promising, but not yielding copper. It is an interesting fact in connection with nickel that it is contained in the sun's atmosphere and is found in all meteoric iron.

Nickel ores are in general complex mixtures, being associated with one or more foreign metallic ores. Rich oxidised nickel ore was discovered in New Caledonia in 1875, and has since been imported into Europe in yearly increasing quantities. These deposits are free from arsenic, and find their way principally to France. Nickel is found in Canada around Lake Huron; and the Sudbury deposits, covering only thirteen thousand acres, are estimated to contain six hundred and fifty million tons of the ore; whilst Dr Bell, the Assistant-director of the Geological Survey of Canada, speaking of the Huronian belt, which stretches for more than six hundred miles east and west, gives it as his opinion that the search for nickel throughout that promising region is only in its infancy.

Turning now to the properties of nickel, we find it attracted by the magnet, and possessing specific gravities of 8·3 and 8·7 for ingot and forged metal respectively. Nickel can be welded at a red heat like wrought-iron, and does not tarnish even on long exposure to air; water has no action upon it and even such fumes as those of sulphuretted hydrogen fail to blacken it. A well-known alloy of nickel—German silver—is composed of three parts of copper to one part of zinc and one of nickel; whilst in the United States, in Belgium, and in Germany, an alloy of one part of nickel to three parts of copper is used for minor coins.

Passing now to consider the alloy made by nickel with steel, one of the first important properties obtained is that of non-corrodibility. It is well known that steel is more liable to rust than iron, such fact forming a drawback to its substitution for that metal; and the immunity from corrosion enjoyed by steels rich in nickel is a point of considerable interest; whilst even steel poor in nickel is found more proof against rust than that in whose composition nickel does not enter.

The superior strength obtainable from nickel-steel will readily suggest the advantages derivable from its employment: smaller scantlings and thinner plates can be employed; and saving in weight will add gracefulness and lightness to the structures under fabrication. Assuming the strength of iron at about twenty tons per square inch, and that of the ordinary mild steel of commerce at about thirty tons per square inch, there seems every indication that nickel-steel can be produced reliable and satisfactory in every respect with a strength of forty tons per square inch, or with additional strength as compared with mild steel and iron in the ratios of four to three, and two to one.

Already in the manufacture of armour-plates nickel-steel has made its mark, and sufficient has been said to demonstrate its superior qualifications for every class of work the engineer, be he civil or mechanical, or the architect may be called upon to design.

Into the question of cost it is foreign to our purpose to enter; but all experience has shown a gradual cheapening in price of production as a material becomes in demand; this and the discovery of new sources of nickel cannot fail to have a beneficial effect on this new alloy, which seems destined at no distant date to play an important part in the metallurgical world.

LAST YEAR'S LEAVES.

OVER sullen ribs of snow,
And the bitter, brown March grass,
As the eager east winds blow,
Before them as they pass,
In a swirl the dead leaves go.

Vagrant ghosts of last year's leaves
Hurried hither—hurried thither;
There were swallows in my eaves
When I watched them wane and wither,
And my fields were full of sheaves.

I have seen the uplands bare,
And the sleet i' the swallow's nest;
I have closed against Despair
The doorway of my breast,
With a hasp to hold him there.

But the sere leaves wander yet
From a year for ever fled,
Like the sleepless, vain regret
For the buried and the dead,
That my heart will *not* forget.

S. REID.

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THE PRINCE'S PLUMES.

THE three traditional ostrich feathers which form the crest of the Prince of Wales, and the motto which invariably accompanies them, are more familiar to an Englishman than any other heraldic insignia, except it be the lion and unicorn supporting the arms of the sovereign, or the well-known dagger in London City shield.

The popular account of the adoption of the feathers by the eldest sons of the English kings as their own peculiar badge is, that the Black Prince, son of Edward III., conquered the original wearer of the crest, John of Luxembourg, king of Bohemia, at the field of Crécy, and ever afterwards wore the plumes in commemoration of the battle. 'The fate of the king of Bohemia,' says Hume, 'was remarkable. He was blind from age; but being resolved to hazard his person and set an example to others, he ordered the reins of his bridle to be tied on each side to two gentlemen of his train; and his dead body and those of his attendants were afterwards found among the slain, with their horses standing by them in that situation. It is said that the crest of the king of Bohemia was three ostrich feathers, and his motto, "Ich Dien," I serve, which the Prince of Wales and his successors adopted in memorial of the great victory.'

Modern research has played havoc with many a cherished legend, one after another of which have yielded to the critical examination of historical records. The general opinion now is that the badge, so far from being acquired on the battlefield, was adopted by the Black Prince and his successors as part of the armorial bearings of the various continental families with whom they were connected by descent. There is no contemporary evidence in support of the popular history of the badge, and the earliest writer who refers to it is Camden, whose *Remains* were published in the time of Elizabeth, more than two centuries after the battle. He says: 'The victorious Black Prince, his son, used sometimes one feather, sometimes three, in token of his speedy execu-

tion in all his services, as the posts in the Roman times were *pterophori*, and wore feathers to signify their flying post-haste. But the tradition is that he wore them at the battle of Poitiers, whereupon he adjoined this old English word, "Ic Den;" that is, I serve, according to that of the apostle, "the heir, while he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant." The learned antiquary even appears to be uncertain whether the battle he refers to was Crécy or Poitiers, for in the next edition of his work he says, 'he won them at the battle of Crécy from John, king of Bohemia.' It is also to be observed, unfortunately for the legend, that the crest of the Bohemian king was not a plume of ostrich feathers, but two wings of a vulture, '*semée*, of linden leaves of gold expanded.'

It is most probable that the badge was introduced into England by Philippa of Hainault, the consort of Edward III., and mother of the Black Prince. She was descended from the sister of Henry, Count of Luxembourg, an ancestor of John of Bohemia, whose connection with the legend is thus accounted for; and John's son, the Emperor Charles IV., bore an ostrich as his badge; as did his daughter Anne, the first queen of Richard II. The earliest reference to the ostrich feathers in any English record is in an indenture witnessing the delivery of certain articles of plate belonging to the wardrobe of Queen Philippa. Silver basins and ewers are described, enamelled with the arms of France and Hainault quarterly, and particular mention is made of a large dish for the alms of the queen. It was silver-gilt and enamelled on the bottom with a black escutcheon with ostrich feathers. The inference is that, like the arms of Hainault upon other articles of the plate, the ostrich feathers in the sable shield belonged to Queen Philippa, and were borne by her as a badge of her family, or in right of some territories governed by the Princes of her house.

The Black Prince refers to the feathers in his will dated the 7th of June 1376. He gave orders that his body should be buried in the cathedral

at Canterbury, and that twelve baton escutcheons should be placed around his tomb. Each was to be a foot high; in six of them should be 'our entire arms,' and ostrich feathers were to be placed in the others. He directed that upon each of the shields the word 'Houmont' should be placed; and it is very noticeable that the motto 'Ich Dien' does not occur in any part of the will. The Prince desired that an effigy of himself should be placed upon the tomb 'fully armed for war, with our arms quarterly, with our crest of the *Leopard* put under the head of the effigy.' He also ordered that his funeral procession through the streets of Canterbury should be preceded by 'two war-horses, covered with our arms; and two men armed in our arms and in our crests, the one for war, with our entire arms quarterly, and the other for peace, with our badge of the ostrich feathers with our banners of the same suite.' The fact that the Prince twice calls the feathers 'our badge' is peculiarly deserving of attention, and clearly shows that they were not used by him as an armorial ensign, but were wholly unconnected with war, and that the man who carried the feathers at the funeral represented the Prince as equipped for the amusement of the tournament, and not as arrayed in his full panoply of combat. Among various other bequests, the Prince left to the church at Canterbury his 'hangings of ostrich feathers of black tapestry, having a red border with swans for ladies' heads.' Although the Prince did not mention the motto 'Ich Dien' in his will, it is very clear that he sometimes used both it and the word 'Houmont' as an addition to his signature, for upon an extant warrant in the Prince's own hand both mottoes appear.

Rudely engraved representations of feathers appear upon two seals of the Black Prince, and upon one of his father; and the badge in different forms was borne by other sons of Edward III. John of Gaunt and his descendants all used the ostrich feathers; and his arms with three feathers enscrolled on a sable shield were placed in a window of St Paul's Cathedral; while his arms in the cloisters of Canterbury are also surrounded by the same badges. There is no evidence that the feathers were borne by Lionel, the second, or by Richard, the fourth son of Edward III.; but they undoubtedly were by Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester, the youngest son, who used two badges, the feathers and the swan. So far from being confined to the sole use of the Princes of Wales, the feathers were occasionally granted to collateral branches of the Royal House. Richard II., who adopted the white hart as his own badge, granted two ostrich feathers to his cousin, Thomas Mowbray, Earl-marshal, and Duke of Norfolk.

The Princes of the rival Houses of Lancaster and York alike used the feathers. Henry IV. before his accession bore them in a remarkable manner. On each side of his shield is an ostrich feather with four small scrolls, the lowest having the letters so; the next, VE; the third, REY; and the last NE—forming together the word SOVEREYNE; and he continued their use when he came to the throne. One of the dishes at the coronation banquet of Henry VI. was a 'frytoun' garnished with a leopard's head and 'ij estryche

fidus.' The badge appears on the seal of Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond, and mother of Henry VII. Edward, Duke of York, who was killed at the battle of Agincourt in 1415, bore both the feathers and the motto 'Ich Dien.' The seal of Edward V. as Prince of Wales represents the ostrich feathers in a singular manner. The Prince appears on horseback; the shield and the trappings of the horse are charged with three lions *passant*, and a single feather is fixed upon the horse's head; while the ground is bespangled with ostrich feathers and roses with the motto 'Ich Dien.' The horse-trappings of Richard III. were also decorated with the same badge. Henry VIII. bore the feathers as king; and from his time they have been used exclusively by the eldest sons of the reigning sovereigns. Edward VI., who never held the title of Prince of Wales, and was known until the death of his father as Prince Edward, simply bore a plume of feathers within a wreath of roses; and Henry, Prince of Wales, son of James I., sometimes bore the plume as it was used by his predecessors, and sometimes as it is seen at the present time. Since that period the feathers have been borne in the usual manner.

The less known motto 'Houmont' was originally of more importance than 'Ich Dien,' but in later times has been almost forgotten. It is probably founded on old German words variously written 'Hoogh moed,' 'Hoo moed,' or 'Hoogh me,' and is supposed to have related to the mental peculiarities of the first bearer.

There is thus strong reason for believing that the badge and both the mottoes have descended to their present possessors from the old House of Hainault, and that, instead of being trophies of successful war, they have been acquired peacefully by inheritance.

THE IVORY GATE.*

BY WALTER BESANT.

PROLOGUE (continued).

'WELL, mother?' he asked.

His mother sat down. She looked pale and wretched.

'Mother,' cried Hilda, the elder sister. 'Quick! What has happened? What does Mr Dering say?'

'He accuses nobody,' she replied in a hard dry voice. 'But'—

'But what?' asked Hilda.

'He told me everything—everything—and—and— Oh!' She burst into sobs and crying, though she despised women who cry. 'It is terrible—It is terrible—It is incredible. Yet, what can I think? What can any one think? Leave us, Hilda. Leave us, Elsie.' The two girls went out unwillingly. 'Oh! my son—how can I believe it? And yet—on the one hand, a boy of two-and-twenty exposed to all the temptations of town: on the other, an old clerk of fifty years' service and integrity. And when the facts are laid before you both—calmly and coldly—you fly into a rage and run away,

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while Checkley calmly remains to await the inquiry.'

Mrs Arundel had been accustomed all her life to consider Mr Dering as the wisest of men. She felt instinctively that he regarded her son with suspicion: she heard all the facts: she jumped to the conclusion that he was a prodigal and a profligate: that he had fallen into evil ways, and spent money in riotous living: she concluded that he had committed these crimes in order to get more money for more skittles and oranges.

'Athelstan'—she laid her hand upon his arm, but did not dare to lift her eyes and behold that guilty face—'Athelstan—confess—make reparation so far as you can—confess—oh! my son—my son! You will be caught and tried and found guilty, and—oh! I cannot say it—through the notes which you have changed. They are all known and stopped.'

The boy's wrath was now changed to madness.

'You!' he cried. 'You? My own mother? You believe it, no? Oh! we are all going mad together. What? Then I am turned out of this house, as I am turned out of my place. I go, then—I go; and'—here he swore a mighty oath, as strong as anybody out of Spain can make them—'I will never—never come home again till you come yourself to beg forgiveness—you—my own mother!'

Outside, in the hall, his sisters stood, waiting and trembling.

'Athelstan,' cried the elder, 'what, in the name of Heaven, have you done?'

'Go, ask my mother. She will tell you. She knows, it seems, better than I know myself. I am driven away by my own mother. She says that I am guilty of—of—of forgery.'

'If she says so, Athelstan,' his sister replied, coldly, 'she must have her reasons. She would not drive you out of the house for nothing. Don't glare like that. Prove your innocence.'

'What? You, too? Oh! I am driven away by my sisters as well!'

'No, Athelstan—no,' cried Elsie, catching his hand. 'Not both your sisters.'

'My poor child;' he stooped and kissed her. 'They will make you believe what they believe. Good Heavens! They make haste to believe it; they are glad to believe it.'

'No—no. Don't go, Athelstan.' Elsie threw her arms about him. 'Stay, and show that they are wrong. Oh! you are innocent. I will never—never—never believe it.'

He kissed her again, and tore himself away. The street door slammed behind him: they heard his footsteps as he strode away. He had gone.

Then Elsie fell into loud weeping and wailing. But Hilda went to comfort her mother.

'Mother,' she said, 'did he really, really and truly do it?'

'What else can I believe? Either he did it or that old clerk. Where is he?'

'He is gone. He says he will come back when his innocence is proved. Mother, if he is innocent, why does he run away? It's foolish to say that it is because we believe it. I've said nothing except that you couldn't believe it without reasons. Innocent young men don't run away when they are charged with robbery. They stay and fight it out. Athelstan should have stayed.'

Later on, when they were both a little recovered, Hilda tried to consider the subject more calmly. She had not her mother's cleverness, but she was not without parts. The following remarks—made by a girl of eighteen—prove so much.

'Mother,' she said, 'perhaps it is better, so long as this suspicion rests upon him, that he should be away. We shall certainly know where he is: he will want money, and will write for it. If it should prove that somebody else did the thing, we can easily bring him back as a martyr—for my own part I should be so glad that I would willingly beg his pardon on my knees—and of course we could easily get him replaced in the office. If it is proved that he did do it—and that, you think, they will be certain to find out—Mr Dering, for your sake, will be ready to hush it up—perhaps we may get the notes back—he can't have used them all; in any case it will be a great comfort to feel that he is out of the way: a brother convicted—tried in open court—sentenced—oh!' She shuddered. 'We should never get over it: never, never! It would be a most dreadful thing for Elsie and me. As for his going away, if people ask why he is gone and where, we must invent something—we can easily make up a story—hint that he has been wild—there is no disgrace, happily, about a young man being wild—that is the only thing that reconciles one to the horrid selfishness of wild young men—and if, by going away in a pretended rage, Athelstan has really enabled us to escape a horrid scandal—why, mother, in that case—we may confess that the blow has been by Providence most mercifully softened for us—most mercifully. We ought to consider that, mother.'

'Yes, dear, yes. But he is gone. Athelstan is gone. And his future seems ruined. There is no hope for him. I can see no hope whatever. My dear, he was so promising. I thought that all the family influence would be his—we haven't got a single City solicitor in the whole family. I thought that he was so clever and so ambitious and so eager to get on and make money and be a credit to the family. Solicitors do sometimes—especially City solicitors—become so very, very rich; and now it is all gone and done—and nothing left to hope but the miserable wish that there should be no scandal.'

'It is indeed dreadful. But still—consider—no scandal. Mother, I think we should find out, if we can, something about his private life—how he has been living. He has been out a good deal of evenings lately. If there is any—any person—on whom he has been tempted to spend money—if he has been gambling—or betting, or any of the things that I read of—this young lady, thanks to the beneficent assistance of certain works of fiction, was tolerably acquainted with the ways of young men and their temptations—it would be a satisfaction to know it at least.'

The ladies of a family where there is a 'wild' young man do not generally find it easy to get at the facts of his wildness: these remain locked up in the bosoms of his companions. No details could be learned about any wildness—quite the contrary. He seemed, so far as could be learned, to have led a very quiet and regular life. 'But then,' said the philosopher of eighteen, quoting

from a novel, 'men shelter each other. They are all bad together.'

But—no scandal.

Everybody knows that kind of brother or sister by whom all family events are considered with a view to the scandal likely to be caused and the personal injury resulting to himself; or the envy that will follow and the personal advantage accruing from that event. That her brother was perhaps a shameful criminal might be considered by Hilda Arundel later on: at first, she was only capable of perceiving that this horrid fact, unless it could be hidden away and kept secret, might very materially injure herself.

Almost naturally, she folded her hands sweetly and laid her comely head a little on one side—it is an attitude of resignation which may be observed in certain pictures of saints and holy women. Hilda knew many little attitudes. Also, quite naturally, she glanced at a mirror on the wall and observed that her pose was one of sorrow borne with Christian resignation.

We must blame neither Hilda nor her mother. The case as put by Mr Dering in the form of plain fact without any comment, did seem very black indeed against Athelstan. In every family the first feeling in such a case—it is the instinct of self-preservation—is to hush up the thing if possible—to avoid a scandal.

Such a scandal as the prosecution of a brother for forgery—with a verdict of guilty—is a most truly horrible, deplorable, fatal thing. It takes the respectability out of a family perhaps at a critical moment, when the family is just assuming the robes of respectability: it ruins the chances of the girls: it blights the prospects of the boys: it drives away friends: it is a black spot which all the soaps ever advertised could never wash off. Therefore, while the mother hoped, first of all, that the boy would escape the clutch of the law, Hilda was, first of all, grateful that there would be no scandal. Mr Dering would not talk about it. The thing would not interfere with her own prospects. It was sad: it was miserable: but yet—no scandal. With what a deep, deep sigh of satisfaction did the young lady repeat that there would probably be no scandal!

As for Elsie, that child went about for many days with tearful eyes, red cheeks, and a swollen nose. She was rebellious and sharp with her mother. And to her sister she refused to speak. The days went on. They became weeks, months, years. Otherwise they would not have been days. Nothing at all was heard of Athelstan. He sent no letters to any one: he did not even write for money: they knew not where he was or what he was doing. He disappeared. It was understood that there had been wildness.

Now—which was very remarkable—though the forger had had a clear run of three weeks, it could not be discovered that any of the notes had been presented. Perhaps they were sent abroad: yet foreign and colonial banks would know the numbers of stopped notes. And towards the discovery of the forger no further step had been taken. The commissionaire who took the cheque had been, as you have seen, easily found: he said he should know the old gentleman who gave him the forged draft to cash. He said, being again interrogated, that

Checkley was not in the least like that old gentleman. What could be thought, then? Athelstan must have 'made up' as an old man: he was fond of private theatricals: he could make up very well: of course, he had made up. And then, this point being settled, they left off talking about the business.

Other things happened—important things—which made the memory of the prodigal son to wax dim. First of all came Hilda's case. She was a graceful young person, with features of great regularity: her expression was cold, her eyes were hard, and her lips were a little thin, but these things at nineteen are hardly perceived. She was that sort of girl who seems created for the express purpose, first of wearing and beautifying costly raiment, and next of sitting in a splendid vehicle. The finer the dress, the more beautiful she looked. The grander the carriage, the more queenly she seemed. In rags her coldness would be arctic, her hardness would be granitic: in silk and velvet she became a goddess. It was therefore most fitting that she should marry a rich man. Now, to be rich in these days, one must be old. It is the price that one has to pay for wealth. Sometimes one pays the price and gets old, and yet does not get what one has paid for. That seems hardly fair. There was a certain rich man, Mr Dering's younger brother, Sir Samuel Dering, Knight, one of the most substantial City men, a man who had a house in Kensington Palace Gardens, a yacht, a country place in Sussex, and piles of papers in a safe, meaning investments. He was a widower without encumbrance: he was fifty-seven years of age, not yet decayed: he wanted a wife to be the mistress of his house and to look well at his dinner-parties. Of course, when one does want a wife, at any age, one wants her young. Hilda Arundel, his brother's ward, looked as if she would discharge the duties required of the position admirably. He suggested the arrangement to his brother, who spoke about it.

There was a good deal of talking about it. Mrs Arundel showed that she knew the value of her daughter; but there was no doubt about the conclusion of the matter. There was a grand wedding, at which all the richer Arundels were present, and none of the poor relations. Mr Dering, the young lady's guardian, gave her away: Hilda became Lady Dering, and has been perfectly happy ever since. Elsie remained with her mother. Her brother was never spoken of between them. But she remembered him, and she was firm in her conviction that his innocence would be some day established.

After five years, nothing at all having been heard of the notes, Mr Dering made application to the Bank of England, and received from them the sum of £720 in new crisp notes in the place of those of which he had been robbed, so that the actual loss at 4 per cent. compound interest amounted to no more than £155, 19s. 9½d., which is more than one likes to lose, yet is not actually embarrassing to a man whose income is about ten thousand a year. He ceased to think about the business altogether, except as a disagreeable episode of his office.

Then Athelstan Arundel became completely forgotten. His old friends, the young men with whom he had played and sported, only remem-

bered him from time to time as a fellow who had come to some unknown grief, and had gone away. There is always some young fellow in every set of young fellows who gets into some scrape, and so leaves the circle, and is no more seen or heard of. We go on just the same without him: very seldom is such a man remembered long: it is the way of the world: we cannot stop to lament over the fallen: we must push on: others fall: close up the ranks: push on: Time drives: the memory of the fallen swiftly waxes dim.

Four years or so after the mysterious business of Edmund Gray, Mr Dering received a letter with an American stamp marked 'Private and Confidential.' He laid this aside until he had got through the business letters; then he opened it. He turned first to the signature. 'Ha!' he said, 'Athelstan Arundel. At last. Now we shall see. We shall see.'

He expected a full confession of the crime. We should never expect, says the Sage, what we desire, because we never obtain what we expect. It would have made Mr Dering more comfortable in his mind had the letter contained a confession. Of course Athelstan had done it. Nobody else could have done it. Yet when he thought about the business at all, there always arose in his mind an uneasy feeling that perhaps the boy had been treated unwisely. It might have been more prudent to have kept the facts from him, although they pointed so strongly in his direction, until proof positive was obtained. It might, again, have been better had the facts been put before him with a few words of confidence, even though that confidence did not exist. Time only strengthened Mr Dering's suspicions against the young man. The thing *must* have been done by Checkley or by him. Now, Checkley was not able, if he had wished, to imitate any handwriting. No! It was done by Athelstan. Why he did, what he got by it, seeing that those notes had never been presented, no one could explain. But he did it—he did it. That was certain.

Mr Dering therefore began to read the letter with interest. Its commencement was without any opening words of respect or friendliness. And it was not by any means the letter of a wicked man turning away from his wickedness. Not a word of repentance from beginning to end.

'Four years ago,' Mr Dering read, 'you drove me from your place and changed my whole life, by a suspicion—amounting to a charge—of the gravest kind. You assumed, without explanation or examination, that because certain facts seemed to point in a certain direction, I had been guilty of an enormous crime, that I had robbed my father's oldest friend, my mother's Trustee, my own guardian, my employer, of a great sum of money. You never asked yourself if this suspicion was justified by any conduct of mine—you jumped at it.'

'Quite wrong. Wilfully wrong,' said Mr Dering. 'I laid the facts before him. Nothing but the facts. I brought no charge.'

'I daresay that by this time the criminal has been long since detected. Had I remained, I would have brought the thing home to him. For of course it could be none other than your clerk. I have thought over the case thousands of times. The man who forged the cheque must

have been one of two—either your clerk—the man Checkley—or myself. It did not take you long, I apprehend, to learn the truth. You would discover it through the presentation of the notes.'—'This is a very crafty letter,' said Mr Dering; 'when he never presented any of the notes. Very crafty.' He resumed the letter.—'Enough said about that. I daresay, however, that I shall some day or other—before you are dead, I hope—return in order to receive some expression of sorrow from you if you can feel shame.'—'Certainly not,' said Mr Dering with decision. 'Meantime, there is a service which I must ask of you for the sake of my people. There is no one else whom I can ask. It is the reason of my writing this letter.'

'I came away with ten pounds—all I had in the world—in my pocket. Not seven hundred and twenty pounds, as you imagined or suspected. Ten pounds. With that slender capital I got across the Atlantic. I have now made twelve thousand pounds. I made it in a very short time by extraordinary good luck.' Mr Dering laid down the letter and considered. Twelve thousand pounds might be made—perhaps—by great good luck—with a start of seven hundred and twenty, but hardly with ten pounds. A silver reef—or more likely a gambling table, or a second crime, or a series of crimes. It will be observed that his opinion of the young man was now very bad indeed: otherwise, he would have reflected that as none of those notes had been presented, none of them had been used. Even if an English ten-pound note is converted into American dollars, the note comes home before ten years. 'Extraordinary good luck.' He read the words again, and shook his head. 'Now, I want you to take charge of this money, to say nothing at all about it, to keep the matter a profound secret, to invest it or put it in some place of safety, where confidential clerks with a taste for forgery cannot get at it, and to give it, on her twenty-first birthday, to my sister Elsie. Do not tell her or anybody from whom the money comes. Do not tell anybody that you have heard from me. When I came away, she was the only one of all my friends and people who declared that she believed in me. I now strip myself of my whole possessions in order to show this mark of my love and gratitude towards her. In sending you this money I go back to the ten pounds with which I started.'

Mr Dering laid the letter down. The words, somehow, seemed to ring true. Could the boy—after all?—He shook his head, and went on. 'You will give Elsie this money on her twenty-first birthday, to be settled on her for herself.'

ATHELSTAN ARUNDEL.

The letter was dated, but no address was given. The post-mark was Idaho, which, as we all know, belongs to a Western State.

He looked into the envelope. There fell out a paper, which was a draft on a well-known London Firm, payable to his order for twelve thousand and fifty pounds.

'This is very unbusiness-like,' said Mr Dering. 'He puts all this money into my hands, and vanishes. These are the ways he learns in America, I suppose. Puts the money blindly in my hands without giving me the means of com-

municating with him. Then he vanishes. How could he prove that it was a Trust? Well, if I could only think—but I cannot—the circumstantial evidence is too strong—that the boy was innocent—I should be very sorry for him. As for Elsie—she must be eighteen now—about eighteen—she will get this windfall in three years or so. It will be a wonderful lift for her. Perhaps it may make all the difference in her future! If I could only think that the boy was innocent—a clever lad, too—which makes his guilt more probable. But I can't—no—I can't. Either Checkley or that boy—and Checkley couldn't do it. He couldn't if he were to try. What did the boy do it for? And what did he do with the notes?

DREDGING FOR GOLD IN NEW ZEALAND.

At the antipodes one naturally expects to find things turned topsy-turvy. It will not, therefore, be matter of surprise to our readers to learn that in far New Zealand the gold-miner resorts to dredging the river-beds as one means of acquiring the precious metal. The search for gold is pursued in divers ways in the Britain of the South. The shallow patches of auriferous soil—whence the old-time digger with his shovel and 'cradle' was wont to obtain such fabulous results—are gradually becoming worked out. The richer quartz reefs, too, have long since been transformed into bullion by means of batteries and other agencies. Hydraulic and hand-sluicing are gradually stripping even the poorer alluvial drifts, and yielding a golden harvest to the bold speculator, and the more cautious Mongolian who follows in his wake.

Sagacious miners are now turning their attention to the great rivers of the South Island, and more especially of Otago, which have for untold centuries 'rolled down their golden sand' to the Pacific Ocean. The mighty Molyneux (or Clutha) and its tributaries seem destined to be the Pactolus of the far South. For years past, covetous eyes have been turned on their turbid waters, and schemes both daring and original have been devised for extracting the fabulous quantities of the precious metal assumed to be hidden beneath the rocky river-bed. Patient Chinamen working with most primitive appliances have managed to secure good returns from the margin of the streams when the water was low. Time and again, projects have been mooted for diverting the river from its usual channel, and thus laying bare the golden soil beneath. Small 'spoon-dredges' have been for many years used for working the river-bed where the water is shallow and the ground easily worked. But these are mere temporary expedients, and do not serve to 'prospect' the main stream of the deep and rapid Clutha. Within the last year or two, however, a number of larger dredges have been built, and are now working on the Clutha and its feeders—the Kawaren and the Shotover.

A visit to one of those larger dredges is both interesting and instructive. Some months since, the writer visited the Sew Hoy dredge, on the Shotover River. (The Celestial appellation of the dredge in question was given to it on account

of its projector being a speculative Chinaman of that name.) The scene was a peculiar one. Through a deep gully, bordered on either side by vast treeless mountains, meandered a small and muddy river, whose bed of flat shingle must have measured about half a mile in width. The stream itself occupied but a fraction of the old river-bed, and its course was tortuous and uncertain. On the edge of the stream, and towards the lower end of the shingle bed or 'beach,' lay a small steam hopper dredge puffing away busily, and apparently digging out shingle from the beach in front, and carefully replacing the same at its stern, where a heap of 'spoil' was plainly visible. On getting on board the dredge itself, however, it soon appeared that the work was not so objectless as it seemed on first sight. The dredge was moored to the river-banks by long wire cables, which kept the vessel in position, and enabled the buckets to eat their way into the bank of 'wash' in front of them. The ladder of the dredge raised or lowered the chain of buckets as required. As the buckets came up full they tipped their loads into a revolving screen or shoot, which separated the larger stones, &c., and conducted the payable wash-dirt on to a series of sloping sluice-boxes, down which a stream of water kept continually flowing from a pump on board the dredge. The wash-dirt was thus gradually reduced, and the gold then saved in the usual way by means of plates, 'ripples,' and cocoa-nut matting. The dredge is kept going day and night, the men working in three shifts of eight hours each. During the shift we were on board, the engineer was an Englishman, and the deck-hands—who looked after the sluice-boxes and moorings—were Chinamen. The duties of the latter were confined to the gold-saving portion of the process, and they had strict instructions not to interfere with the engines in any way. A young Celestial, however, anxious to display to us ignorant outsiders how easily the great machine was worked, took advantage of the engineer's momentary absence to turn one of the levers used for lowering the bucket-ladder. The result was alarming. The huge machine strained, groaned, creaked loudly once or twice, and finally ceased working. The engine had to be stopped forthwith; and when we left, the engineer was busily engaged trying to get the dredge once more into working order. Our phlegmatic Mongolian friend seemed more amused than alarmed at the unexpected result of his display of engineering skill. Very picturesque he looked in his slouch-hat, blue shirt, and long gum boots, as he waved farewell to us with a long iron rake from the deck of the silent dredge.

There are now about twenty dredges working on the Clutha and its tributaries alone. These are all hopper dredges; but their motive-power is derived from various sources. The earlier dredges built were of the paddle-wheel class, being worked by the strong current against which they hung at their moorings. It was soon found, however, that these 'current-wheel' dredges were unsuitable for all parts of the river except where the rush of water was strong and constant. Steam-power was accordingly called into requisition, and this in time enabled the eddies and side-waters of the mighty Clutha to be thoroughly prospected and worked. In the more remote districts, more-

over, fuel has been found so costly that electric machinery is now being introduced; and one of the claims lately taken up on the Shotover is economically and efficiently worked by a dredge driven by electric force generated from a water-race some miles from the river.

The auriferous sea-beaches of the southern part of Otago and the coast of Westland are also being dredged for gold, but by a different process. For hopper dredges of the ordinary centre-ladder type have been substituted dredges working on the suction principle with a large metal nozzle and powerful pumping gear. Several Welman dredges constructed on this principle are now at work on the beaches referred to with greater or less success. Space will not permit of a detailed description of the working of these Welman dredges. Suffice it to say that in their case, as in that of the river dredges, a very small percentage of gold in the large quantities of stuff put through is required to make the returns highly payable. In this connection it may be mentioned that from one small dredge working on the Clutha River near Roxburgh as many as one hundred and eighty ounces (say seven hundred pounds worth) of the precious metal have been obtained in a single week.

Dredging for gold in New Zealand is still in its infancy. Much yet remains to be done in the way of perfecting its various processes. Rome was not built in a day, nor have the ultimate or ideal methods of gold-dredging and subsequent gold-saving yet been attained to. The fact remains, however, that even with the somewhat crude dredging appliances at present in use, an appreciable increase is being made in the output of gold from the southern portion of the colony of New Zealand.

SUNSTRUCK.*

CHAPTER VII.

AN hour later, the two young men were seated in long lounge-chairs in the dense shade cast by a huge tree. On a table between them lay flowers and luscious fruits; while beneath the table lay blinking at them a huge Cuban blood-hound, as if keeping guard over his master's guests.

The house was hidden by the luxuriant foliage, and the only personage visible in the midst of the calm dreamy silence was Semiramis, the black nurse, who sat on a stool at a little distance, watching them from time to time, to see if her services were needed.

The silence was at last broken by Manton, who had been lying back with his eyes half closed, and who now said softly: 'Thank God!—Will, lad, I never thoroughly knew the delight of existence till now. Yes: we shall soon grow strong again.'

'Amen to it all, Jack,' replied Burns. 'I'm pounds better already.'

They relapsed into silence once more, and then Burns spoke, after drawing in a long deep breath: 'It's heavenly!'

Then he took a glass from the table, drank, and set it back.

'Have a drink, Jack.'

Manton slowly raised his glass and drank, gazing at the dog the while.

'Jack. What a brute of a dog.'

'Yes. Kept to hunt the runaways, I suppose.'

'How long have we been out here?'

'I don't know: about a couple of hours, I suppose; but time seems to have dropped away, and it is all delicious repose. That fevered agony seems something which never existed.'

'But it did. Two hours, eh?—I say.'

'Yes.'

'I'm nearly well; and as soon as you can start we shall have to go.'

'Go? Oh no. Captain Greville said we were to stay until the ship came back.'

'Yes, lad, he said so to me too; but we must be off almost at once.'

'Go?' said Manton so excitedly that the black woman started up.

'Massah want 'Miramis?'

'No, no, my good woman, no,' said Manton, with the impatience of an invalid.—'Now, then, why must we be off at once?'

'Because, lad, the captain told me this morning that he was glad to have a couple of honourable English gentlemen beneath his roof.'

'Well,' panted Manton, with a faint colour coming into his cheeks.

'No: it's ill, lad. I can't answer for you, though I may suspect; but as far as I am concerned, he has not got an honourable English gentleman beneath his roof.'

'Will!'

'But a thorough-paced scoundrel instead.'

'You are speaking in riddles,' said Manton hoarsely.

'Then I'll speak plain English. Look here, Jack: we have been thrown into the society of two sweet innocent girls who have led the most secluded of lives; and if there is such a thing as love, that's the disease I've taken badly. It's contagious, I believe, and if I give that complaint to one in whose company I am hospitably allowed to be, I shall have been the scoundrel I say.'

Manton drew a long deep breath.

'I think you are as bad as I am, my lad, from what I have seen; and if I am right, there can be only trouble. So we had better go while our shoes are good.'

'Yes,' said Manton excitedly, 'trouble. Two men who have always been like brothers growing ready to spring at each other's throats, while they are taking advantage of their host's kindness by bringing misery upon his home.'

'Sounds vain, doesn't it, to say so much?'

'It might in some cases, Will,' responded Manton, 'but I think not here. They are not accustomed to the ways of the world. Yes; we must go, and the sooner the better, I suppose.—Yes?—What is it, 'Miramis?'

'De young missie say may dey come and sit an' talk to de gemmen lil bit?'

'Yes,' said Manton eagerly.—'No. Our compliments, and we are still too weak and ill.'

'S, massah,' said the nurse, and she moved off.

'Jack, you brute,' said Burns, in a low angry voice, 'how could you have the heart to send such a message as that!'

'I want to be an honourable gentleman if I

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can,' said Manton coldly. 'The ladies are indeed unused to the ways of the world.'

'No need to insult them if they are,' said Burns bitterly. 'Seems to me that the feud has begun.'

That evening Renée grew thoughtful and strange, and found herself furtively watching Josephine, blushing each time she realised that she was guilty of what she told herself was a meanness.

There was a change, too, in Josephine, who was singing about the house in a wild excited manner; but so sure as she caught Renée's eyes fixed upon her, her own contracted, the lines between the eyebrows grew more deeply marked while she returned a defiant angry stare, that brought the tears to Renée's lids, and made her turn away with a sigh so as to be alone and think.

Josephine sat at her window with her head resting upon her hand. One by one the lights had been extinguished about the house, till one only remained—that in Captain Greville's room, where he sat reading for a time before going to bed.

At last the light was extinguished in the captain's room; and as soon as all was dark there, the girl's hand dropped upon the sill, and she reached out a little, peering into the darkness, where little points of light glided here and there over the transparent purple of the shadowy night.

'My bootiful,' said a soft thick voice directly after in a whisper just beneath where the girl leaned out.

'Oh 'Miramis,' cried Josephine, in an eager whisper, 'I thought you would not come.'

'Den missie shouldn' tink such ting. Well, didn' 'Miramis say she make de hahnsume buckra officer quite well?'

'Yes, 'Miramis.'

'And um make lub to missie?'

'Yes—no—not much.'

'Ah? Wait lil bit, Missie Josee, and he lub her much as she like.'

'But sometimes I think he might love Renée instead,' said the girl faintly.

'Oh no,' said the woman with a low chuckle. 'He going lub Missie Josee. 'Miramis make lub-charm, and Missie Josee hab de lubber she like moce. Where Missie Josee hahn? Dat's um—now touch. What dat you touch?'

'Your necklace of bright-coloured seeds,' said the girl.

'Yes, missie. Ebery one got a charm in um—make young man tink 'bout de lady who want um. Missie Josee want um buckra Massah Manton marry her. He got to marry her—dat's all.'

'But suppose he doesn't care for me, 'Miramis.'

'Yes.—What suppose?'

'He were to love Renée instead,' whispered the girl, almost inaudibly.

'What? No: he goin' lub my lil darlin' Missie Josee, who always lub 'Miramis. She gib him ting make um grow strong an' well, all o' purpose for Missie. Massa Captain tink he go cure de hahsum sailor, but it all 'Miramis' doing. Whah Missie Josee's hahn?'

The girl leaned out again into the darkness, and there was a loud rustling and a sharp ejaculation.

'What's the matter?' whispered Josephine.

'Miramis slip an moce tumble down out ob de tree. Dah, kissie, kissie, kissie lubly hahn. Juss like Missie Josee moder's hahn. Good-night, darlin'! She shall hab de hahnsum buckra officer.—Good-night.'

Josephine let herself sink down upon the matting-covered floor and rested her burning face in her hands to think of John Manton and her newly-awakened love; while in her room on the other side of the passage, Renée was also awake, too unhappy to sleep, for the home which had once been so happy seemed now to be clouded over with trouble, and the future began to look very blank.

CHAPTER VIII.

'Nonsense, my lads. I stand to you both in the position of your captain, and I am answerable to him for the state in which he will find you when he returns.'

'Yes, Captain Greville,' said Manton, who acted as spokesman, one evening as they sat together after dinner, with the moths whirring round the shaded lamps, and the fireflies playing about like sparks over the bushes in the garden near the open window; 'but we have been here nearly a month; and Burns and I think that we ought not to trespass on your kindness any longer.'

'Humph!' said Greville. 'What do you think of doing, then?—putting to sea in an open boat?'

'Oh no, sir,' interposed Burns; 'it must be a month before the ship returns, perhaps two, and we have set our minds on making an exploring expedition through the island.'

'Rubbish!' said the captain tartly.—'Now, gentlemen, speaking as your host, I say I shall not let you go; and then as your medical man, I say it would be madness. Why, my good fellows, you are both as weak as ever you can be, and no more fit to go cutting your way through those forests than to fly. You would both be down with fever at the end of a couple of days. You must hug the shore, and hug it here in my garden. There is the boat.'

'Yes, Captain Greville, you are very good, and we are most grateful,' said Manton.

'Show it then, sir, by doing me justice when Captain Lance comes back.'

'But really, sir'—said Burns.

'There—there—there—my dear boys; light your cigars, and we'll have coffee.—What! you will not smoke? Very well: let's get into the drawing-room and have some music. Renée's harp has been almost silent since you two have been here; but the noise will do you good now.'

The young men glanced at each other as the captain rose.

He threw aside a thin drapery, and held it while the young men passed through into the drawing-room, where, dimly seen by the light of the shaded lamp, Renée and Josephine were seated some distance apart, the one reading, the other with work in her hand, which she hastily went on with as the gentlemen entered.

'Come, girls,' cried Greville. 'Your turn now to entertain. I'm going to smoke my cigar outside. Let's have a little music.—Sing me my old favourite, Josee.'

He stopped by the door while Renée crossed to the harp standing in one corner, and Josephine went to a canterbury and drew out a music-book. Then there was a little tuning; and both young men stood watching the round white arms, the one with its fingers busy among the strings, the other straining at the harp wrest.

This preparation finished, Renée played a short prelude; and Josephine's rich full voice rose and filled the room, thrilling her hearers as she sang with wonderful force and passion one of the fine old Irish ballads, full of love and promise of faith to the very end. And as she sang, her eyes were for a time half closed, the lids veiling their lustre till near the end, when she raised them and fixed them full upon Manton, who was watching and listening intently.

Burns saw the look pass between them, and his brow contracted as he noted that Manton seemed fascinated by the glowing eyes fixed upon his. Then he turned away, and saw that Renée's hands still rested on the harp, to whose silent strings her fingers seemed to cling, while her head drooped, and he could read misery and despair in every lineament of her face.

'Poor girl!' said Burns bitterly to himself as he crossed to her side and offered a chair.

'You are tired, Miss Greville,' he said.

'Tired? Oh no,' she replied gently.

'Well,' cried the captain 'from outside, 'what next? That's very good, but I want more.'

'Yes, you will sing again, Miss Maine?' said Manton, as the girl looked up at him with a timid appealing look, full of tenderness, one which plainly enough said: 'Shall I?'

'And you will play the accompaniment again, Miss Greville?' continued Manton, advancing towards the harpist.

Renée bowed her head and avoided his glance, turning to the music and selecting the ballad she knew from old habit her companion would prefer.

Manton drew back as he saw how plainly Renée avoided him. Burns stood leaning against the back of a chair, watching the little comedy being played; and directly after the chords of the harp vibrated through the room, Josephine took up the strain, and Manton listened from the couch, with his head resting upon his hand, seeing Burns advance to turn over the music on the stand of the harpist, and then involuntarily letting his eyes seek those of Josephine, who was singing, so it seemed, only to him, the words of the song sounding like the outpourings of her own heart.

He gazed at her once more, as if fascinated, listening, drinking in the music—the blending of voice and harp, which sounded so dreamy and delightful in his weak state, that his eyes grew dim, and the passionate look of the beautiful girl was robbed of half its power.

'Done?' came the voice of him who filled his thoughts. 'Then come out here, you young people. It is delicious. The moon is just rising.'

They all went out slowly in obedience to the captain's words, and Renée shrank back, to leave the room last with Burns; while Josephine, after throwing a light scarf about her head and neck, placed her hand upon Manton's arm.

'Ah, that's better,' said the captain as they

approached the spot where he was leaning back in a cane-seat. 'The most delicious night we have had for months. What a relief these times are after our hot days. But we must be careful.'

That night, after the captain and the two young men had retired to their rooms, there was an eager conversation going on beneath Josephine's window, where she was leaning out; while Renée had sought her room to throw herself upon her bed, weeping silently in the misery of spirit which had come upon her.

'Is that you, 'Miramis?' whispered Josephine as she reached out and peered down to gaze into the darkness.

'Yes, Missie Josee.'

'Miramis! Come closer—closer still, so that I can whisper.'

'Dah, missie, you reach down. You touch my ear an' speak right in um. You got somefin' good to say?'

'Yes,' panted the girl excitedly. 'He loves me, 'Miramis—he loves me!'

'Course. 'Miramis always tell Missie Josee so. She nurse and save de hahnsum officer buckra, Massa Manton, for Missie Josee. Missie Josee gib 'Miramis gold brooch now, and yaller hankchiff.'

'Yes—yes—yes!' cried Josephine excitedly. 'Now go. I want to shut my window and think.'

'When Missie Josee gib 'Miramis de brooch?'

'To-morrow.'

'An' de yaller hankchiff?'

'As soon as I can buy one.—Good-night—good-night.'

She drew back and closed the window, to take her right hand in her left and hold it to her lips as she stood in the half-light, the broad yellow moon sending its rays through the lattice panes and casting her shadow upon the wall.

'It was here he held it,' she whispered softly; 'and there—and there—and there.'

At each word she kissed her hand, her full red lips curling as she stood there afterwards smiling at her happy thoughts; and that smile was upon her lips as she lay down that night and slept.

CHAPTER IX.

How did it happen? Who can tell? How does it always happen that two who love are drawn together. Nature's magnetism must be to blame.

Days had passed since the night when Manton had listened to the singing, and an afternoon had come when he and his friend were in their old place down the garden.

Burns had dropped asleep after they had sat together for some time in silence, for a coolness had sprung up between the young men, one which a few words on either side spoken openly would have cleared away; but those words were not uttered, and the coolness threatened to be the beginning of a feud.

Weary of much sitting, Manton left his chair, and began to stroll down the garden toward where he could hear the voices of the black labourers in the plantation.

'Perhaps the captain's with them,' he thought, 'and I must see him alone and speak out frankly, for my position seems to be intolerable.'

He went on, and passed out of the garden to the beaten track which led through a patch of the primeval forest toward the negroes' cottages. The path was very secluded and winding, dark almost in the deep shade cast by the huge trees which the captain had religiously preserved for their grandeur; and Manton was slowly and dreamily wandering on, thinking out what he should say, when his heart suddenly began to beat rapidly, the blood flushed to his temples, and he stopped short to watch the slight graceful figure in white coming slowly toward him, her hat in one hand, a basket in the other, suggesting that she had been out upon some mission to the negroes' village. Her head was bent; and as Manton gazed eagerly at the beautiful face before him, he could see that it was troubled, for the tears were stealing down her cheeks.

For a moment he felt that his presence was an intrusion upon her sorrow; and he was about to hurry away; but his feet seemed nailed to the spot, and he stood firm till she was close up and became aware of his presence, starting violently, flushing up, and then turning deadly pale.

'Mr Manton!'

'Miss Greville—Renée,' he exclaimed hoarsely; and, carried away by the emotion within him, he caught her hands and held them firmly in spite of the violent efforts she made to snatch them away.

'Mr Manton!' she exclaimed, now flushing once more, and her eyes meeting his full of indignant fire—'loose my hands. What does this mean?'

'What I had hoped you saw and believed,' he cried in a low passionate voice: 'what I have tried hard to hide; what I have fought against all through these weary weeks of anxiety.—Renée, listen to me. Forgive me, if it is dishonourable to speak as I do, but the words will out now.—No, no—don't repulse me like this. The thought of you almost brought me back to life, for I love you—I love you as dearly as ever man could love.'

She looked at him wildly for a few moments, and then snatched her hands away.

'It is an insult!' she cried angrily.

'To offer the love of an honest man!' he said in a tone full of bitter reproach. 'Is this the gentle girl whose image I set up in my breast to worship! No, no—don't leave me like this, Renée. I am not worthy of you, but believe me all I say is true.'

She seemed to grow before him in her indignation, and for a few moments stood gazing at him with a look of withering contempt.

'Is this the gentleman to whom my father has done nothing but good—to whom we offered a kindly welcome in his time of need?'

'Miss Greville,' he cried excitedly, 'what have I said that you should turn upon me like this!'

'Returned evil for good. Given us deceit when we looked for frank manliness.'

'Renée, you are too cruel!' he cried.

'Cruel? How could I be harsh enough to the man who, after trifling and leading on one whom I look upon as a sister, dares to offer me what he calls his love!'

'I—trifle—lead on Josephine?' he cried indignantly. 'Never, so help me Heaven!'

She gazed at his flushed indignant face wildly, as he went on angrily now.

'Who dares say that? Oh, this is too much! Miss Greville—Renée—what have I ever said and done that you should think me so contemptible a cur?'

'Mr Manton!' she cried, with her voice trembling now, and her eyes gazed searchingly into his, 'I thought—my sister thought'—

'So little of me that you both supposed I would insult you and betray your father's confidence in so contemptible a way.'

'But Josephine'—

'Well,' he said coldly, 'Josephine?'

'She thinks that'—

'That I love her,' he cried bitterly. 'Surely she could not think this. I have never by word or look given her cause. I have never thought of her in connection with love. There is some terrible mistake. Miss Greville, Renée, you misjudge me, on my soul.'

'Is—is this the truth?' she faltered, her voice growing hoarse and agitated.

'Look at me and ask me that question again,' he said, catching her hand. 'Renée, from the first day I saw you, when weak almost unto death, you seemed to be the angel of hope beckoning me back to life. Indeed, indeed, it is true; and I have never given your sister more than a passing thought.—Don't withdraw your hand. Tell me you believe me. You cannot think I could be so base.'

'What can I think?' she faltered. 'Josephine believes so firmly that'—

She did not finish her sentence, for, as she spoke, he could read in her eyes that she had perfect faith now in all he said. Her sweet countenance had softened, and was irradiated now by a joy she could not hide; and as he drew her toward him, he felt that she was yielding softly, and that the misunderstanding was at an end, when all at once her face grew set, with a look of horror and dread. She shrank from him; and with a feeling of anger and shame that they should have been surprised, he turned round quickly to face Captain Greville, and ask pardon for suffering love to master duty toward his host.

But he was wrong. The captain was not standing behind him in the path, but Josephine, with her dark eyes dilated, her creamy cheeks flushed with scarlet, her head thrown back, and her lips parted in a smile which showed her white teeth.

'I am so sorry,' she said with a mocking laugh; and her voice had a metallic ring. 'I did not know you two were lovers. Shall I go away?'

'No,' said Manton, recovering himself, and holding out his hand as he met the girl's flashing eyes. 'Stay with us. Josephine—sister—I love Renée very dearly. You love her dearly too. Give me your hand.'

She fixed her eyes on his in a cruel vindictive stare, made no answer, but stood motionless for some moments before turning quickly and hurrying away.

Manton stood frowning for a few moments.

'Come,' he said, taking Renée's hand; 'there must be no further misunderstanding. Tell me, though: you believe me now?'

She could not answer; but he was satisfied with the look of faith and trust that beamed from her eyes; and they walked slowly back together

till they reached the garden, where Burns still lay back asleep. They stopped near him, and Manton felt a strange fresh dread arise within him as he asked himself whether he was to find an enemy in the sleeping man.

'I cannot help it,' he said half aloud. 'If he loves you too, what wonder? Renée, tell me all. Has Will here ever told you that he loved you?'

'Mr Burns?' she whispered eagerly. 'Oh no. Could you not see? He loves poor Josee, I am sure, and I always thought he was jealous of you.'

'He—Josephine,' cried Manton excitedly. 'Then it was about her! How blind I have been.—Here, Will: wake up!' And he laid his hand on the sleeper's shoulder.

Burns started up, to look wildly from one to the other.

'Congratulate me, old fellow,' cried Manton, taking Renée's hand as she stood flushed and tearful beside him. 'You and I have been playing at cross-purposes. Renée here has made me the happiest man under the sun.'

'Jack!' cried Burns wildly. 'I thought—I thought.—He stopped, looking deadly pale, and then flushing in his excitement.

'Yes; I know now what you thought. But it was all a mistake, lad. Renée'—

'Is my child, sir,' said a stern voice, 'and you are my guest, whom I trusted as a man of honour. I think some explanation is first due to me.'

It was given after dinner.

MEMORY IN ANIMALS.

ARROGATING the title of 'lord of creation,' man has been loth to recognise the claim of the lower animals to a mental status approaching that of himself. But the many objections formerly raised against this claim, objections mainly dictated by human vanity and unreasoning prejudice, have long been disposed of as baseless assumptions. Darwin, Lubbock, Lindsay, Romanes, and many others, have given ample proof that there is no fundamental difference in the mental faculties of man and the lower animals, the difference being simply one of degree and not of kind.

The possession of Memory by Animals forms one of the most important and interesting chapters in comparative psychology, and is one of the many facts establishing the claim of the lower animals to a common intelligence with ourselves. That animals profit by past experience is shown by the fact that they have retentive memories for; or vivid recollections of, past events, as well as of persons, places, and things. Darwin relates the case of a baboon at the Cape of Good Hope recognising with joy its owner who had been absent for nine months. In his *Descent of Man*, the great naturalist gives the following particulars of his own dog: 'I had a dog who was savage and averse to all strangers, and I purposely tried his memory after an absence of five years and two days. I went near the stable in which he lived, and shouted to him in my old manner: he showed no joy, but instantly followed me out walking, and obeyed me, exactly as if I had parted with him only half an hour before. A train of old associations, dormant during five years, had thus been instantaneously awakened in his mind.'

Professor Romanes cites the case of a dog remembering a certain sound after an interval of three years. 'I had a setter in the country, which one year I took up with me to town for a few months. While in town he was never allowed to go out without a collar, on which was engraved my address. A ring upon this collar made a clinking sound, and the setter soon learned to associate the approach of this sound with the prospect of a walk. Three years afterwards I again took this setter up to town. He remembered every nook and corner of my house in town, and also his way about the streets; and the first time I brought his collar, slightly clinking as before, he showed by his demonstrations of joy that he well remembered the sound with all its old associations, although he had not heard this sound for three years.'

Sir Andrew Smith once witnessed the following, and related the story to Darwin: 'At the Cape of Good Hope an officer had often planged a certain baboon; and the animal seeing him approaching one Sunday for parade, poured water into a hole and hastily made some thick mud, which he skilfully dashed over the officer as he passed by, to the amusement of many bystanders. For long afterwards the baboon rejoiced and triumphed whenever he saw his victim.'

Professor Romanes, for the purpose of obtaining material at first hand, obtained the loan of a monkey from the collection of the Zoological Society. From the first the monkey took a violently passionate attachment to him, and after keeping it for about three months, he returned it to the Zoological Gardens; and up to the time of the monkey's death it remembered him as well as the first day it was sent back. The following is Mr Romanes' statement in regard to the memory of this monkey:

'I visited the monkey-house about once a month, and whenever I approached his cage he saw me with astonishing quickness—indeed, generally before I saw him—and ran to the bars, through which he thrust both hands with every expression of joy. He did not, however, scream aloud; his mind seemed too much occupied by the cares of monkey society to admit of a vacancy large enough for such very intense emotion as he used to experience in the calmer life that he lived before. Being much struck with the extreme rapidity of his discernment whenever I approached the cage, however many other persons might be standing around, I purposely visited the monkey-house on Easter Monday, in order to see whether he would pick me out of the solid mass of people who fill the place on that day. Although I could only obtain a place three or four rows back from the cage, and although I made no sound wherewith to attract his attention, he saw me almost immediately, and with a sudden intelligent look of recognition ran across the cage to greet me. When I went away, he followed me, as he always did, to the extreme end of his cage, and stood there watching my departure as long as I remained in sight.'

There are many well-authenticated facts showing that the elephant has an exceedingly tenacious memory. Pliny wrote of this animal that in old age it could recognise men who were its drivers when young; and this is rendered highly

credible by the following instances, quoted by Mr Romanes, which came under the personal notice of Mr Corse. 'He saw an elephant which was carrying baggage take fright at the smell of a tiger, and run off. Eighteen months afterwards this elephant was recognised by its keepers among a herd of wild companions which had been captured and were confined in an enclosure. But when any one approached the animal he struck out with his trunk and seemed as fierce as any of the wild herd. An old hunter then mounted a tame elephant, went up to the feral one, seized his ear and ordered him to lie down. Immediately the force of old associations broke through all opposition; the word of command was obeyed, and the elephant while lying down gave a certain peculiar squeak which he had been known to utter in former days. The same author gives another and more interesting account of an elephant which, after having been for only two years tamed, ran wild for fifteen years, and on being then recaptured, remembered in all details the words of command.'

The memory of the horse is most marked. There are well-authenticated anecdotes in abundance showing that horses have spontaneously visited blacksmiths' shops when they required shoeing or when their shoes were uncomfortable. The horse's memory of roads and places is well known, and the following letter from the Rev. Rowland H. Wedgwood to Darwin is a good instance of this: 'I want to tell you of an instance of long memory in a horse. I have just driven my pony down from London here, and though she has not been here for eight years, she remembered her way quite well, and made a bolt for the stables where I used to keep her.'

The memory and keen observation exhibited by a horse belonging to Mr Romanes is both instructive and amusing. 'I myself had a horse which was very clever at slipping his halter after he knew that the coachman was in bed. He would then draw out the two sticks in the pipe of the oat-bin so as to let all the oats run down from the bin above upon the stable floor. Of course he must have observed that this was the manner in which the coachman obtained the oats, and desiring to obtain them, did what he had observed to be required. Similarly, on other occasions he used to turn the water-tap to obtain a drink, and pull the window cord to open the window on hot nights.'

The instances given of animals under the influence of alcohol form appropriate anecdotes at temperance lectures. Dr Lauder Lindsay relates that a dog, once drunk, ever afterwards refused the same kind of intoxicating liquor—beer. Its recollection of the disagreeable effects of drinking it even caused it to growl at the sight of a beer-pot. And Darwin relates how an American monkey after getting drunk on brandy would never touch it again; and thus, adds the great naturalist, was wiser than many men.

The parrot, too, possesses a strong memory. 'The bird,' says Dr Lindsay, 'not unfrequently takes a prominent and certainly intelligent part in the private worship of its master's household. Such parrots, for instance, make responses at the proper time—an exercise that implies a good deal more than mere memory, mere attention to the service. The behaviour, nay, the very speech,

the remarks and conversation of the bird, are suitable to place, time, and other circumstances. Thus, a certain English bishop's parrot is (or was) in the habit of saying—sometimes quite devoutly and with becoming solemnity, at other times sarcastically or ironically, but in either case at proper seasons and appropriately to the circumstances—"Let us pray." Of another we are told that it could sing in correct time and measure "There is a happy land."

The memory of bees is typical of most common insects. The following example, given by Huber, of its duration in bees is but one of a hundred, as readers of Sir John Lubbock's interesting experiments know. One autumn, Huber placed some honey in a window, which was visited by bees in large numbers. The honey was removed in the winter, and the shutters put up. When the shutters were taken down in the following spring, the honey was not replaced in the window, yet the bees, after an absence of many months, returned with the ostensible purpose of obtaining honey.

We cannot better conclude than by a reference to the memory of the ant. The remarkable intelligence of this little animal has excited the wonder and admiration of mankind. Darwin remarked that its brain 'is one of the most marvellous atoms of matter in the world, perhaps more so than the brain of man.'

To test the power of memory in the ant, Sir John Lubbock first tried keeping an ant away from its nest for more than a year and then restoring it. He found it was immediately recognised and caressed by its old friends and associates. He repeated this experiment a number of times, and with the same result. In order to deceive the ants in the nest, a foreigner was introduced in place of the one taken away; but the ants immediately detected the deception, and severely maltreated the intruder.

On the duration of memory in ants we have the following observation of Mr Belt, quoted by Mr Romanes: In June 1859 Mr Belt's garden was invaded by leaf-cutting ants. He found their nest about a hundred yards distant from his garden, and poured down their burrows a pint of common brown carbolic acid mixed with four buckets of water. 'The marauding parties were at once drawn off from the garden to meet the danger at home, and the whole formicarium was disorganised, the ants running up and down again in the utmost perplexity.' Next day Mr Belt found them busily employed bringing up the ant-food from the old burrows, and carrying it to newly-formed ones a few yards distant. These, however, turned out to be only intended as temporary repositories; for in a few days both the old and the new burrows were entirely deserted, so that Mr Belt supposed all the ants to have died. Subsequently, however, he found that they had migrated to a new site, about two hundred yards from the old one, and there established themselves in a new nest. Twelve months later the animals again invaded his garden, and again he treated them to a strong dose of carbolic acid. The ants, as on the previous occasion, were at once withdrawn from the garden; and two days afterwards he found 'all the survivors at work on one track that led directly to the old nest of the year before, where they were busily em-

ployed in making fresh excavations. Many were bringing along pieces of ant-food' from the nest most recently deluged with carbolic acid to that which had been similarly deluged a year before, and from which all the carbolic acid had long ago disappeared. 'Others carried the undeveloped white pupæ and larvæ. It was a wholesale and entire migration;' and the next day the nest down which he had poured the carbolic acid was entirely deserted. Mr Belt adds: 'I afterwards found that when much disturbed, and many of the ants destroyed, the survivors migrate to a new locality. I do not doubt that some of the leading minds in this formicarium recollected the nest of the year before and directed the migration to it.'

On the duration of memory in ants, Mr Romanes further quotes from a statement of Karl Vogt 'that for several successive years ants from a certain nest used to go through certain inhabited streets to a chemist's shop six hundred metres distant in order to obtain access to a vessel filled with syrup. As it cannot be supposed that this vessel was found in successive working seasons by as many successive accidents, it can only be concluded that the ants remembered the syrup store from season to season.'

THE PROFESSOR'S SKELETON.

THE Professor was a good man, a man of unimpeachable character and reputation—a man who had never been known to make a mistake, and also a man who was thoroughly aware of the fact. So much for himself. For his abilities—he knew his work, and how to do it; he likewise knew a good deal about other people's work, and, as far as he conveniently could, insisted upon its being done too. Without going into details, it will readily be understood that, though undoubtedly a useful man in his day and generation, the Professor was by no means a popular one; and it was over one of his latest interdicts that his wife and his step-daughter were conferring one rainy morning in the solitude of the best parlour.

'It is of no use whatever, my dear; he will not even discuss the question. I am very sorry for you; but I don't see any help for it.'

'You give way to him a good deal too much, mother. If he had one shadow of common-sense on his side, it would be another story. It's too late now to pass things over in that high-handed fashion.'

Mary Andrews spoke with some heat. Had she not good cause? Her first lover, unexceptionable in all respects, had appeared upon the scene; and without rhyme or reason, the Professor had put down his foot and refused to countenance any such proceeding.

'Why? why? In my day, young people did not presume to question the why and wherefore of their guardian's conduct; it ought to be sufficient for you that I have good reasons of my own, Mary,' he had told her when she tried to argue the matter.

'But it's not sufficient,' returned Mary. 'I'm too old to be treated that way, papa. If you have anything against him, you must tell me straight and plain.'

'Well, for one thing,' began the Professor, fairly driven to bay—'for one thing, his manner is objectionable. I dislike that light jesting style exceedingly. I believe him to be incorrigibly careless and superficial; and I do not speak without observation. Then he is wanting in the commonest courtesy of a gentleman; I caught him only the other day with a grossly caricatured representation of myself on his desk. You may think these trivial matters, my dear; but straws show the way the wind blows.'

The Professor had been edging towards the door as he spoke; with the last word, he vanished from the room. With all his learning, he was not altogether above such devices; and Mary quite understood that, and made up her mind to resume the discussion the very first opportunity: not so was the Professor to dispose of her views and feelings, whatever he might do with her mother's.

Discretion is said to be the better part of valour. Dr Dow did not appear again that day. Where or how he spent the time was a matter best known to himself; but for many days afterwards it was impossible to secure the smallest chance of an interview with him. Mary met her lover on the Park road one afternoon, and owned, with mingled wrath and irritation, that affairs were still as before. She had been able to accomplish nothing in the way of bringing the Professor to a more satisfactory state of mind.

'I am sorry to say it of any one connected with you, Mary,' remarked the young man gravely; 'but there is a good deal of stubbornness in your respected step-father's composition; he will neither be led nor driven. Shall we throw him overboard, and do without his kind permission?'

Mary shook her head despondently. 'We can't do that, John; it means mother too; besides, he has a kindly nature underneath.'

'Then he has a most unpleasant way of showing it on the surface,' was the rejoinder. 'I suppose you go off to your country quarters next week, and it will be rank heresy for me to show my face within twenty miles of the place. By the time you come back, it's hard to say what may have happened.'

'I may even have married into the band of professors myself,' said Mary demurely, 'and have an infallible guide of my own.'

'I'll qualify him for three months in hospital the first time I come across him,' was Mr Grierson's reply.

'Seriously, John, we can't very well help ourselves. You can write as often as you like; and the first chance I have of a solemn square up with the Professor, be sure I'll take it. But for that unlucky caricature, there might have been no trouble of any kind. Why did you risk it?'

'It was impossible to help it, Mary. If only you had seen him chasing round with that famous umbrella after some imaginary miscreant who had tampered with his papers—it was too good to be lost—not that I have not been sorry enough about it since,' he added in a graver tone.

It could not be undone now, and the pair had just to make the best of the position. For the next few days Dr Dow kept his household in a perfect whirlwind of preparation that effectually shut out all hope of private debate. On Sunday he raked up some acquaintance at the other side of the town, and spent the whole day there; and on Monday morning, provokingly triumphant, he stood on the front steps surveying the train of cabs waiting to convey his family and their belongings to the station, and keeping a vigilant outlook for possible shortcomings.

'Mary, my dear, if you would have some little regard for neatness. I never in my life saw such a disreputable portmanteau. What was your mother thinking of to allow it to go? Unless I look after everything myself'—

'Richard, did you notice if that roll of rugs was carried out?' interrupted Mrs Dow from behind.

'It was, my dear, and put into the second cab. I never yet met with a woman who knew where the wraps went, or if there were any at all. It takes a man'—

Mrs Dow did not wait to hear the rest, had probably heard it before. She went back into the dining-room, where a further consignment of packages was stacked upon the table, and began to strap up an overflowing bag.

'Now, mother,' said Mary warningly, 'that is not work for your fingers. Where is papa, that he can't?'—

'Hush! He's counting up the boxes. You know it takes a man'—

'Oh yes; I know all about that,' laughed Mary, finishing the refractory straps herself. 'Now, mother, we will just go and put ourselves into the first cab, and leave the "man" to wind up any way that pleases him.'

She swept her mother out of the chaos, past the energetic Professor—who was expounding the first principles of leverage to a sulky porter—into the roomiest cab, whence they looked out at the rest of the performance with rather malicious satisfaction on Mary's part.

It came to an end at last. The Professor, with his hands under his coat-tails, looking not at all unlike a dignified bantam cock, strutted round the various rooms, turned the key in the front door with his own hand, and descended the steps. One foot in the cab, he paused and looked searchingly at his wife. 'Isabella, where was my study coat packed?'—

'Oh dear,' cried Mrs Dow, stricken into dire confusion and consternation; 'I do believe it hasn't been packed at all; it's hanging up in that dark closet behind your study.'

'I knew it!' ejaculated her husband. The coat in question was a baggy venerable garment, of a nondescript greenish hue, but dear beyond price to the heart of its owner. The holiday would have been no holiday without it, and the whole establishment knew that very well; hence the Professor felt that here was solid ground for

a grievance at last. He waved the cabman aside and went back into the house.

'Take care of the matches, dear,' his wife cried after him.

Dr Dow stalked majestically in without vouchsafing a backward glance; he passed the dining-room door, his study door, and turned up a dim narrow passage; the closet door was at the end, a big dark cavern, that served as a general receptacle for lumber, and all the odds and ends of the household. The Professor tumbled over two trunks, and knocked his hat off against some sharp projection, before it occurred to him to dive into his coat-tail pocket for a match. Then he discovered that the unfriendly projection had been the gas bracket, and that the shock had knocked off the burner. No matter; it was only one more annoyance. He lighted the burnerless pipe and proceeded to look for his coat. There it was, not even decently hung up—just thrust out of sight and mind behind an empty crate. The Professor carried it out into the lobby and sorrowfully viewed the creases by the light of day.

'Papa!'—it was Mary's voice at the front door in a tone of indignant expostulation—'do you know we have only fifteen minutes left to get to the station? It's no use going at all if you don't come now—this minute!'

Dr Dow gathered up the maltreated coat under his arm. His papers, his umbrella—where were they? What way was this for a man to set off to his well-earned rest? In a fever of justifiable impatience at the utter unreasonableness of all things animate and inanimate on this particular morning, the Professor turned and locked the closet door—which had swung to of its own accord—and rushed once more into the street.

That was the last of the day's minor worries; nothing else went wrong. They did not miss the train or lose their luggage. The rescued coat was tenderly brushed, and folded up in the rack above. The sun shone out over browning fields and purpling heather; the anxious lines faded out of Mrs Dow's face; she moved up a little closer to her troublesome husband, and both looked as contented as though their days went by in one unbroken round of peace and concord. They meant to enjoy their holiday-time.

For the pair who were separated there was always one grand resource—the post. Mary wrote endless letters to her young lover; and neither of them appeared to be absolutely steeped in misery and despair, whatever they might choose to say on that head, and though that solemn 'squaring up' had come, and gone, and been of none effect.

'It is entirely for your own good, my dear,' said the learned man, looking at her quite pathetically. He had held his ground through all her arguments and entreaties. 'If I believed the young man to be worthy of you, no one would welcome him into the family more joyfully; but I have been unable—utterly unable to discover one redeeming point about him; and I should be failing, most miserably failing in my duty to you if, for the sake of present peace, I allowed you to sacrifice your future. Do not speak to me any more on this matter, my dear, I beg of you.'

Of course all this was faithfully reported to John, who as faithfully promised by return, to

do any doughty deed that might present itself in the rather limited round of daily existence. 'If he would hurl himself into the sea, I would be only too pleased to fish him out again; or if he wants a contribution to any pet charity, he has but to hint as much. I am ready to thrash any rival Professor within an inch of his life for him; but I must say it is a trifle hard on us both his sticking out in this fashion, when there's not the least likelihood of anything of the kind.'

Some days after the exodus from town, it chanced that the Professor had occasion to go back to attend a committee meeting. He was to return that same night. Nevertheless, Mrs Dow and Mary escorted him to the tiny railway station and surrounded him with little attentions, as if it were to be a lengthy parting; a state of things that the Professor thoroughly appreciated. He looked down upon them from the window of the railway carriage with quite a benignant expression.

'Richard, dear,' observed his wife, emboldened by it to a parting petition, 'the evenings are a little chilly; would you mind calling at the house and bringing my fur cloak back with you? It's hanging up in that dark closet.'

'Certainly, my dear,' he answered. 'You may depend upon me, though you would have left my coat in that same closet.'

Dr Dow reached town very comfortably, attended his meeting, and, after lunch, proceeded leisurely in the direction of his own house. Not very far from it, he unexpectedly and rather unwillingly came upon John Grierson. The young man was turning a corner sharply, and the pair almost came into collision. There was no loophole for pretending they had not observed each other; Mr Grierson at anyrate wanted no loophole; it was a chance not to be lightly lost.

'Ah, Dr Dow, I am lucky to have met you,' he said. 'I thought you were in the country.'

'So we are. A committee meeting brought me in for the day—that is all,' quickening his pace as he spoke.

Mr Grierson quickened his too. 'I wanted to tell you that I have got that appointment I mentioned; it will make a very comfortable addition to my income.'

'I am glad to hear it,' returned the Professor frigidly, walking up his own door-steps.—'I will bid you good-morning now, Mr Grierson; I have to look in here for a minute or two.'

'Then perhaps you will allow me to wait for you? I have several other things to speak to you about.'

Very reluctantly, the Professor gave way; he had the instincts of a gentleman, and could hardly decline as curtly at his own door as elsewhere. 'The house is *en deshabille*,' he said, opening the door with his latchkey; 'but if you like to wait here for a moment, I will not detain you longer. Leave the door open—it feels uncommonly close inside.'

It certainly did. John Grierson stood in the doorway, looking thoughtfully out at the passing cabs and omnibuses, and making up his mind that there should be no further begging the question by his proposed father-in-law. If fair means did not answer, he should be made to

understand in plain Saxon that they would do without him. At this point Mr Grierson suddenly became aware of smothered execrations and ejaculations from the regions behind.

'Hullo! is anything the matter?' he called out. 'Burglars—— Good gracious!' He had found his way to the little passage behind the study. Dr Dow was there, clutching at the door into the dark closet, from which a lurid light shone. The air from it was like a blast from a furnace; but the interior was like unto no furnace either of them had ever seen.

The gas had been burning in the closet since the day the family left town! The Professor had neglected to turn it off before he locked the closet door! And there it was, the smoking gas jet—without a burner—flaring away, as it had flared day and night since the house was shut up. How the house itself had escaped entire destruction was a mystery not to be explained. From wall and ceiling of the closet, from shelves and pegs and crates and garments, hung waving pendicles of soot. Every box and bundle was crusted with it, even to the boarded floor; and the luckless Professor stood gazing helplessly in at the havoc he had accomplished.

Mr Grierson gave vent to a prolonged whistle. 'Phew! if that's the plight your servants leave behind them, I'd make a clean sweep of them every one. Why, the place might have been burned down three times over.'

'It was I who left it,' gasped the convicted master, 'not the servants.'

'O-h!'

'I wouldn't have had it happen for ten—twenty—fifty pounds,' panted the Professor. 'I have always been so particular about anything of that kind, and now'—— He broke off with a groan that expressed more than words.

Mr Grierson made no comment; he did not feel called upon to express any sympathy—it was hardly to be expected of him. The Professor might be great in metaphysics, but in a practical emergency he was nowhere. As far as John Grierson could perceive, they were likely to spend the rest of the evening gazing at the sooty scene.

'You are going back by the six train, I suppose?' he remarked tentatively.

'How can I go back with a house like this?' demanded the Professor. 'I shall never hear the last of it. Look at Mrs Dow's cloak; I was to have taken it back with me.' He lifted the edge of the garment as he spoke—the fur-lining might have been composed of black fringe, for any colour that could be seen.

Mr Grierson shook his head discouragingly. 'I'm afraid Mrs Dow will never put that on again.'

'I never had a misfortune like this in my life before,' wailed her unhappy husband. 'I'd almost as soon the whole place had caught fire.'

Mr Grierson shook his head a second time. It was quite a refreshment of spirit to be able to look on reprovingly; he would not have missed the chance for a good deal, even if his own affairs had to stand over in consequence. All at once a sudden gleam of inspiration came upon him; some expression that was hardly compassion so much as self-interest swept across his complacent face; he dimly saw some beautiful possibility

of establishing a hold upon the immaculate Professor, and working it round to his own ends.

'How would it be if you were to say nothing at all about it?' he suggested cautiously. 'Get a charwoman in and have this mess cleared away? It's only soot, after all—there's no real damage done.'

The Professor grasped at the idea, like the proverbial drowning man at the straw. 'Could it be done?' he asked anxiously. 'There is that cloak too, only bought last winter.'

'Couldn't you get another like it?' insinuated the tempter. 'They're sure to have plenty more at the shop it came from; women's clothes are all cut after the same pattern.'

The Professor fell headlong into the trap; the downward path is fatally easy, once the first crooked step is taken. John Grierson promptly placed himself at the head of affairs, and the Professor was like clay in the hands of the potter. A charwoman was hunted up, brooms and brushes brought into full play, Dr Dow and Mr Grierson assisting till they might have passed for a pair of itinerant Christy Minstrels. The cloak was vigorously shaken out of the study window, and tied up in a clumsy paper parcel, ready for negotiating the change next morning. By ten o'clock that night the Professor's credit was saved; but his innocence was gone. For him, a grimy skeleton would haunt that closet through all time to come.

'Would it be possible to stop up that gas pipe, do you think?' he asked his accomplice, as they stood critically surveying the result of their labours. 'It doesn't look at all bad till you turn that light on; a person coming in with merely a candle would not notice any difference.'

Mr Grierson laughed. 'All right. We'll make assurance doubly sure. A plug of paper will keep that pipe off duty till it's convenient to put it on again.—Now we may as well look after some soap and water for ourselves; we have put in a fair night's work.'

Whatever John Grierson's failings might have been in the past, Dr Dow had no reason to complain of his doing things by halves on this occasion. He gave the finishing touches to everything, swept away all trace of the charwoman's presence, took upon himself the sole responsibility of the cloak transaction, and presented himself at the station the next morning in abundance of time to hand it in to the Professor's carriage and assure him that detection was impossible.

'I really do not know what to say to you, Mr Grierson,' said the Professor, uneasily arranging his parcels on the opposite seat. 'You have given yourself a good deal of trouble over this unfortunate accident. I am almost afraid I lost my balance slightly yesterday; but it is so seldom that anything of that kind has occurred, you can perhaps understand my unwillingness to have it generally talked about.'

'Don't think of it,' said Mr Grierson, with great politeness. 'Very few of us have contrived to get on so far without some kind of skeleton to hide away.—Good-bye; be sure and tell Mary I'll take a run over to see her on Saturday.'

And somehow—into the details of the process it is better not to inquire too closely—the Pro-

fessor brought himself to deliver the message verbatim. He knew now that that same skeleton would be a powerful lever in all coming arrangements.

Some years back—about the juvenile era of the present generation—it was the universal creed that no good action ever went unrewarded, no deed of darkness undiscovered and unpunished. Nevertheless, there have been many exceptions recorded. Dr Dow's skeleton is one of them: months of quiet dust have gathered undisturbed about it; no ruthless hand has let in the light of day, or gas, into the dark closet behind the study, and possibly Mrs John Grierson is the only outsider who has ever heard it whispered that there was any mystery connected with it. The nearest approach to discovery came with the Christmas bills; even gentle Mrs Dow was aghast at the length of the quarter's gas account. 'It is a perfect imposition,' she declared indignantly; 'we have not burned the half of it. I am most careful in seeing that it is never used unnecessarily. I don't know what the Professor will say when he sees it.'

But the Professor coming in just then, declined to interfere. It was better—much better, he said—speaking very feelingly—to be cheated than to cheat; and if there was any imposition in the matter, he preferred to leave it entirely to the conscience of the gas company.

It was curious that Mr Grierson took much the same view when he saw the bill. After that, Mrs Dow had no alternative but to pay it, though she did it under protest, and with a firm conviction of flagrant iniquity in high quarters.

W H Y ?

I WONDER why, six months ago,

When we two met to say good-bye,
And roses tossed their scented snow

To wooing winds that whispered nigh :

When sunlight fell in glittering showers

The blossom-laden boughs among,

And all the earth was bright with flowers,

And all the air was glad with song :

That, even though you bent and kissed

The tearful cloud upon my face,

I only saw a world of mist,

Which held no beauty and no grace !

I wonder why, now days are cold,

And no gay wing the coppice stirs ;

Now snow lies thickly o'er the wold,

And mournful winds are in the firs :

Nor sun, nor bird, nor flower I miss,

Because at the old place we stand

(There are no tears for you to kiss),

And once more whisper hand in hand :

That though the earth is wrapped in gloom,

And leaden clouds shut out the sky,

My world seems filled with light and bloom

And summer warmth—I wonder why !

E. MATHESON.

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CONCERNING EARTHQUAKES.

BY A LATE RESIDENT IN TOKYO, JAPAN.

EARTHQUAKES are popularly regarded as among the most terrible visitants that bring destruction on man.

The wild wind and the remorseless dash
Of billows

have probably destroyed more human life; but they can to a certain extent be eluded. The man who ventures not upon the deep has little to fear from the hurricane; but from the dire earthquake there is no escape. It comes and goes, mocking at our *terra firma*, and ruthlessly laying low our loftiest towers. The fiercest storm heralds its approach by goats' beards of cirrus cloud and a falling barometer. But the earthquake has no sure heralds; and the scientific man is baffled in all his attempts at prognostication. It is this mysteriousness, this apparent free-will, that add to the terror of its visitations.

Even in countries where earthquakes, though frequent, are rarely disastrous, there is an *uncanniness* which experience never lives down. Indeed, it is all the other way, as most residents in such countries can testify. Familiarity does not in this case breed contempt. The gentlest rumbling has been known to develop suddenly into a terrific shaking; and who knows but what this particular tremor may so develop? Anything is possible; everything is uncertain. We have met with some, it is true, who have claimed a prophetic instinct in the matter, who have maintained that they always felt peculiarly nervous an hour or two before an earthquake came. It is not a little curious, however, that no person of scientific training has ever claimed such foreknowledge. Further, it was always *after* the earthquake had come and gone that we heard such phrases as, 'I was sure an earthquake was coming;' or, 'That explains my nervousness to-day.' On one occasion, about two hours before quite a lively shake, one *soi-disant* prophet boldly

declared there would be no earthquake that night, because he lacked the peculiar sensations. Whatever may be claimed in the matter, however, one thing is certain—no person has ever warned a community of the approach of an earthquake; and till such a benefactor has arisen, earthquake visitations will be as wayward as human fancies themselves.

Science has nevertheless taught us much concerning our earth-shakings, especially during the last twenty or thirty years. More particularly has our knowledge of small earthquakes been considerably extended; while many old theories have been exploded, and some new ones have been advanced. And yet the grand problem of the origin of earthquakes remains essentially unsolved. There is no doubt, of course, that an earthquake must originate in an explosion, or a crack, or a disturbance of some kind, in the body of the earth. But what is the cause of the disturbance itself? Is it simply a loosening of rocks in the neighbourhood of cavities, or is it a chemical reaction, or a sudden evolution of steam caused by water coming into contact with molten rock? There are a great many facts that point to water and steam as important agents in the origin of earthquakes. One of the most suggestive of these is the contiguity of earthquake districts to the sea. Furthermore, earthquakes frequently have their origin just off the coast below the ocean bottom.

Now, if we consider the significance of a shoreline, we shall easily recognise the probability of neighbouring districts being seismically sensitive, as it might be termed. Seawards, the land slopes down till in some regions it is nine or ten miles lower in level than the heights that lie landwards. If the solid crust of the earth were to become fluid, it would at once flow down from its elevated parts until all became reduced to the same level. As it is, however, its rigidity sustains it; but none the less will there be a tendency, under the action of gravity, towards a general levelling. There must therefore exist in the intermediate districts lying near to the

shore-line a severe straining; so that the very irregularity of the land contour gives all the conditions favourable for the production of snaps and tremors in a material as intensely heterogeneous as we know the earth's crust to be. When such facts and possibilities are given their full weight, the surprise is not that there *are* earthquake districts here and there on the margins of continents, but that there are not more of them.

We have just pointed out that in the irregularity of distribution of the earth's solid matter we have a sufficient explanation of the existence of these seismically sensitive regions. But there is a very old theory of the cause of earthquakes which still has credence in some quarters, but which physically has not a leg to stand on. Error, indeed, always dies hard; and in this case not a few facts, real or supposed, seemed to find a ready enough explanation. For instance, the lava that streamed from volcanoes suggested oceans of molten rock many miles down below the earth's surface. The known increase of temperature as we descend into the earth's crust lent a powerful support to this view. Thereupon followed the theory that, just as the moon's gravitational action caused tides on the surface oceans of water, so would it produce tides in the subterranean ocean of lava. These bearing upon the lower surface of the crust would cause ruptures with tremors and earthquakes, or would find outlet by lava streams through volcanoes. Now, to establish this, it was obviously necessary to submit earthquake statistics to a severe examination, so that haply there might be discovered therein a periodic variation in frequency following some lunar periodicity. This was the problem which Professor Perrey of Dijon set himself to solve nearly fifty years ago. By an elaborate manipulation of statistics, he concluded that earthquakes were more frequent at new moon and full moon than at half-moon; more frequent at new moon than at full; more frequent when the moon was nearest the earth than when it was farthest away; more frequent at times of meridian passage of the moon than at other times. For the last twenty years these calculations by Perrey have been discredited for various reasons. His catalogue of earthquakes was far from complete, since it took no account of the innumerable small earthquakes of the kind that are almost hourly being registered by the delicate seismographs of to-day. Further, the differences in the frequencies on which he based his conclusions were all very small; and it is now generally admitted that, rationally interpreted, the statistics point to no excess of frequency at new moon, or at perigee, or at meridian passage. Very recently, M. De Ballore, a Swiss captain of artillery, has with much fuller statistics treated the last-named relation (if any) between earthquake frequency and lunar culminations. His conclusion is a negative one.

Now that we know more about the structure of the earth, we are not surprised that Perrey's supposed relations do not hold. G. H. Darwin's refined calculations have fully established Sir William Thomson's earlier conclusion, that our earth as a whole is as rigid as an equal-sized

globe of steel. This rigidity is quite inconsistent with the hypothesis of an ocean of lava spread out under a comparatively thin crust of solid material. The crust of the earth is a phrase still in common use; but it cannot now be taken as implying an under-stratum of molten rock. It simply means that part of the earth which is accessible to us. Of the deeper parts we know nothing definite, except that they are to a depth of several hundred miles at least essentially solid, being so kept, in spite of the high temperature, by the pressure of the superincumbent mass. Probably the structure of the earth is very heterogeneous, perhaps full of cavities containing semi-fluid material. It is quite possible, also, that tidal *strainings* may exist within the earth; but this is a very different thing from the subterranean tides whose assistance was invoked by the earlier seismologists.

Before passing to the discussion of other possible seismic influences, it will be well for us to consider some of the characteristics of earthquake motions. We do not refer so much to those terrible shakings which destroy towns, open chasms, and devastate a country. Terrible and heart-thrilling though these are, they are ill adapted for scientific study. Only very general ideas as to the nature of the motion can be obtained either from the recollection of the survivors of the catastrophe or from the character of the havoc wrought. Such a seemingly simple problem as the finding of the impulse that will level a wall is still far from being solved. At present, then, we rather refer to those small earthquakes which do little damage, but which can be recorded and even measured on suitable instruments.

An instrument for recording earthquakes is called a seismograph; an instrument for measuring them is called a seismometer. There are many kinds of the former class of instrument, all more or less useful in their way; but evidently the seismometer is a much higher grade of instrument, since it gives us the means of comparing the intensities of earthquakes occurring at different times. When, nearly twenty years ago, the Japanese government invited the aid of scientific men of other countries, it was fortunate in attracting to its shores some enthusiastic Britons, whose united labours led to the evolution of a trustworthy seismometer. Japan was one of the few countries where continually recurring earthquakes of small intensity could be studied with ease; and Professors Milne, Gray, and Ewing, building on the foundations of their predecessors in seismology, and working more or less independently, speedily devised instruments capable of giving continuous and complete records of earthquake motions. From these records the whole circumstances of the motions can be accurately worked out at leisure.

We do not purpose at this time to enter into a description of these seismometers. It is sufficient here to know that with such instruments motions amounting only to the five-hundredth part of an inch can be registered and measured. When the motion of the ground amounts, say, to half an inch, there is great risk of these delicate seismometers being thrown off their bearings. For larger earthquakes, therefore, less delicate seismometers must be constructed. A seis-

mological observatory should contain, indeed, a variety of instruments for recording the whole range of earth-shakings from the feeblest tremor up to earthquakes that fall just short of disaster. Observations, approaching more or less closely to this ideal state of equipment, exist in various parts of the world; and from their cumulated material we may hope in time to gather important information as to the distribution and relative frequency of earthquakes at different localities.

There is, so far, only one law of frequency that has unmistakably declared itself. It is usual to call it the annual periodicity; but, as will be shown immediately, seasonal periodicity is much the better name. Broadly stated, the fact is that in winter there are more earthquakes than in summer. For example, in Japan, the liveliest earthquake months are generally between January and May; while in Chili and in New Zealand, the maximum frequency occurs between June and September, that is, in their winter. In tropical districts like Java and Sumatra, there is no marked winter maximum, and we know that there is no marked winter. These facts are very instructive; and their significance was first fully discussed by Professor C. G. Knott in a paper on 'Earthquake Frequency' published in the Transactions of the Seismological Society of Japan.

Now, in inquiring into the possible causes of this seasonal periodicity, we must bear in mind that the sun is the great ruler of the seasons; consequently, we may possibly have to look to some solar phenomenon or effect, which, though timing with the seasons, may not be of necessity involved with them. For example, as the sun's distance from the earth changes from its smallest magnitude to its greatest in half a year, its tidal straining on the solid material of the earth passes from its maximum to its minimum. For the nearer the tide-producing body to the earth, the greater the tide or the tidal stress. The sun is nearest to the earth in December, so that if earthquake frequency should depend on this 'annual tide,' we should look for a maximum frequency in our winter.

We have no right to expect the effect to be contemporaneous with the imagined cause; for in many natural phenomena effects distinctly lag behind their causes. For example, our warmest summer weather is much later than the longest day when the sun attains his highest altitude. So in the case under discussion, a month or two may well elapse before the seismic influence of the maximum tidal stress can assert itself. Now, as already noticed, it is in winter that earthquakes do attain their maximum frequency. But it is in the *local* winter; and consequently we must abandon the suggested hypothesis. For, although in the northern hemisphere the maximum frequency does really occur when the sun is near its perigee, yet in the southern hemisphere the maximum frequency occurs when the sun is near its apogee.

It is evident, in fact, that we have to look to some influence depending upon what astronomers call the declination of the sun—that is, its position north or south of the equator. Now, the most obvious phenomenon attending the sun's march from solstice to solstice is, of course, the alterna-

tion of heat and cold. But a little consideration will show that this phenomenon can hardly have any direct influence upon the frequency of earthquakes. The annual variation of temperature at the earth's surface is not perceptible at a depth of fifty feet, while we are certain that the great majority of earthquakes originate in regions several miles below the surface. In addition to the broad temperature changes we have, further, the various climatic conditions as to rain, wind, storm-tracks, and atmospheric pressure. To what extent may we connect these periodic factors with earthquake frequency? Professor Milne has subjected the Japanese earthquakes to a searching analysis, grouping them under high barometer, low barometer, rising barometer, falling barometer, strong winds and calms, and so on; and in no case was he able to establish any relation. If such meteorological phenomena are to have any effect at all, it must, in short, be in virtue of their annual or long-period variations. As soon as the full significance of this statement is realised, we have not far to seek for a real cause. We may find it in the accumulation of snow over continental regions, adding to the pressure on the land. In this way the straining effect existing along the shore-line may be increased, so that the seismically sensitive region may yield most frequently during the winter months. Or we may find it in the great annual see-saw of barometric pressure over land and sea. In the warm summer weather the land surface becomes strongly heated as compared with the ocean surface. The result of this is that the atmospheric pressure over the ocean is somewhat greater on the average than the pressure over the land. As the winter comes on, the land surface cools until in temperate regions it becomes on the average colder than the sea. As a result, the atmospheric pressure over a continent becomes considerably greater than over the contiguous ocean. It should be noted that this see-saw of pressure is not perceptible in tropical regions, exactly where, as we have seen, there is no distinct seasonal periodicity in earthquakes. Here, then, we have a meteorological phenomenon with a seasonal periodicity of identically the same character as the annual variation in earthquake frequency. We do not mean that this winter accumulation of pressure over land areas causes earthquakes; but that, given the seismically sensitive region separating land and ocean areas, it may well be enough to accelerate the occurrence of those yieldings or snappings or explosions which are among the real origins of earth-shakings. In this sense we may regard snow accumulations and barometric gradients as real seismic factors.

These conclusions are based on statistical averages; and when we speak of a winter maximum of frequency we do not mean that the greatest earthquakes tend to occur in winter. Terrible disasters like that which visited the south shores of Japan in October of last year must be regulated—if we may use the expression—by conditions that depend wholly upon the internal structure of the earth. This earthquake was the most violent that had visited Japan for thirty-seven years. It was felt over the greater part of the main island; and, from the destruction caused to railways and telegraphs, it was some days before it was generally known how

terrible had been the shock in the populous provinces of Mino and Owari. This region lies about forty miles to the south-east of Kyoto. Here railway metals were twisted, river embankments destroyed, bridges broken, whole towns of houses and temples reduced to ruins, and thousands of inhabitants killed. In the neighbourhood of Gifu the configuration of mountain and valley has been changed completely; and it is believed that a large tract of inland country has been depressed below the sea-level. An important centre in the pottery industry was involved in the destruction; while the floods and fires that ensued added to the havoc wrought. For a week following the great shock thousands of smaller disturbances continued to occur. In Tokyo and Yokohama the shock was fortunately not felt as an excessive one. The motion of the ground was much greater than is usually experienced; but it was of a gentle swaying character, and was consequently unaccompanied by any serious damage to property. It may be mentioned that the region most heavily visited is not volcanic, and is much less subject to shakings than regions farther east—another instance of the hopelessness of any attempt to predict the approach of a disastrous earthquake.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER I.—UP THE RIVER.

‘CAN you not be content, George?’ asked the girl, sitting in the stern. ‘I think that I want nothing more than this. If we could only go on always, and always, and always, just like this.’ She had taken off her right-hand glove, and she was dipping her fingers into the cool waters of the river as the boat slowly drifted down stream. ‘Always like this,’ she repeated softly. ‘With you close to me—so that I could touch you if I wanted to—so that I could feel safe, you know—the sun behind us, warm and splendid, such a sweet and fragrant air about us, trees and gardens and fields and lanes on either side—and both of us always young, George, and—and nice to look at, and all the world before us.’

She, for one, was not only young and nice to look upon, but fair—very fair to look upon. Even young persons of her own sex, critics and specialists in the Art and Science of Beauty—rivals as well—had to confess that Elsie was rather pretty. I believe that few such critics ever go farther. She was, to begin with, of sufficient stature, in a time when dumpy women are not considered, and when height is a first necessity of comeliness: she paid, next, such obedience to the laws of figure as becomes the age of twenty, and is, with stature, rigorously demanded at this end of the century. Her chief points, perhaps, lay in her eyes, which were of a darker shade of blue than is common. They were soft, yet not languid; they were full of light; they were large, and yet they could be

quick. Her face was subject to sudden changes that made it like a spring-time sky of shower, rainbow, sunshine, and surprise. Her hair was of a very common brown, neither dark nor light. She was attired, this evening, in a simple gray frock of nun’s cloth with a bunch of white roses on her left shoulder.

When one says that her companion was a young man, nearly all is said, because the young men of the present day are surprisingly alike. Thousands of young men can be found like George Austin: they are all excellent fellows, of much higher principles, on some subjects, than their fathers before them; not remarkably intellectual, to judge by their school record: yet with intelligence and application enough to get through their examinations moderately: for the most part they do pass them with moderate success: they are not ambitious of obtaining any of the great prizes—which, indeed, they know to be out of their reach—but they always set before themselves and keep always well in sight the ideal suburban villa and the wife: they always work steadily, if not feverishly, with the view of securing these two blessings; they always hope to secure an income that will enable them to maintain that wife—with a possible following of babies—in silk attire (for Sundays); in ease as to household allowance; and in such freedom of general expenditure as may enable her to stand up among her neighbours in church without a blush.

The world is quite full of such men: they form the rank and file, the legionaries: their opinion on the subject of labour is purely Scriptural—namely, that it is a curse: they do not particularly love any kind of work: they would prefer, if they had the choice, to do nothing at all: when they get their summer holiday they do nothing all day long, with zeal: they give no more thought to their work than is sufficient for the bread-winning: whether they are professional men or trading men their view of professional work is solely that it brings in the money. If such a young man becomes a clerk, he never tries to learn any more after he has left school: he accepts the position: a clerk and a servant he is, a clerk and a servant he will remain. If he is engaged in trade he gives just so much attention to his business as will keep his connection together: that and no more: others may soar: others may become Universal Providers: for his part he is contented with his shop and his Sunday feast. If he becomes a professional man he learns no more of his science than is wanted every day. The lawyer passes his exam. and puts away his law-books; he knows enough for professional purposes: the doctor reads no more; he knows enough for the ordinary needs of the G. P.: the schoolmaster lays aside his books; scholarship and science interest him no longer; he has learned enough to teach his boys: the curate makes no farther research into the history and foundations of his church; he has learned enough. In a word, the average young man is without ambition; he is inclined to be lazy; he loves the present far more than the future—indeed, all his elders unite in letting him know that his own is quite the most enviable time of life; he likes to enjoy whatever he can afford, so that he very often eats up all his

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wages : he does not read too much : he does not think too much : he does not vex his soul too much with the problems of life—greater problems or lesser problems—he accepts the teaching of his newspaper, and agrees with the words and the wisdom of yesterday's leading article : he accepts religion, politics, morals, social systems, constitutions, things present, past, and future, as if—which is perfectly true—he had nothing to do with them, and could not help it whatever was to happen. He never wants to alter anything : he believes that all British institutions are built on the solid rock and fashioned out of the hardest granite : any exceptions to this rule, he thinks, have come straight down from Heaven.

Observe, if you please, that this kind of young man confers the greatest possible benefits upon the country. He ought to be made a Baronet at least, if honours meant anything. His apparent sluggishness keeps us from the constant changes which trouble some nations : his apparent lack of ambition makes it easy for the restless spirits to rise : were the country full of aspiring young men we should be for ever having civil wars, revolutions, social upsydowns, new experiments, new religions, new governments, new divisions of property, every year. Again, it is this young man who by his steady attention to business, his readiness to work as much as is wanted, but no more ; his disregard of theories and speculations, his tenacity ; his honesty, his loyalty, his courage, and his stout heart, has built up the British name so that there has never been any name like unto it, nor ever will be again, for these solid and substantial virtues.

Being, then, just a young man of the time, George Austin was naturally like most young men in dress, in appearance, in language, and in manners. And had it not been for the strange experience which he was to undergo, he would have remained to this day just like other young men. He was better looking than most, having a good figure, a well-shaped head, and regular features, with eyes rather fuller of possibilities than falls to the lot of most young men. In short, a good-looking fellow, showing a capability for something or other in his firm mouth, ample cheek, strong chin, and resolute carriage. He would have made a fine soldier ; but perhaps an unsuccessful general, for want of that quality which in poets is called genius. In the same way he would in a lower walk keep a business together, but would fail to achieve a great fortune for lack of the same quality. As for his age, he was seven-and-twenty.

'Always like this,' the girl went on. 'Always floating down the stream under a summer sky. Always sweet looks and love and youth. It seems as if we could never be unhappy, never be worried, never want anything, on such an evening as this.' She turned and looked up the stream, on which lay the glory of the sinking sun—she sighed. 'It is good to come out on such an evening only to have a brief dream of what might be. When will the world give up their foolish quarrels, and join together to make the lives of all happy ?'

They had been talking, among other things, of socialism, all out of yesterday's leading article.

'When,' George replied, 'there is enough of good things to go round : when we invent a way to make all men ready to do their share as well as to devour it : when we find out how to make everybody contented with his share.'

Elsie shook her head, which was filled with vague ideas—the ideas of a restless and a doubting time. Then she went back to her original proposition. 'Always like this, George—and never to get tired of it. Time to stand still—nothing to change : never to get tired of it : never to want anything else. That is Heaven, I suppose.'

'We are on earth, Elsie,' said her lover. 'And on earth everything changes. If we were to go on drifting down the stream, we should get into trouble over the weir. To capsize would be a pretty interruption to your Heaven, wouldn't it ? And the sun will soon be setting and the river will get misty ; and the banks will grow ugly. But the chief thing is that we shall both grow old. And there is such a lot that we have got to do before we grow old.'

'Everything has to be done,' said Elsie. 'I suppose we have done nothing yet.'

'We have got to get married for the first thing, before we grow old.'

'Couldn't you love an old woman, George ?'

'Not so well, Elsie,' her lover replied, truthfully. 'At least, I think not.—And oh ! Elsie, whenever I do think of the future, my heart goes down into my boots. For the prospect grows darker and darker.'

Elsie sighed. She knew, already, too well, what was in his mind. Plenty of girls, in these days, know the familiar tale.

'Darker every day,' he repeated. 'They keep on crowding into the profession by multitudes, as if there was room for any number. They don't understand that what with the decay of the landed interest and of the country towns, and the cutting down of the costs, and the work that goes to accountants, there isn't half the business to do that there was. There don't seem any partnerships to be had for love or money, because the few people who have got a good thing have got no more than enough for themselves. It is no use for the young fellows to start by themselves ; so they have got to take whatever they can get, and they are glad to get even a hundred a year to begin with—and I am seven-and-twenty, Elsie, and I'm drawing two hundred pounds a year.'

'Patience, George ; something will turn up. You will find a partnership somewhere.'

'My child, you might as well tell Robinson Crusoe that a boiled leg of mutton with caper sauce is going to turn up on his desert island. We must not hope for the impossible. I ought to be grateful, I suppose, considering what other men are doing. I am planted in a good solid House. It won't run away, so long as the old man lives.'

'And after that ?'

'Well, Mr Dering is seventy-five. But he will not die yet, not for a long time to come. He is made of granite : he is never ill : he never takes a holiday : he works harder than any of his people ; and he keeps longer hours. To be sure, if he were to die without taking a partner—well

—in that case, there would be an end of everything, I suppose.—Elsie, here's the position.' She knew it already, too well—but it pleased them both to parade the facts as if they were something quite novel. 'Let us face it'—they were always facing it. 'I am Managing Clerk to Dering & Son—I get two hundred pounds a year—I have no prospect of anything better. I am bound all my life to be a servant. Elsie, it is not a brilliant prospect: I found out at school that it was best not to be too ambitious. But—a servant all my life—I confess that did not enter into my head. If I knew any other trade, I would cut the whole business. If there was any mortal thing in the whole world by which I could keep myself, I would try it. But there's nothing. I have but one trade. I can't write novels, or leading articles; I can't play on any instrument; I can't paint or act or sing or anything—I am only a solicitor—that's all. Only a solicitor who can't get on—a clerk, Elsie. No wonder her ladyship turns up her nose—a clerk.' He leaned his chin upon his hands and laughed the conventional laugh of the young man down on his luck.

'Poor George!' she sighed. In such a case there are only two words of consolation. One may say 'Poor George!' or one may say 'Patience!' There is nothing else to say. Elsie first tried one method and then the other, as a doctor tries first one remedy and then another when Nature sulks and refuses to get well.

'And,' he went on, piling up the misery, 'I am in love with the sweetest girl in the whole world—and she is in love with me!'

'Poor George!' she repeated with a smile. 'That is indeed a dreadful misfortune.'

'I am wasting your youth, Elsie, as well as my own.'

'If it is wasted for your sake, George, it is well spent. Some day, perhaps'—

'No—no—not some day—immediately—at once.' The young man changed colour and his eyes sparkled. It was not the first time that he had advanced this revolutionary proposal. 'Let prudence go to the'—

'Not there, George—oh! not there. To the winds, perhaps, or to that famous city of Palestine. But not there. Why, we might never get her back again—poor Prudence! And we shall be sure to want her all our lives—very badly. We will, if you please, ask her to go for a short voyage for the benefit of her health. We will give her six months' leave of absence: but we shall want her services again after her holiday—if you think we can do without her for so long.'

'For a whole twelvemonth, Elsie. Let us brave everything, get married at once, live in a garret, and have a splendid time—for a whole twelvemonth—on my two hundred pounds.'

'And am I to give up my painting?'

'Well, dear, you know you have not yet had a commission from anybody.'

'How can you say so, George? I have painted you—and my sister—and my mother—and your sisters. I am sure that no studio even of an R.A. could make a braver show of work. Well—I will give it up—until Prudence returns. Is it to be a garret? A real garret, with sloping walls, where you can only stand upright in the middle?'

'We call it a garret. It will take the form, I suppose, of a tiny house in a cheap quarter. It will have six rooms, a garden in front and a garden behind. The rent will be thirty pounds. For a whole twelvemonth it will be a real slice of Eden, Elsie, and you shall be Eve.'

Elsie laughed. 'It will be great fun. We will make the Eden last longer than a twelvemonth. I daresay I shall like it. Of course I shall have to do everything for myself. To clean the doorstep will be equivalent to taking exercise in the fresh air: to sweep the floors will be a kind of afternoon dance or a game of lawn-tennis: to wash up the cups and saucers will be only a change of amusement.—There is one thing, George—one thing'—she became very serious—'I suppose you never—did you ever witness the scouring of a frying-pan? I don't think I *could* do that. And did you ever see beefsteaks before they are cooked? They suggest the animal in the most terrible way. I don't really think I could handle those bleeding lumps.'

'You shan't touch a frying-pan, and we will have nothing roasted or fried. We will live on cold Australian beef eaten out of its native tin: the potatoes shall be boiled in their skins. And perhaps—I don't know—with two hundred pounds a year we could afford a servant—a very little one—just a girl warranted not to eat too much.'

'What shall we do when our clothes are worn out?'

'The little maid will make some more for you, I suppose. We certainly shall not be able to buy new things—not nice things, that is—and you must have nice things, mustn't you?'

'I do like things to be nice,' she replied, smoothing her dainty skirts with her dainty hand. 'George, where shall we find this house—formerly Eve's own country villa before she—resigned her tenancy, you know?'

'There are places in London where whole streets are filled with families living on a hundred and fifty pounds a year. Checkley—the chief's private clerk—lives in such a place: he told me so himself. He says there is nobody in his parish who has got a bigger income than himself: he's a little king among them because he gets four hundred pounds a year, besides what he has saved—which is enormous piles. Elsie, my dear, we must give up our present surroundings, and take up with gentility in its cheapest form.'

'Can we not go on living among our own friends?'

George shook his head wisely. 'Impossible. Friendship means equality of income. You can't live with people unless you do as they do. People of the same means naturally live together. Next door to Lady Dering is another rich Madam, not a clerk's wife. For my own part I shall sell my dress clothes for what they will fetch—you can exchange your evening things for morning things. That won't matter much. Who cares where we live, or how we live, so that we live together? What do you say, Elsie dear?'

'The garret I don't mind—nor the doorsteps—and since you see your way out of the difficulty of the frying-pan'—

'You will be of age next week, when you can please yourself.'

'Hilda gives me no peace or rest. She says that there can be no happiness without money. She has persuaded my mother that I am going to certain starvation. She promises the most splendid establishment if I will only be guided by her.'

'And marry a man fifty years older than yourself with one foot already well in'—

'She says she has always been perfectly happy. —Well, George, you know all that. Next Wednesday, which is my birthday, I am to have a grand talk with my guardian. My mother hopes that he will bring me to my senses. Hilda says that she trusts entirely to Mr Dering's good sense. I shall arm myself with all my obstinacy. Perhaps, George—who knows?—I may persuade him to advance your salary.'

'No, Elsie. Not even you would persuade Mr Dering to give a managing clerk more than two hundred pounds a year. But arm yourself with all you have got—don't forget any piece of that armour, child. The breastplate—there was a poor damsel once who forgot that and was caught by an appeal to her heart—nor the helmet—another poor damsel was once caught by an appeal to her reason after forgetting the helmet. The shield, of course, you will not forget—and for weapons, my dear, take your sweet eyes and your lovely face and your winning voice—and I swear that you will subdue even Mr Dering himself—that hardened old parchment.'

This was the kind of talk which these lovers held together whenever they met. George was poor—the son of a clergyman, whose power of advancing him ceased when he had paid the fees for admission. He was only a clerk, and he saw no chance of being anything else but a clerk. Elsie could bring nothing to the family nest, unless her mother made her an allowance. Of this there could be no hope. The engagement was considered deplorable: marriage, under the circumstances, simple madness. And Hilda had done so well for herself, and could do so much for a sister so pretty, so bright as Elsie! Oh! she was throwing away all her chances. Did one ever hear of anything so lamentable? No regard for the family: no ambition: no sense of what a girl owes to herself: no recognition or gratitude for the gift of good looks—as if beauty was given for the mere purpose of pleasing a penniless lover! And to go and throw herself away upon a twopenny lawyer's clerk!

'George,' she said seriously, 'I have thought it all out. If you really mean it—if you really can face poverty—mind—it is harder—much—for a man than for a woman'—

'I can face everything—with you, Elsie,' replied the lover. Would he have been a lover worth having if he had not made that answer? And, indeed, he meant it, as every lover should.

'Then—George—what in the whole world is there for me unless I can make my dear boy happy? I will marry you as soon as you please, rich or poor, for better for worse—whatever they may say at home.—Will that do for you, George?'

Since man is so constituted that his happiness wholly depends upon the devotion of a woman,

I believe that no dear boy ever had a better chance of happiness than George Austin—only a managing clerk—with his Elsie. And so this history begins where many end, with an engagement.

THE MONUMENT.

To the Londoner there is only one monument in the world—The Monument. And now that an agitation has been set on foot for its demolition or removal to the Victoria Embankment, we may be sure that a good deal of feeling will be exhibited on the part of the public who are partial to the ancient glories and landmarks of the City. The Monument, as is well known, was erected to commemorate the extinction of the Great Fire of London; and while its erection was not untinctured by partisanship, it still remains a very interesting memorial of a state of public feeling that, we hope, is now less and less manifested.

The summer of 1666 had been excessively dry, and the wood and plaster houses of old London were consequently in a ripe condition for burning, when the fire which proved so disastrous broke out. Every effort was made to prevent the spread of the flames, and everybody lent what aid he could in rescuing life and property. Even the king seemed to think seriously of the matter, and indeed a contemporary writer informs us that he took great pains—'no less than if he had been a poor labourer'—and 'strecht forth his own royal hands to assist in the putting out of those aspiring flames, which seemed to expect a princely extinguisher.'

There is no need to dwell upon the extent of the ravages of this dreadful conflagration, for that is well known to all; it will be sufficient to say that the City rose from its ashes, an improvement perhaps upon the old one, but not by any means so great a one as might have been made, had Wren's plans for rebuilding it been accepted and carried out.

In order to 'preserve the memory of this dreadful visitation,' an Act of Parliament was passed enacting that a column or pillar of brass or stone should be erected on or near unto the spot where the fire broke out, in perpetual remembrance thereof, and that such inscriptions as the Mayor and Court of Aldermen might direct should be engraved thereon. Sir Christopher Wren was appointed to design and carry out the erection of the column. For this purpose he drew up several designs, notably one with sculptured flames of gilt bronze issuing from the loopholes lighting the staircase; and a phoenix, also of gilt bronze, upon the summit. It was found, however, that this design would prove too costly; and, moreover, the resistance which the outspread wings of such an ornament would offer to the wind would have rendered it somewhat unsafe. The great architect then suggested a statue of Charles II., twelve or fifteen feet high, which in brass would have cost one thousand pounds. Such a finishing would, he thought, 'be more valuable in the eyes of foreigners and strangers,' and worthy of the greatness of the pillar. This was submitted to His Majesty, who, although he did not dislike the idea of a statue, was of opinion that a large ball of metal would

be more ornamental at a distance. Next to a statue, this seemed the most suitable thing that could be placed upon the column, 'by reason of the good appearance at distance, and because one may goe up into it and upon occasion use it for fireworks.'

The work of erecting the Monument was accordingly commenced in 1671, the site chosen being that upon which the church of St Margaret, New Fish Street, had stood before the fire, and was exactly two hundred and two feet—the height of the column—from the spot where the fire broke out.

The Rev. Samuel Rolle, whose meditations upon the fire and its results are well known, found food for reflection not only in the site selected for the Monument, but also in the materials of which it was proposed to construct it. Nothing, he thought, is more emblematical of fire than burnished brass; and moreover, if the City, as it was alleged, met its destruction by 'the treachery of the Papists,' no metal could be more appropriate as showing that they had sinned with a brow of brass. If, on the other hand, stone were used, that would be a lasting emblem of the hardness of their hearts in burning such a city and bringing thousands of families to ruin. It was his opinion that a memorial should have been placed where the fire ended, to mark the termination of the citizens' sufferings, rather than where it now stands. In this opinion he had the support of Evelyn, who would like to have seen in addition 'a plain lugubrious marble' placed where it broke out.

As is generally known, the substance chosen was stone; and the column was completed in 1677, the work having proceeded somewhat slowly on account of the difficulty of obtaining stone of sufficient size and quantity. To remedy this, a proclamation was issued forbidding the transport of stone from the Isle of Portland 'without leave and warrant first obteyned from Dr Christopher Wren, surveyor of our works.' Altogether, 28,196 cubic feet were used in the construction of the Monument, which is a fluted Doric column, 202 feet high; the body of the shaft is fifteen feet in diameter, and stands upon a pedestal forty feet high and twenty-one square. Upon the summit is a blazing urn of gilt brass, supported by a cone thirty-two feet high, around which is an iron balcony. Upon the north side of the pedestal is graven a lengthy legend in Latin, which describes the extent of the damage done by the fire, and formerly ended in this manner: 'But the Papistical malice which perpetrated such mischiefs is not yet restrained.' This last line formed no part of the original inscription, but was added, by order of the Court of Aldermen, in 1681, at which time rumours of the Popish Plot were disturbing men's peace of mind, and exciting in them horror and hatred of the Papists in an extreme degree. In 1685, however, this line was erased, only to be cut still deeper four years later. Once more, and for ever, it was obliterated in January 1831 by Act of Common Council. In the same manner was treated the following inscription, which was engraved around the base of the pillar, beginning on the western side: 'This Pillar was set up in perpetual remembrance of that most dreadful burning of this Protestant City, begun and carried on by the

treachery and malice of the Popish faction in the beginning of Septem. in the year of our Lord 1666, in order to the carrying on their horrid plott for extirpating the Protestant religion and old English liberty, and the introducing Popery and slavery.'

It was the recutting of these offensive inscriptions that inspired Pope with the well-known lines:

Where London's column pointing at the skies,
Like a tall bully lifts the head and lies.

Upon the south face is another legend, also in Latin, and somewhat lengthy, which informs us of the measures which were taken for the restoration of the City in the best possible manner, such as widening and levelling streets, rebuilding churches, bridges, and gates. The east side records the names of the Lord Mayors in whose years of office the column was begun, continued, and completed.

A most interesting feature of the Monument is the allegorical picture upon the front or west side. It was sculptured by Gabriel Cibber, father of the famous actor and poet-laureate, and represents the City—in the form of a female figure—wearing a most unhappy look. Time is trying to raise her, while Providence bids her look towards a cloud upon which are seated figures of Peace and Plenty. To the right is a figure of the king, who wears a laurel wreath upon his head, and holds a truncheon in his hand. He is attended by Science, Architecture, and Liberty, whom he bids render assistance to the languishing City. Behind the king stands his brother, the Duke of York, who holds a garland in one hand wherewith to crown the City, and in the other a sword for her protection. Justice and Fortitude bring up the rear; while beneath the raised pavement upon which the king is seen, grovels Envy, gnawing at a heart. This figure gave rise to an amusing query some time back, a correspondent of *Notes and Queries* asking the editor of that paper whether it was intended to represent a man swallowing an oyster!

Although Cibber was a sculptor of great capability, as shown by his well-known figures of 'Raving and Melancholy Madness,' which were formerly over the gates of Bethlehem Hospital, and are now in the Guildhall Museum, this specimen of his work has been severely criticised. Wren's biographer considered it sufficiently rude and gross. 'Charles,' he continues, 'is bewigged and be-Romanised; scaffold poles support Portland stone clouds, and solid genii float bisected with joints of mortar as thick as their fingers. The scaffolding, ladders, and hodmen have been admired for years, and record the dresses of the labourers with more fidelity than that of the monarch and his architect.'

The total cost of erecting the Monument was £13,700, of which Cibber was paid £600 'for carving the hieroglyphick figures'; Robert Bird, coppersmith, £128, 6s. for the copper urn; and William French, £104 for setting up the balcony. The remainder mostly went in masons' and carpenters' charges, &c.

In the present day, when there is everywhere a craze for building Babels, the 'Metropolitan Maypole,' as the Monument has been called, is

no longer to be marvelled at on account of its proportions. At the time of erection, however, it was spoken of as 'the biggest and highest all Europe has to show,' being considerably taller than the columns of Trajan and Antoninus. But if our pillar does not impress the visitor of to-day with the magnificence of its proportions, it may at least claim his attention on the score of the historic interest with which it is imbued. It is for this reason, perhaps, that the greater number of sightseers in London betake themselves to Fish Street Hill; although not a few find the journey up the winding stairs—three hundred and more in number—and the admission fee of threepence repaid by the view which is sometimes to be obtained from the summit. Addison on one occasion visited the Monument in company with his friend the fox-hunter, and found the 'perpendicular march' very trying both to wind and limbs, having to pause for breath several times on his way up. His friend, on the contrary, being a 'well-breathed man,' quickly mounted the steps; and by the time poor Addison emerged from the darkness of the staircase, had counted all the steeples and churches that were within sight, and was calculating upon how many acres they stood. The number of warehouses and barns visible from this elevated position raised in his mind thoughts of Popish meeting-houses which required all Addison's persuasive powers to dispel. On reaching the street again, the fox-hunter was more than joyed at reading the inscription which accused the Papists of burning London, as he had always been under the impression that the Presbyterians were responsible for the act. This impression was the result of a country attorney's information, who doubtless held opinions savouring of Papacy.

The Royal Society at first made use of the Monument for astronomical observations; but the vibration of the column, due in some measure to the constant stream of traffic in the vicinity, so affected the nicety of their experiments that they had to be discontinued. Owing to this, a report quickly spread that the column was unsafe, and for some time people were afraid to ascend. As, however, there was no collapse, they gradually got the better of their fear, and continued their visits. It was formerly permitted to continue the upward journey beyond the cage in which visitors now stop; and Roger North gives the following interesting account of a visit at a time when the interior of the flaming urn was open to the public. He says: 'We mounted to the top, and one after another crept up the hollow iron frame that carries the copper head and flames above. We went out at a rising plate of iron that hinged, and there found convenient irons to hold by. We made use of them, and raised our bodies entirely above the flames, having only our legs, to the knees, within; and there we stood till we were satisfied with the prospects from thence. I cannot describe how hard it was to persuade ourselves we stood safe, so likely did our weight seem to throw down the whole fabric.' Those who have paid a visit to the top of the Eiffel Tower will doubtless remember experiencing a similar feeling on a larger scale to that described by Roger North.

The 'London Spy' could not, of course, omit seeing the Monument in his travels, and was

informed by his guide that it was the first thing that caused wry-necks in England, by reason of the people 'staring at the top on't.' As for the utility of it, the vintners' boys and drawers visited it once a week for the purpose of exercising their legs and learning the 'tavern-trip' by running up to the balcony and down again. An instance is on record of a drawer at the *Baptist's Head Tavern* in the Old Bailey performing this feat for a wager which was laid by some of the frequenters of that house. The boy was allowed three minutes, but was down again in two and a half, a performance which gained him the applause of the bystanders, if he did not manage to get the wager paid.

The Monument seems to have had the same fascination for suicides as some other lofty structures, notably Clifton Suspension Bridge. No fewer than seven persons have met their deaths from this pillar, six of which were suicides. Cradock, a baker, was the first to throw himself over in 1788. Next on the list is Lyon Levi, the diamond merchant, who was in the thoughts of the 'vulgar little boy' when he was contemplating self-destruction from Margate pier:

And now I'm here, from this here pier
It is my fixed intent
To jump as Mr Levi did
From off the Monument.

A baker named Leander; Margaret Moyes, a baker's daughter; a boy named Hawes; and Jane Cooper, a servant girl, were the other unfortunate victims of suicidal mania, the seventh death being that of a man who fell from the balcony accidentally while looking at a live eagle that was kept in a cage there. Advantage was taken of these melancholy occurrences to publish 'special' news-sheets containing detailed accounts of them, with a grotesque illustration, and perhaps a few verses on the subject with a moral of some sort running through them.

SUNSTRUCK.*

CHAPTER X.

'No, my boys; I am going to say no more about it. I believe you, John Manton, fully. I grant that the declaration was an accident, and that you would have spoken to me. It has been a surprise, for I could not help suspecting Josee of liking you, and I thought it was mutual.'

'On my honour as a man, Captain Greville,' cried Manton, 'never since I have been your guest have I said word, or given your adopted child look when we have been alone that you might not have heard or seen.'

'I believe you, John Manton; and sorrowfully enough I congratulate you, for you are a fortunate fellow.—Now, let's finish our wine and change the subject. There has been enough of this for one day. Another time we'll discuss the matter in its business light.—But come, Burns; you look very solemn. Is there another complication? Do you want to make a clean breast about anything?'

'Yes, sir,' cried the young officer, flushing like a school-girl; 'but I can't find words to say what I wish.'

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'Shall I say the words for you?—This has all been a complete piece of deceit: you and John Manton here knew I had two pretty daughters, and you determined to come and carry them off.'

'Don't treat it like that, sir,' cried Burns; 'it is too serious. I am weak yet, and I can't speak as I should like; but I will tell you—I do love Miss Maine—Josephine.'

'And you want my consent?'

'Yes, sir,' said Burns sadly; 'but I want hers too, and it seems hopeless.'

'Faint heart never won fair lady,' said the captain, shaking the young man's hand. 'Be patient and wait.'

He opened the door and drew aside the curtain for the young men to pass into the drawing-room, where Renée and Josephine were sitting far apart.

That evening passed like a dream to John Manton, in spite of several fierce or mocking glances from Josephine's eyes. But he paid little heed to them, for he saw that she was laughing merrily and chatting with Burns half the time, while the latter was giddy with excitement and delight.

After a time, at his earnest request, she sang ballad after ballad, Renée willingly playing the accompaniments, and Josee's sweet rich contralto voice never sounded more full of power and passion. The notes thrilled through Burns, and in his fool's paradise he made himself believe that the loving expression given to the songs was intended for his ears and his alone.

But when all separated for the night, he was somewhat chilled by Josee's manner. He spoke to her tenderly, but he could not conceal from himself that the words she uttered in return had a half-mocking ring. Still, he brightened up when he reached his room, where Manton stayed with him for a few minutes, looking dreamily happy and content, for the gentle pressure of Renée's hand still clung to his fingers, and in her eyes he had read a young innocent girl's first love and devotion to the man of her heart.

'Ah, Jack!' said Burns with a sigh, 'I wish I were as happy as you seem to be.'

'There is no seem, old fellow, for it is all true—true as heaven. Only wait, and you will be the same. There; good-night. I'm too stupid to talk. It is all so new and strange—so much greater than I can believe.—Good-night, lad—God bless you!'

He hurried out of the room, through the mat-draped doorway, to his own.

Burns tossed off the white coat he wore, lit a cigar, and went to the open window to lean out over the long, low, flower-hung veranda, and drink the delicious, comparatively cool night-air. It was profoundly dark; and he listened to the peculiar notes of the night-birds in the neighbouring forest, and the whir and chirp of the abundant insects that thronged around. He was thinking of Josephine, and going through the evening once again, when it struck him that he could hear a faint whispering somewhere close at hand, like the voices of two people in eager consultation, the one deep and angry, the other almost piteous, and broken every now and then by a sob.

This roused his curiosity, and he was wondering who it could be, when the whispering sud-

denly ceased, and from a distance rose a dull, low, thrumming, followed by a chorus of voices, sounding weird and strange in the darkness, with the lightning playing faintly just above the spot whence the music seemed to come.

'How fond these blacks are of night meetings,' thought Burns. 'Well, they work hard enough by day, and they have a right to some amusement, of course.—I wonder whether she ever will—I wonder whether she ever will—— Bah! what a coward I am.'

He left the window and went to the draped doorway which separated the rooms, drew the matting aside and whispered: 'Asleep, Jack?'

A heavy breathing came back for answer, and Burns dropped the hangings.

'Asleep and happy, poor fellow. Well, Heaven bless 'em both! I wonder whether I can get my share.'

He threw off his clothes and lay down; but his mind was not at rest, and hour after hour passed with the sleep he wooed refusing to come.

At last a peculiar drowsy sensation assailed him, and he was just dropping off, when he started back into wakefulness to lie listening to a rustling movement in the next room, followed by a faint *chink* as of glass against glass, and then came a trickling sound.

'Jack's thirsty,' he said to himself. 'So am I. Shall I get out and have a good drink? Yes, I will—no, I will not; the water will be flat, mawkish, and warm. I wish I had an orange—I wish—I wish'—

It must have been something about Josee, and her hands giving him some luscious production of the captain's garden, for a smile played about his lips as he forgot his thirst, and dropped off soundly into a deep sleep, which lasted till the cathedral birds were chanting loudly in the dewy woods. Then he awoke with a start, for the idea was strong upon him that he had heard the sound of a fall, and a deep groan in his room, and that he had been grasped by a hand, while a voice whispered sharply: 'Will—Will—for God's sake—help!'

CHAPTER XI.

All was perfectly still for a few moments; and in the belief that he had been dreaming, Burns was about to settle himself down to sleep again, when a groan came from the adjoining room; and hurrying in, it was to find Manton writhing on the floor, his face all drawn and ghastly in hue, his brow covered with great agony-wrung drops, and his teeth set upon one of his arms to check the cries which strove to escape.

'Jack, what is the matter?' cried Burns, hurrying to his friend's side.

Manton raised his head a little and gasped forth in a choked unnatural voice: 'Water—burning—help!'

There was a great porous vessel on the table, and a glass by its side, which Burns filled hastily and bore to his companion, who dashed out his hand to seize the glass, but only struck it from Burns's grasp, for it to fall on the matting, every drop being spilled.

Before he could fill it again, Manton writhing in a fresh paroxysm the while, there was a sharp tap at the outer door, and Greville's voice was heard.

'May I come in?' he said. 'Is anything the matter?'

Burns flew to the door and flung it open.

'For goodness' sake, get some brandy, sir. The poor fellow is in a horrible state.'

Greville hurried to Manton's side, dropped on one knee, hurriedly asked him a few questions, and examined him the while.

'What is it, sir?' whispered Burns; 'the fruit?'

'Fruit? No,' said Greville, through his teeth.

—'Here, Manton, my lad, try and speak. What have you taken?'

No words came, but the young man feebly pointed to the water-vessel.

Greville caught up the glass from the floor, poured into it a portion of the contents of the vessel, tasted it cautiously, and then spat it violently out and poured the contents of the glass back again.

'Don't touch any more of that, any one,' he cried.—'Stop; I'll secure it;' and catching up the vessel, he hurried with it out of the room, to return at the end of a few minutes with another glass, whose contents he forced the young man to swallow. It was a hard task, though, for his teeth were set fast, and he was writhing and groaning in the midst of agony which was insupportable.

By this time the whole house was astir. Renée and Josephine had hurriedly dressed, and the former had been twice to the bedroom door to beg for news, but only to be summarily dismissed, and return to her companion, whose face was drawn into a set frown, her eyes looking wild and strange, and in her way she seemed to be suffering as deeply as Renée.

'What does papa say?—what does he say?' she whispered hoarsely. 'Is it the old illness come back?'

'I don't know. He will not speak. I was to go back and wait,' sobbed Renée. 'Josee, dear, do you think he is very bad?'

The girl made no answer, but began to pace the room hurriedly, looking wild and strange. Several times over, she shuddered and made for the open window, as if to hurry out into the garden; but she always checked herself, and resumed the hurried pacing of the room.

Twice over, a low moaning reached them, and Renée ran to the door, wringing her hands; while Josephine thrust her fingers into her ears to shut out the sound.

Then there was silence again, and they waited, till all at once, so wild a cry of agony rang out that Renée could bear no more, and, rushing up-stairs, passed at once into the sufferer's room.

Her father started from where he had been bending down over Manton, trying to restrain him, and turned to her.

'Renée, my child,' he whispered, 'how could you be so mad as to come here. I am doing everything I can for him.'

'Yes, yes,' she said in a pitiful tone; 'I know, I know; but you can't do this;' and, sinking upon her knees by the pillow, she laid one of her soft white hands upon the young officer's brow, as she whispered: 'Jack—Jack—my darling—if I could but bear it for you!'

He turned his strained and bloodshot eyes to her, raised his hands and pressed them upon hers,

a low painful sob escaping from his lips before he set his teeth and lay with his eyes closed, evidently suffering acutely.

Renée looked up at her father—a long appealing look; but he shook his head.

'I can do no more,' he said. 'That is right: try and get him to suffer patiently. There may be a little hope.'

Renée's eyes dilated with horror.

'May be a little hope!' she said half aloud; and, uttering a stifled cry, she laid her brow upon the edge of the bed, her lips moving fast in prayer.

Greville stood gazing down at the young people for a few minutes, heart-wrung by his child's agony, and fully realising now the potency of the first love awakened in her breast. Then with a sigh of misery he walked across to the window, where Burns was standing, ready to look appealingly in his eyes.

Greville read his thoughts, and said in a whisper: 'I can do no more. It is horrible—horrible!'

'Yes; but tell me,' said Burns, 'what is the complaint? Have you given him medicine?'

'Don't you see what it is?'

'No: only that he seems in frightful, cramping, burning pain.'

Greville was silent for a few moments, and then gloomily: 'You must know the truth,' he said in a voice so low that his words were hardly audible: 'he has been poisoned.'

'What!' cried Burns excitedly.

'Hush! Come down with me to my den;' and, unnoticed by Manton and Renée, they stole from the chamber, and into the captain's private room, half-office, half-study, where, after closing the door, he unlocked a cupboard, took out the porous vessel that had stood upon Manton's table, and then taking a glass, he poured out a little, tasted it, and spat twice.

'Yes,' he said; 'that is the third time of testing it. I cannot be mistaken—it is manchineel.'

'Manchineel? What is manchineel?'

'The deadly poison used by the black people to get rid of their enemies.'

'Impossible!' cried Burns. 'Poor Jack had no enemies. The black people liked him, for he was generosity itself. No one could be so cruel. And without a motive! There was no'—

He stopped short, with his face blanching and a look of horror in his eyes.

'Well,' said Greville hoarsely, 'what are you thinking? You are suspecting some one.'

'I? No, no!' cried Burns. 'Whom could I suspect?'

The captain's face was very white too, as he caught Burns's arm in a fierce grip, and his voice sounded strange in the young man's ears. 'That drug is terrible in its effects. Please God, the antidote I have given may save John Manton's life; but if he dies, I have seen enough yesterday and this morning to know that it will destroy another young life as well. William Burns, you suspect some one; and if I can bring home the guilt to the wretch who has done this thing, even if it were one dear to me, he should suffer by the law—if I could withhold my own hand, and not be his executioner myself. Now! Speak out: the truth. Hah!'

It was as if a sudden revelation had flashed across his brain, and loosening his fierce grip of the young man's arm, he staggered back into a chair, and sat gazing wildly up at Burns.

'No, no!' he panted; 'it is too horrible. It is impossible.'

'Yes,' cried Burns; 'the thought is too horrible. It is impossible.'

'He thinks the same—he thinks the same,' muttered Greville; and he let his face drop down into his hands, as, in rapid review, he ran over the incidents of the love matters of the young people, of the pangs of jealousy and hatred, and of there being the strain of the vindictive black blood in certain veins. Then he thought of the people on his plantation, their secret meetings, their dabblings in witchcraft so called, and poison; and he recalled the different cases of death which had occurred in the island, several of which could be traced to poison.

'No, no!' he gasped, as he raised his head again, and saw Burns gazing at him with a look full of agony and despair. 'It is impossible. But you—you are thinking the same still.—You believe it—you suspect her.'

'No,' cried Burns fiercely. 'I do not suspect her. Do you think I could suspect the woman I love of such a horror!'

Greville stood with his brow deeply lined, gazing straight before him, and as he remained there fixed, the glass rattled against the porous vessel, for the floor vibrated with the hurried tread of some one walking to and fro in the next room, and once more the eyes of the two men met in a penetrating gaze.

'Not in a sane moment,' said Greville at last aloud, but as if speaking to himself; 'but perhaps in a mad fit of jealous passion.—Come with me.'

'No,' cried Burns fiercely, as he barred the way. 'Where are you going?'

'To see my patient,' said Greville, with a bitter smile.

Burns gave way, and followed his host into the chamber, where the situation remained the same. Manton was in agonising torture, but one arm was about Renée's neck.

He opened his eyes as they entered, and Greville crossed over to him and laid his hand upon his brow.

'Don't—don't let me die—now,' he whispered. Then his face contracted again, and Greville shrank away, signing to Burns to follow.

'It is too hard to bear,' he whispered. 'Poor lad!—poor lad!'

He led the way to his own room again, and now Burns caught his arm.

'A doctor,' he said—'a doctor.'

'There is not one upon the island,' replied Greville. 'If there were a hundred, they could do no more than has been done.'

He stopped, listening to the rapid pace to and fro in the dining-room, and, with his face contracting more and more, he whispered the one word 'Come!'

'No,' said Burns again fiercely. 'You shall not go there. It is a cruel insult. It is madness. I tell you it is impossible.'

'And yet in your heart you believe it,' said Greville sternly, 'or you would not try to stop me. Come.'

'You shall not go,' cried Burns.

'Silence, boy. I stand to her in the place of her father. Recollect, too, that you are as weak as a child. I will be just, but I must have this cleared up and at once.'

He grasped the young man's wrist in a tremendous grip, and Burns was constrained to accompany him as he led the way into the dining-room, where, with her long black hair dishevelled and her face wild with horror, Josephine was walking rapidly to and fro, caged in by the horrible thoughts from which she was trying vainly to escape.

CHAPTER XII.

The girl did not hear them enter, and walked on with her eyes fixed, like one walking in her sleep, till she was close upon Greville, when she started excitedly, caught at his arm, and thrust her face close to his.

'John Manton?' she said in a husky tone of voice. 'How is he? Is he better?'

'No,' said Greville, gazing down at her fiercely.

'What is the matter with him?' she cried imperiously.

'You know,' said Greville coldly.

'I? No! Oh no! I do not know,' she said rapidly; and she laid her hand upon her breast, as if to stay its throbbings.

'Then I will tell you,' said Greville in a slow, hard, magisterial tone.

'No, no,' cried Burns. 'Captain Greville, it is an outrage.—Josephine, go to your room. You shall not hear his words.'

She darted a grateful look at him; and then faced the captain, as he said sternly: 'Silence, boy! That poor fellow—my guest—the man to whom my child has given her heart—lies above us, foully—treacherously poisoned.'

'Ah!' cried Josephine, uttering a wild cry.

'No, no, no; it is impossible.'

'It is possible, for it has been done.'

'No, no,' cried Josephine wildly, as she threw herself upon her knees at the captain's feet. 'Don't say that. Father!—my more than father, don't say that.'

'I do say it; I will say it; and it has been done by the accursed hand of one who was wildly jealous of him—mad that he had fixed his affections elsewhere.—Josephine, I took you to my heart as a child; I have been as your father, and now you have stricken at me through him—through them.'

'What!' she cried, shrinking back so that she half crouched upon the floor, supporting herself by one hand.

'I say you have stricken at me through them.'

'No, no; it is not true,' she cried hysterically.

'No other hand could have done the cruel deed; no other could have had access to the room above and drugged the water with manchineel.'

'Manchineel?' cried Josephine, gazing wildly before her. 'Ah, yes; it must have been manchineel.'

'Your words almost convict you, girl. You have always loved to consort with the wretched women who practise upon their fellow-slaves. You know of the powers of these drugs.'

'I? No,' she cried hurriedly; 'very little.'

'Enough for the purpose. Answer me: you placed that poison where he would drink of it?'

'I?—No, father, no!—It is too cruel.'

'Yes, it is too cruel,' cried Burns.

'You deny it? Do you deny that you cared for Mr Manton, and suffered bitterly from jealousy at what you have seen?'

'No,' she cried, rising slowly, and shaking back her hair from her face; 'no; I do not deny that I did suffer, as I am suffering now.'

'Captain Greville, you hear. Have some mercy.'

'Yes, I will have mercy if she will confess.'

'That I poisoned John Manton!' said Josephine proudly. 'No; I cannot confess. I would sooner have poisoned myself and been at rest.'

'I'd give the rest of my poor life to know that this was true,' cried Greville.

'But you believe me guilty,' said the girl, drawing herself up. 'Well, I am little better than a black slave. I have lived upon your charity all these years; now send me back amongst your slaves; punish me, if you will. I could not be more wretched than I am. What will you do—flog me? Well, I have nothing to confess.'

'Josephine, my child!' cried Greville wildly, 'it was in a fit of madness.'

'Ah!' she cried, as his appealing tones rang through her, and she threw herself at his feet.

'Now then—the truth—the truth?'

She rose and shrank away. 'I have told you the truth,' she said coldly, 'and you do not believe. I would have died sooner than injure him and break poor René's heart.—And you,' she said, turning sharply upon Burns and speaking with a curiously *naïve* innocence of manner. 'I am not blind: you always liked me from the first. Do you, too, believe I could be the wretch he thinks?'

'No,' cried Burns excitedly, as he caught her hands and held them firmly. 'I do not believe it, dear; and I'll fight your battle against the whole world.—Now, Captain Greville, what have you to say?'

The captain turned upon him slowly as Josephine drooped over the hands which held hers, kissed them both, and then sank down weeping hysterically.

CURIOUS WEAPONS.

In these days, the appliances of war have been elaborated to such a degree that it is questionable whether they are not rather too scientific to be used by excited men in so rough a business as actual fighting. But on this subject invention has never stood still, and there is hardly any race so barbarous or low in the scale as not to have some ingenious 'slaughter-weapon' to show.

Perhaps a too practical acquaintance with the claws of wild beasts led some races to copy their use. The best-known instance of this is the Indian 'bâgh'nakh,' or tiger's claw, consisting of from three to five steel claws about two inches long, connected together, and furnished with rings in which to insert the fingers. This horrid con-

trivance was carried in the left hand, leaving the right free for a dagger; and the identical 'tiger-claw' wherewith Sivaji, founder of the Mahratta kingdom, murdered the Mogul's general, is now in the Indian Museum. But in actual war the bâgh'nakh would have been only an encumbrance, and its use was confined to private feud. Some of the White Nile tribes use an iron ring on the right wrist, with diverging blades four or five inches long. The Samoans, without the feline race to copy, invented the 'fighting glove,' a sort of mat of coco fibre, tied to the hand by strings, and thickly set with rows of sharks' teeth.

The boomerang (literally, 'kangaroo-stick') is too well known to need description; but it may be said that there are two varieties, one of which, the war boomerang, was not intended to return to the thrower. It is much less curved and heavier than the other or 'circling' weapon. Boomerangs of this sort were in common use in Southern India, made of wood, iron, and even ivory; but the returning boomerang is solely Australian. The best performers were the blacks of the Riverina plains, and marvellous some of their feats were; but few of them are left, and before long, boomerang-throwing will be a lost art.

The 'chakra,' or quoit, of India is a very ancient weapon. It was much affected by the 'akalis,' or champions, of the Sikhs, and is still in use in the Punjab. The akali wore a conical cap some two feet high, formed of plaited cane, covered with blue cotton cloth, surrounding which, hoop-fashion, were sometimes as many as nine quoits, from a foot to four inches diameter, of light thin steel, and sharpened outwardly to a knife-edge. When the warrior desired to use them, he passed his forefinger through the uppermost to lift it off, gave it a rapid spin on the finger overhead, and launched it horizontally at his enemy's face. Some of these men were said to have made good practice at eighty yards. But its use was resorted to only when hard pressed, as the quoits were often valuable articles, inlaid with gold, and the chances of recovery after a *mélée* would be small.

Another odd missile weapon is the Central African 'trombash.' This is a species of knife, but of the most eccentric shape, no two specimens being alike, and resembling old English capital letters in outline. They are formidable weapons when used by practised hands; but it is quite evident in examining them that a good deal of labour has been wasted on them, for many of the blades and projections are so placed as to be perfectly useless. Africans in general seem to have a weakness for unnecessary detail in their weapons. Some of them spend a vast amount of labour and skill in forging the most atrocious-looking arrow and spear heads, bristling with barbs till they look like awns of barley imitated in iron. Some of them go so far as to make the barbs point in opposite directions, so that the arrow may neither be drawn out nor pushed through. It is strange that no African race seems to have any idea of making a really effective sword or dagger. All those illustrated in books of travel or exhibited in collections are curiously unpractical instruments. The same peculiarity

can be seen in the curious axes used by the Khonds and other aborigines of Central India, the blades of which are scolloped and crescented in a way to take away greatly from their efficiency.

The national Malay weapon, the kris, is said to have been invented by a Javanese monarch of the fourteenth century. Its varieties are said to exceed a hundred, and there are in Javanese no fewer than fifty names for them. It varies in size, from the two-feet wavy blade of Sulu down to a mere toothpick. But the peculiarity is that the weapon is never ground, but kept rough and saw-like in edge, by scouring with lime juice or the juice of an unripe pine apple, sometimes mixed with arsenic; and it is on this account that kris wounds are so dangerous. Old specimens are so eaten away by this practice that the blade seems formed from a bunch of wires roughly welded up. Such crises are highly valued, and some of the ancient ones, heirlooms of chiefs, with grotesquely carved and inlaid hilts and sheaths, are almost unpurchasable.

The Bornean 'mandau,' or 'head-taker,' is a modification of the Burmese 'dah.' It is a heavy thick-bladed cutlass, from twenty to thirty inches long, and the edge is ground from the right side only, the left side being forged slightly concave. The blade is also slightly curved to the right, so that the cutting action of the weapon is like that of an enormous gouge. Only two strokes can be dealt with the mandau—from right to left downwards, and left to right upwards.

But it is to India that we must look for strange and ingenious varieties of the sword and dagger, as well as for the most striking examples of art in arms. The weapon common to every part of Hindustan, so as to deserve the name of the national arm, is the 'katar.' This is a broad two-edged dagger, the hilt of which is formed something like an H, the hand grasping the crossbar, which is generally double, while the side-bars extend on each side of the wrist. Some katars are made with five blades, which unite into one, but, by squeezing together the crossbars, diverge like the fingers of a hand when the thrust has been given. Other katars are made in sets of two, or even three, of diminishing sizes, the blades of the larger being hollow, and forming sheaths for the smaller. Some of the Southern Indian katars, known as 'death-givers,' are immense weapons, nearly two feet long in the blade; and the hilts are a mass of fantastic scroll-work and mythological monsters, the cobra with expanded hood figuring largely. There is also the 'bich'hwa,' or scorpion's sting, a doubly-curved dagger; the 'khanjar,' a larger form of the same; and the 'peshkabz,' or hunting-knife. But none of these elaborate weapons have about them the terribly 'business-like' look of the Khyber knife (ch'hura), with its ponderous single-edged, tapering blade, and plain ivory hilt.

The sword-stick, or 'gupti,' is of Indian origin. There is one form of it which was peculiar to chiefs and men of rank. The hilt of the sword, forming the handle of the stick, is crutch-shaped, and the owner, when lying on his divan, would have his arm resting upon this, so as never to be taken quite unarméd. It was called in Persian 'takiyah-i-zafar,' or 'cushion of victory.' Another form of concealed sword was made so

flexible as to be worn round the waist like a girdle.

The swords of Hindustan are of endless variety in size and shape, the most common being the 'teggha' and 'talwar,' broad much-curved blades, wrongly styled scimitars, the real scimitar being a clumsy chopper-like weapon, nearly straight, and widening to the point. There is the 'khanda,' a heavy straight sword with basket-hilt, like the Scottish claymore. The khanda was an object of worship to the Rajputs, precisely as to the Scythians. The 'pata,' or gauntlet sword, much used by the Mahrattas, was a development of the 'katar,' having a long rapier blade, often of Spanish make, and a cylindrical hilt, into which the arm was passed to the elbow. The Persian sword, however, was valued above all others, and particularly those of Khorassan. These are the real 'Damascus blades,' the damascening being produced by the crystallisation of the steel. Connoisseurs recognise ten different varieties of watering or 'jauhar,' and the most incredible prices have been given for fancy specimens. In Burnes' Visit to the Court of Sind, he says: 'I have had in my hand a plain blade which had cost them [the Amirs] half a "lac of rupees" [in that day about five thousand pounds]. Such swords as these often bear long inscriptions in gold inlaying, such as: "I am the produce of Persia, of ancient steel and water. When a brave man wields me, a hundred thousand Hindus will perish by my edge."' There is a very singular sword in the South Kensington collection, composed of two very thin blades, with half-hilts, which are made by a series of catches on the inner side to unite and form a single weapon. From the great beauty of the ornaments and mounting, it was probably made by some renowned armourer for presentation. But the great brittleness of these swords makes them unfit for use by Europeans, who would shiver them to pieces by a 'swashing blow;' while the Oriental employs their razor edge only for the 'drawing' cut.

The Nepalese 'kukri,' or heavy-curved knife, with the edge on the inner side, is familiar by name to readers of the accounts of our 'little wars,' in which the Ghoorka infantry have taken part. But there is another Nepalese weapon, the 'kora,' the most strangely-shaped sword ever used, which, starting from the hilt about an inch and a half wide, when near the end turns at right angles and expands to six inches. The late Jung Bahadur, a noted expert at all Eastern arms and exercises, was able to decapitate a bullock with one blow of the kora.

There is a weapon known as the 'crow's beak,' which was formerly much in use among men of rank in Persia and North India. It was a horseman's weapon, and consisted of a broad curved dagger-blade, fixed at right angles to a shaft, pickaxe fashion. The shaft encloses a dagger, unscrewing at the butt end. This concealed dagger is a very common feature of Indian arms, and especially of the battle-axes of Persia.

The club, or mace, was probably the first, as it is the most universal weapon, and every nation would seem to have some form peculiar to itself. The Maori spent years of labour in grinding to shape his battledore-like 'merai' out of jade

or greenstone; the New Britain savage makes a hole through a granite pebble by dropping water on it while hot, and thus forms the head of his club; the Fijian found ready to his hand a tree, whose evenly radiating roots he trimmed into an exact likeness of the medieval 'morgenstern,' wherewith the Swiss battered down the Austrian ranks at Sempach. The mace of the Persian horseman was of steel, with a head formed of six or more radiating blades or ridges, and had often a basket hilt like a sword. The terrible Mahmud of Ghazni, like the knight of Border song, 'at his saddle-girth had a good steel sperthe, full ten pound weight and more,' and it was with this that he shattered the idol of Somnauth before the eyes of the horrified priests, strewing the temple floor with the jewels hidden within.

The bow as used by Asiatic horsemen assumes a curious shape. They were made of horn, generally buffalo horn, in two pieces, joined by a wooden centre, and when unstrung, had the form of a capital C, which enabled them to be hung over the arm on horseback. When strung—a difficult feat to those unused to them—they took the double curve of the antique bow as seen in the representation of Cupid. This was the 'Tatar's bow,' used by the Scythians, Parthians, and Persians, and, up to quite recent times, in India. It was drawn by the thumb alone, on which the archer wore a broad thick ring of horn, ivory, or cornelian, on whose edge the bowstring rested. The long-bow was also much in use among Indian infantry of the middle ages; but neither they nor any other Asiatics appear to have done such execution as the English archers of the same period. Bernier says, describing a battle between Aurungzebe and his brother Dara: 'They draw their arrows with a marvellous swiftness, one man being able to draw six of them before a musketeer can discharge twice; but, to say truth, their arrows do but little execution; more of them are lost in the air or broken on the ground, than hit.' The bow, in fact, requires more than any other weapon constant practice from childhood; and strong Englishmen of the present day are quite unable to use the bows of the half-human Mincopies of the Andamans. There is a curious example of a repeating crossbow in the United Service Museum, taken from the Taku forts, at which place the Chinese archers caused us heavy loss on the first occasion of the attack.

The many strange machines known as catapults, balistas, &c., had their counterparts all over Asia. It may be mentioned that the last instance of the use of the catapult in Europe was at the great siege of Gibraltar, where one was built, by order of General Eliott, to 'lob' shells into a part of the Spanish works too close to allow the guns to depress enough. But when cannon and muskets had once come into use, they were soon adopted everywhere. The great gun of Bijapur was cast in 1549 at Ahmednagar. It is twenty-eight inches in diameter of bore, and weighs over forty tons; and as the two places are distant nearly two hundred miles as the crow flies, it would be interesting to know how it was transported. It was used in several battles by the Mogul emperors, sacks of copper coins being fired from it. It was named Malik-i-Maidan, or 'the monarch of the field.' There was a gun at Dacca

thirty-six feet long, and weighing some thirty tons, made of wrought-iron bars laid together like the staves of a cask, and hooped with iron rings. Its bore was about fifteen inches. This gun was worshipped by the natives of Dacca; but about 1780, the island on which it lay was washed away, and it disappeared in the Ganges. The celebrated fort of Asirgarh had a gun of about the same calibre, which the natives believed capable of pitching a four-hundred-pound ball fourteen miles. It was a common practice with Eastern armies to cast their cannon before the place besieged, so as to avoid the difficulties of transport. In 1838, at the siege of Herat by the Persians, Mahmoud Shah had a heavy bronze gun cast in his camp; and when the siege was raised, the gun was sawn to pieces, and taken back to Teheran. The most celebrated guns of this sort are the 'kemaliks' of the Dardanelles, huge bronze howitzers, some of them over two feet in calibre. At the passage of the Dardanelles by Sir J. Duckworth's fleet in 1806, the ships suffered heavily from these seemingly antiquated monsters, the range being short. One shot killed and wounded twenty-five men, and an eighty-gun ship was all but sunk by an eight hundred pound stone ball. At the siege of Rhodes, the Turks constructed mortars by hollowing out cavities in the solid rock at the proper angle; and in the arsenal at Malta is a trophy of the long and glorious defence of Valetta, in a Turkish gun, about a six-pounder, composed of a copper tube, coiled over with strong rope, and 'jacketed' with raw hide. In the same collection are some antique 'quick-firers,' breech-loaders, with small bores and immensely long barrels, like punt guns. The Malay pirates put great trust in the long brass swivel guns called 'lela'; and in Borneo, these lelas were used as a kind of currency, large sums being estimated in guns. The Chinese cast excellent bronze guns (there is a fine specimen of them in Devonport Dockyard); but so little did they understand gunnery, that in the so-called 'Opium War,' the forts of the Bocca Tigris, defending the Canton river, had the guns built immovably into the walls. The Sikh gunners opposed to us in the two Punjab wars, though they loaded with amazing recklessness, shovelling in the powder from open boxes, stuck to their guns to the last. The blood of the first man killed was smeared on the gun, and the whole detachment died beside it, sooner than retreat.

Eastern muskets and matchlocks are remarkable for their great length of barrel, which is necessary to consume the large charge of weak, slow-burning powder. The 'Damascus' or 'laminated steel' twist barrels were brought to a high state of perfection in the East long before our gun-makers adopted the plan. The same gorgeous ornamentation was applied to firearms as to swords, 'armes de luxe' being made for chiefs, in which even the bands attaching the barrel to the stock were of massive gold, and the muzzle cased in gold and set with jewels, the foresight being sometimes a diamond, in anticipation of a recent patent. Skilful marksmanship has always been highly valued in India. Akbar the Great was a noted shot, proving the muskets with his own hands, so that it may be guessed that there was not much 'scamping' done in the royal workshops. Bernier, however, says of Aurung-

zebe's infantry: 'Their musketeers be pitiful men, afraid of burning their eyes or singeing their great beards, but most of all, lest some Djin or evil spirit burst their musquet.'

CASKS CUT FROM THE TREE.

FEW objects are more familiar than the common cask or barrel; yet few people have probably been at pains to consider the skill and ingenuity which have succeeded in bringing to perfection an invention as scientific as beneficial all the world over; and probably fewer still are conversant with the brain-power and time which have been expended in attempts to produce machinery which shall at the same time cheapen and expedite the manufacture of these well-known and useful contrivances. Barrels are no new thing; as far back as the time of Pliny they were in use, and that author mentions the Alpine valleys as the locality of their invention.

The trade readily divides itself into two great classes—the wet and dry manufactures; or casks designed to hold liquids, or dry goods. A third subdivision, known technically as 'white cooperage'—that is, wooden tubs, churns, pails, and other even-staved vessels—may be added.

When it is considered that tight casks have not merely to withstand the pressure of the contained liquid, but frequently also that of gases, arising from fermentation of such liquid, in addition to the handling and rough usage to which they are at all times liable, it will be readily understood how important are sound materials and workmanship in their construction.

A cask is a double conoid—namely, having its greatest diameter—technically known as the 'bulge' or 'belly'—at its centre; and this being borne in mind, the complex shape of each stave will be at once appreciated. Not only is the stave curved lengthways to form the 'bulge,' but crossways it is similarly made to form part of the circumference of the cask; whilst the edges must receive the exact bevel to fit those on either side along their entire length. The two processes known as 'chiming' and 'crozing,' which consist in finishing the ends for receiving the heads, yet remain to be performed. The 'chime' is the bevel formed on the extremity of the staves; and the 'croze' is the groove into which the ends or heads fit. Hooping, generally with iron bands, completes the manufacture of a cask.

Having thus sketched in brief outline the routine in vogue in the cooper's trade for manufacturing casks, we pass to consider as concisely as possible Mr Oncken's invention for producing staveless casks direct from the tree. Mr Oncken aims at turning out casks from one piece of wood—the body of the cask to be formed of one long single stave; the ordinary shape—that is, the double conoid—being retained. The method of preparing the body of the cask may be likened to sharpening a lead-pencil by a pocket sharpener, the shaving produced forming the staves of the cask.

The stem of a tree—poplar is frequently chosen—is first cut into lengths corresponding to the size of the cask. These lengths are then boiled

for two or three hours in a closed vessel, a current of electricity being passed through the water the whole time. The chemical action thus produced in combination with the prolonged boiling gives to the wood the necessary softness, and enables the subsequent cutting process to be performed without difficulty in a machine rotating the log in the same manner as the ordinary lathe, whilst advancing it towards a broad block fixed on a frame, having a slot in it similar to that of the common joiner's plane. As the trunk of the tree is revolved against the block, a continuous sheet of wood is cut of any desired thickness, and drawn out flat by hand on to a table at the rear of the machine. The sheets are then passed through a grooving-machine, which cuts the 'croze' or groove in which the head is eventually fitted. Another machine seizes the sheet between two arms, and by the means of knives, cuts a series of mortises or slots round the sides, giving it when made up the desired conical shape. Eventually, the sheet reaches the cooper, who rolls it into cylindrical form, drives on the hoops, and renders it a perfect barrel, after drying in a special apparatus.

The invention above detailed has safely passed the experimental stage, and is already in full practical operation at Merxem, in Germany, where Mr Oncken has started a factory, and is busily engaged in turning out his staveless casks.

When it is considered how numberless are the quantities of casks in daily use in every part of the globe, and the innumerable purposes to which they are devoted, hardly a trade or industry being carried on without them, the wide field open to improved and economical means of production of such indispensable necessities of civilisation, will be readily appreciated.

'HOME, SWEET HOME.'

'I'm going home, I'm going home!'

A ragged urchin cried one day;

The blue sky looked a far-off dome,

As he pursued his homeward way.

I wondered if 'sweet home' to him

Had music's meaning soft and clear,

Those words that mock, or seem a hymn,

According to the list'ning ear.

The urchin's voice was jubilant;

And yet I judged his home must be

Where daily toil kept off grim want,

Or struggled with chill poverty.

But if the lamp of love burns bright

Young hearts to warm, and cheer, and bless,

'Tis still 'sweet home' where day and night

Is felt some human happiness.

A palace home without love's spell

Can only be a stately Inn,

Though mortals are constrained to dwell,

Its cheerless, sheltering walls within,

And dream, with undefined desire,

Of something which they do not know,

Of peace to which their hearts aspire,

Which only love can here bestow!

CAMILLA CROSLAND.

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TECK AND ITS DUCHY.

THE announcement of the engagement of Prince Edward of Wales to the Princess May of Teck, and the melancholy fact of his death since, drew attention to the duchy from which the Princess's father derives his title.

It has been often a matter of surprise to the writer how very little English people visit some of the most interesting scenery in Germany, through and past which they whirl in express trains on their way to the Alps. It is true the Alps are giants and supreme in beauty. The snow and ice exercise a magnetic influence on such as are hurrying for a short holiday among the mountains away from the drudgery of office and the smoke of a capital. But there are others who have time on their hands and who saunter on their way; yet these are content to follow the beaten route and stay where the guide-book tells them there is a good hotel and a fine view. Such persons are perhaps ill disposed to venture on new ground; but there are others to whom new ground is attractive, and to such we would suggest an expedition that will halt short of the Alps—almost within sight of them, and visit the Rauhe Alb, a singular limestone and volcanic plateau between the Neckar and the Danube.

The district is interesting to the geologist, for the Jurassic limestone has been penetrated and metamorphosed by volcanic vents; the flora is interesting; this region, moreover, has been a cradle of crowned heads. Here is Hohenzollern, the ancestral home of the imperial German family; here is Hohenstaufen, whence issued the splendid imperial Swabian house that held the crown of Charles the Great till its extinction in Conradin.

Here also is Teck, whence the fair Princess draws her title. Moreover, the valleys are most quaint and beautiful; and the little towns and villages of the principality, with their russet-tiled roofs, teem with picturesque subjects for the pencil and brush. The Jura limestone makes

a great crescent with its horns to the north, and in the basin thus formed flow the Neckar and the Main. The limestone range springs out of the Black Forest chain; the Danube rises in it; then, after running east, it curves up into Franconia, and dies away into the Main Valley, between Bamberg and Baireuth. This half-moon of limestone forms a plateau, with the long slope towards the south and east, and the abrupt face towards the basin it encloses. The plateau is in itself barren and bald; the rain that falls on it is at once absorbed, and goes to fill vast subterranean reservoirs that decant into the streams at the mountain roots. The valleys torn in the limestone are wildly beautiful, the rocks assuming the most strange and picturesque shapes; and the bottoms are occupied by cherry and pear and apple orchards; or by meadows rich with grass, watered by the deep limpid streams that well out of the flanks of the mountains.

The Swabian Jura, that leads into the Franconian Jura to the east, is, in fact, a continuation of the Swiss Jura. The geologic formation is the same. Fire and water have combined to give a peculiar character to the portion of the Jura which is in Swabia, for not only have the torrents rent the sides of the mountain terrace in all directions, but the central fire of the earth has sought a vent there, and has thrown up a multitude of mud volcanoes, now quiescent indeed, but bearing unmistakable evidence of their origin. Thus the plateau of limestone is broken by a number of conical heights, of which the Rechberg rises to the height of 2316 feet, and is crowned by a little pilgrimage church. The Hohenstaufen (2237) is another of these singular cones, the summit occupied by the ruins of the castle of Barbarossa. Another, again, is Hohenzollern (2840), surmounted by a marvellous crown of towers and battlements, a modern restoration of a medieval castle, the nursery of the present imperial house of Germany. The geologic formation consists of the dark lias, the lowest of the rocks that at all shows; then the brown oolite, and above that the white Jura limestone.

Nothing can be conceived more dreary than the plateau, with its white road glaring in the mid-day sun, the miserable starved barley-fields on each side of it, and the cottages whitewashed till they hurt the eye—in the blaze of the summer sun. But the contrast, the moment we pass into the valleys, is the more charming, and the views from the high points, such as Hohenstaufen or Teck, are of peculiar beauty, especially at sunset, when the golden orb has sunk behind the purple-domed heights of the Black Forest. Or, again, looking south, to see the marvellous panorama of the Swiss and Bavarian Alps before one, ghost-like, their silver peaks alone visible, their bases lost in ethereal blue.

The castle of Teck lies on a peak of the Rauhe or Swabian Alb, that runs out from the main mass above the village of Owen in the Lauter Valley. The valley is walled to the west by a singular spur of limestone, or rather peninsula, connected with the main range by a narrow neck, that has at some prehistoric period been cut through by a fosse and a bank thrown up, so that it was made an almost inaccessible camp of refuge in time of war. The valley watered by the Lauter is of singular beauty; it is held to be the most lovely in the whole district. In June it is a sea of flowers, from the fruit-trees that occupy it—plums, apples, cherries, pears, damsons—and the stately old walnut trees are certain to attract admiration. Vines are grown on the slopes of the hills. Unhappily, a vineyard is not so picturesque as one would have fain wished it, so we will say no more about them.

The nearest station is Kirchheim, on a branch line from that connecting Stuttgart and Ulm. From Kirchheim a good road leads to Owen, about five miles distant, and when there, we are at the foot of the heights of 'the Teck.' This is a peak of limestone, connected with the main mass by a neck of rock, and it has a volcanic hill thrown up to the north of it, connected with it by another neck. From the platform of the old castle the eye looks down some twelve hundred feet into the valley below over the precipices of limestone. This old ducal residence, this eagle nest of a noble family, is surrounded with basaltic elevations, that stand as watchmen about it. Across the green meadows and glittering thread of the Lauter rise precipitously the great crags to the west, that form the plateau out of which rises another fortress, the Hohenneuffen. The view is most impressive; the conical Achalm shooting up above Reutlingen, capped with the towers of a venerable castle, stands to the west. The Rechberg, with its little chapel high up in the clouds, is visible to the west; Hohenstaufen, Stuifen, the Rosenstein, and other points, form a coronet of volcanic cones surrounding Teck on the horizon. And far away in the west lie the dark masses of the Black Forest. Below, the plain, with its clusters of brown-tiled houses in hamlets and towns, with the spires of churches, and here and there an

old tower of an enclosing wall, rising out of the richest foliage and the most smiling pastures, forms a picture of as great a charm in its own way as the distant prospect.

The castle of Teck must at one time have been very extensive, if we may judge by the remains. Who built it is unknown. In 1152 it was pawned by Bertold of Zähringen to the Emperor Frederick I.; but it was redeemed shortly after, and it formed the nucleus of the estates of the family of Zähringen in this part of Swabia. In 1525, when the peasants rose in arms against the feudal lords, this castle, like almost every other in Swabia, fell into their hands, and was burnt. However, in 1557 a chapel was still in use in the midst of the ruins, and some attempt was made in 1564 to convert the remains of the castle into a great breeding-place for horses and cattle, and a cheese and butter manufactory. It was hence that the breed of cattle that goes by the name of Teck was raised, a breed held still in esteem. In 1736, Duke Charles Alexander of Würtemberg considered it advisable to erect here a fortress after the prevailing fashion; but on his death the works were abandoned.

The Teck family was founded by Adalbert, one of the Zähringen stock, a faithful companion of Henry VI. He died in 1197. One of the members was Bertold, Bishop of Strassburg in 1223, and one of the best bishops of that see. Conrad III. received several votes of the electors to the German crown after the death of Rudolf of Hapsburg. He died in 1242. Owing to the German custom of subdividing all estates among the children equally, the Teck family was greatly reduced in wealth and power; and in 1384, Frederick IX. fell into difficulties; but was assisted by Frederick, Elector of Bavaria, and Eberhard, Duke of Würtemberg. His son Ulric rode to the Council of Constance at the head of two dozen horsemen. He died in Italy in 1432. Ludwig IX. became an Augustinian friar, and was given the patriarchate of Aquileia. He died of the plague at Basle, and was buried there, the last of his race. The embarrassments of the family had been the advantage of their neighbours; the Dukes of Würtemberg had managed to gradually absorb most of the estates, either by purchasing them outright, or by lending money on some of the manors, which the Teck Dukes were unable to redeem. As now the race had come to an end, the Duke of Würtemberg obtained a grant from the Emperor Maximilian I. in 1493 to assume the title of Duke of Teck and to quarter the Teck arms. So it remained till 1806. The title of Dukes of Teck has now passed to a line collateral to that of the kings of Würtemberg, and is borne by the son of Duke Alexander of Würtemberg by his wife, the Countess Claudine of Rhédey, who was created Countess of Hohenstein by the Emperor Francis I.

Just under the castle of Teck is a cave called the Cavern of Sibylla. In it at one time lived a certain Sibylla, who was the mother of three bold sons who carved out their fortune with their sword, and built themselves the daring tower of Wielandstein on a precipitous needle of rock a little farther up the valley. For long these three brothers lived in the closest friendship: then—all three fell in love with the same

woman, and their affection towards each other was turned into deadly hatred. They fought each other, and, according to the belief of the superstitious, at dead of night about the ruins may be heard the cries and clash of arms of the brothers, who are condemned to fight till doomsday. And then at night, from out of her cave issues the mother, and travels in a coach of flame from the Teck to Wielandstein, to endeavour to bring her sons to peace. And it is said that a certain strip along the valley where the leaves hang on the trees for a fortnight longer than elsewhere, and where the fruit is always sweeter than elsewhere, and the grapes yield a more fiery wine, marks the course along which the Lady Sibylla rolls nightly in her coach of fire.

There are a good many legends connected with the neighbourhood.

Duke Lutzman of Teck married Elizabeth, Countess of Freiburg about 1300. A witch warned her that she would die by lightning; accordingly, she was in deadly fear whenever a storm broke. After having consulted many learned scholars, one gave her a charm she was to repeat whenever a cloud passed over her head. This gave her some rest. However, she always bade her ladies in waiting look well at the sky and report to her if they saw a cloud that seemed to threaten. One day there was a great feast in the castle at Teck. Before she entered the banquetting hall, she said to her maid: 'Go forth and search the sky if all be clear.' The girl went outside, and looked in every direction. The sky was quite clear except for a tiny fleecy cloud that came up with the wind from the Black Forest. She went in and told the Duchess that there was no cloud to be seen. So the lady sat down at table. During the banquet, the little cloud gathered more vapour and spread over the sky. Suddenly there was an explosion. The lightning fell and struck the Duchess dead as she sat at table by her lord. Such is the story. As, however, she seems to have been alive in 1336, she must have used her charm pretty well for a good number of years of her married life. She and her husband were buried in the monastery church of Oberndorf, to which they had been benefactors. Most of the family were, however, buried at Owen, a little town dominated by the castle of Teck, and numbering about two thousand inhabitants. The chapel in which were the tombs of thirteen of the Dukes is, however, destroyed, and only one monument remains. The parish church is gone, the nave much earlier than the choir. A good number of old pictures, removed from the castle of Teck before it fell into complete ruin, are preserved in the town-hall.

The town held to the Swabian league in the sixteenth century, and stoutly resisted Duke Ulrich of Württemberg, who twice laid siege to it. The women armed themselves with hay-forks, and charged the men-at-arms and drove them from the gates. In reward for the prowess of the little town, it was granted special privileges by the Emperor.

The whole valley of the Lauter is rich with picturesque objects, and is full of interest. It was clearly at one time a perfect hive of knightly families, for almost every height is crowned with the remains of a castle. The valley is about twelve miles long, and ends at Gutenberg, that

lies somewhat overshadowed by the mountain walls in their very lap, near the source of the Lauter, that bursts forth from a grotto in the face of a cleft. A little way up the mountain side is a cavern, consisting of several chambers, that has never been thoroughly explored. In this, tradition says, sits a white lady with face cold and dead as the moon—so cold, that he who looks on her feels a chill strike to his heart. There she sits winter and summer, waiting her release; and that will not be till some good Christian shall venture to approach her and, without showing signs of fear, shall kiss her icicle-cold and colourless lips.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER II.—IN THE OFFICE.

'I'LL take in your ladyship's name. There is no one with him at this moment.—Oh yes, my lady,' Checkley smiled superior. 'We are always busy. We have been busy in this office for fifty years and more.—But I am sure he'll see you. Take a chair, my lady. Allow me.'

Checkley, the old clerk, had other and younger clerks with him; but he kept in his own hands the duty, or the privilege, of going to the private room of the chief. He was sixty-seven when last we saw him. Therefore, he was now seventy-five; a little more bent in the shoulders, a little more feeble; otherwise unaltered. In age we either shrivel or we swell. Those live the longest who shrivel; and those who shrivel presently reach a point when they cease to shrink any more till they reach the ninetieth year. Checkley was bowed and bent and lean: his face was lined multitudinously: his cheeks were shrunken: but not more so than eight years before. He wrote down the name of the caller—Lady Dering—on a square piece of paper, and opened the door with an affectation of extreme care not to disturb the chief's nerves by a sharp turn of the handle, stepped in as if it was most important that no one should be able to peep into the room, and closed the door softly behind him. Immediately he reappeared, and held the door wide open, inviting the lady to step in. She was young; of good stature and figure, extremely handsome in face; of what is called the classical type, and very richly dressed. Her carriage might have been seen, on looking out of the window, waiting in the square.

'Lady Dering, sir,' said Checkley. Then he swiftly vanished, closing the door softly behind him.

'I am glad to see you, Hilda.' The old lawyer rose, tall and commanding, and bowed, offering his hand with a stately and old-fashioned courtesy which made ladies condone his unmarried condition. 'Why have you called this morning?

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You are not come on any business, I trust. Business with ladies who have wealthy husbands generally means trouble of some kind. You are not, for instance, in debt with your dress-maker?'

'No—no. Sir Samuel does not allow of any difficulties or awkwardness of that kind. It is not about myself that I am here, but about my sister, Elsie.'

'Yes? What about her? Sit down, and let me hear.'

'Well, you know, Elsie has always been a trouble to us on account of her headstrong and wilful ways. She will not look on things from a reasonable point of view. You know that my mother is not rich, as I have learned to consider rich, though of course she has enough for a simple life and a man-servant and a one-horse brougham. Do you know,' she added pensively, 'I have often found it difficult not to repine at a Providence which removes a father when he was beginning so well and actually on the high-road to a great fortune.'

'It is certainly difficult to understand the wisdom of these disappointments and disasters. We must accept, Hilda, what we cannot escape or explain.'

'Yes—and my mother had nothing but a poor thousand a year!—though I am sure that she has greatly bettered her circumstances by her transactions in the City. Well—I have done all I can, by precept and by example, to turn my sister's mind into the right direction. Mr Dering—by long habit Hilda still called her guardian, now her brother-in-law, by his surname—'you would hardly believe the folly that Elsie talks about money.'

'Perhaps because she has none. Those who have no property do not understand it. Young people do not know what it means or what it commands. And whether they have it or not, young people do not know what the acquisition of property means—the industry, the watchfulness, the carefulness, the self-denial. So Elsie talks folly about money—well, well!—he smiled indulgently—'we shall see.'

'It is not only that she talks, but she acts. Mr Dering, we are in despair about her. You know the Rodings?'

'Roding Brothers? Everybody knows Roding Brothers.'

'Algy Roding, the eldest son of the senior partner—enormously rich—is gone—quite gone—foolish about Elsie. He has been at me a dozen times about her. He has called at the house to see her. He cares nothing at all about her having no money. She refuses even to hear his name mentioned. Between ourselves, he has not been, I believe, a very steady young man; but of course he would settle down; we could entirely trust to a wife's influence in that respect: the past could easily be forgotten—in fact, Elsie need never know it: and the position would be splendid. Even mine would not compare with it.'

'Why does she object to the man?'

'Says he is an ugly little snob. There is a becoming spirit for a girl to receive so rich a

lover! But that is not all. She might have him if she chose, snob or not, but she prefers one of your clerks—actually, Mr Dering, one of your clerks.'

'I have learned something of this from your mother. She is engaged, I am told, to young Austin, one of my managing clerks.'

'Whose income is two hundred pounds a year. Oh! think of it! She refuses a man with ten thousand a year at the very least, and wants to marry a man with two hundred.'

'I suppose they do not propose to marry on this—this pittance—this two hundred a year?'

'They are engaged: she refuses to break it off: he has no money to buy a partnership: he must therefore continue a clerk on two hundred.'

'Managing clerks get more, sometimes; but, to be sure, the position is not good, and the income must always be small.'

'My mother will not allow the man in the house: Elsie goes out to meet him: oh, it is most irregular. I should be ashamed for Sir Samuel to know it. She actually goes out of the house every evening, and they walk about the square garden or in the Park till dark. It is exactly like a housemaid going out to meet her young man.'

'It does seem an unusual course; but I am no judge of what is becoming to a young lady.'

'Well—she needn't go on like a housemaid,' said her sister. 'Of course the position of things at home is strained, and I don't know what may happen at any moment. Elsie says that she shall be twenty-one next week, and that she means to act on her own judgment. She even talks of setting up a studio somewhere and painting portraits for money. That is a pleasant thing for me to contemplate. My own sister earning her own living by painting!'

'How do you think I can interfere in the matter? Lovers' quarrels or lovers' difficulties are not made or settled in this room.'

'Mr Dering, there is no one in the world of whom she is afraid, except yourself. There is no one of whose opinion she thinks so much. Will you see her? Will you talk with her? Will you admonish her?'

'Why, Hilda, it so happens that I have already invited her to call upon me on her birthday, when she ceases to be my ward. I will talk to her if you please. Perhaps you may be satisfied with the result of my conversation.'

'I shall—I am sure I shall.'

'Let me understand. You desire that your sister shall marry a man who, if he is not already rich, should be at least on the high-road to wealth. You cannot force her to accept even the richest young man in London unless she likes him, can you?'

'No. Certainly not. And we can hardly expect her to marry, as I did myself, a man whose wealth is already established. Unless she would take Algy Roding.'

'Very good. But he must have a certain income, so as to ensure the means of an establishment conducted at a certain level.'

'Yes. She need not live in Palace Gardens, but she ought to be able to live—say in Pembridge Square.'

'Quite so. I suppose, with an income of

fifteen hundred or so to begin with. If I make her understand so much, you will be satisfied?'

'Perfectly.—My dear Mr Dering, I really believe you have got the very young man up your sleeve. But how will you persuade her to give up the present intruder?'

'I promise nothing, Hilda—I promise nothing. I will do my best, however.'

Hilda rose and swept back her dress.

'I feel an immense sense of relief,' she said. 'The dear child's happiness is all I desire. Perhaps if you were to dismiss the young man immediately, with ignominy, and were to refuse him a written character on the ground of trying to win the affections of a girl infinitely above him in station, it might produce a good effect on Elsie—showing what you think of it—as well as an excellent lesson for himself and his friends. There is no romance about a cast-off clerk. Will you think of this, Mr Dering? The mere threat of such a thing might make him ready to give her up; and it might make her inclined for his own sake to send him about his business.'

'I will think of it, Hilda.—By the way, will you and my brother dine with me on Monday, unless you are engaged? We can talk over this little affair then at leisure.'

'With pleasure. We are only engaged for the evening. Now I won't keep you any longer.—Good-bye.'

She walked away, smiling graciously on the clerks in the outer office, and descended the stairs to the carriage, which waited below.

Mr Dering returned to his papers. He was not changed in the eight years since the stormy interview with this young lady's brother: his small whiskers were a little whiter: his iron-gray hair was unchanged: his lips were as firm and his nostrils as sharp, his eyes as keen as then.

The room looked out pleasantly upon the garden of New Square, where the sunshine lay warm upon the trees with their early summer leaves. Sunshine or rain, all the year round, the solicitor sat in his high-backed chair before his great table. He sat there this morning working steadily until he had got through what he was about. Then he looked at his watch. It was past two o'clock. He touched a bell on the table, and his old clerk came in.

Though he was the same age as his master, Checkley looked a great deal older. He was bald, save for a small white patch over each ear; he was bent, and his hands trembled. His expression was sharp, foxy, and suspicious. He stood in the unmistakable attitude of a servant, hands hanging in readiness, head a little bent.

'The clerks are all gone, I suppose?' said Mr Dering.

'All gone. All they think about when they come in the morning is how soon they will get away. As for any pride in their work they haven't got it.'

'Let them go.—Checkley, I have wanted to speak to you for some time.'

'Anything the matter?' The old clerk spoke with the familiarity of long service which permits the expression of opinions.

'The time has come, Checkley, when we must make a change.'

'A change? Why—I do my work as well as

ever I did—better than any of the younger men. A change?'

'The change will not affect you.'

'It must be for you then. Surely you're never going to retire!'

'No—I mean to hold on as long as I can. That will only be for a year or two at most. I am seventy-five, Checkley.'

'What of that? So am I. You don't find me grumbling about my work, do you? Besides, you eat hearty. Your health is good.'

'Yes, my health is good. But I am troubled of late, Checkley—I am troubled about my memory.'

'So is many a younger man,' returned the clerk, stoutly.

'Sometimes I cannot remember in the morning what I was doing the evening before.'

'That's nothing. Nothing at all.'

'Yesterday, I looked at my watch, and found that I had been unconscious for three hours.'

'You were asleep. I came in and saw you sound asleep.' It was not true, but the clerk's intentions were good.

'To go asleep in the morning argues a certain decay of strength. Yet I believe that I get through the work as well as ever. The clients do not drop off, Checkley. There are no signs of mistrust—eh? No suspicion of failing powers?'

'They think more of you than ever.'

'I believe they do, Checkley.'

'Everybody says you are the top of the profession.'

'I believe I am, Checkley—I believe I am. Certainly, I am the oldest. Nevertheless, seventy-five is a great age to be continuing work. Things can't last much longer.'

'Some men go on to eighty, and even ninety.'

'A few—a few only.' The lawyer sighed. 'One may hope, but must not build upon the chance of such merciful prolongation. The older I grow, Checkley, the more I enjoy life, especially the only thing that has ever made life happy for me—this work. I cling to it'—he spread his hands over the papers—'I cling to it. I cannot bear to think of leaving it.'

'That—and your savings,' echoed the clerk.

'It seems as if I should be content to go on for a hundred years more at the work of which I am never tired. And I must leave it before long—in a year—two years—who knows? Life is miserably short—one has no time for half the things one would like to do. Well'—he heaved a deep sigh—'let us work while we can. However, it is better to climb down than to be pulled down or shot down. I am going to make preparations, Checkley, for the end.'

'What preparations? You're not going to send for the minister, are you?'

'No. Not that kind of preparation. Nor for the doctor either. Nor for a lawyer to make my will. All those things are duly attended to. I have resolved, Checkley, upon taking a partner.'

'You? Take a partner? You? At your time of life?'

'I am going to take a partner. And you are the first person who has been told of my intention. Keep it a secret for the moment.'

'Take a partner? Divide your beautiful income by two?'

'Yes, Checkley. I am going to give a share in that beautiful income to a young man.'

'What can a partner do for you that I can't do? Don't I know the whole of the office work? Is there any partner in the world who can draw up a conveyance better than me?'

'You are very useful, Checkley, as you always have been. But you are not a partner, and you never can be.'

'I know that very well. But what's the good of a partner at all?'

'If I have a partner, he will have his own room, and he won't interfere with you. There's no occasion for you to be jealous.'

'As for jealous—well—after more than sixty years' work in this office, it would seem hard to be turned out by some new-comer. But what I say is—what is the good of a partner?'

'The chief good is that the House will be carried on. It is a hundred and twenty years old. I confess I do not like the thought of its coming to an end when I disappear. That will be to me the most important advantage to be gained by taking a partner. The next advantage will be that I can turn over to him a quantity of work. And thirdly, he will bring young blood and new connections. My mind is quite made up, Checkley. I am going to take a partner.'

'Have you found one yet?'

'I have. But I am not going to tell you who he is till the right time comes.'

Checkley grumbled inaudibly.

'If I had been less busy,' Mr Dering went on, 'I might have married, and had sons of my own to put into the House. But somehow, being very much occupied always, and never thinking about such things, I let the time pass by. I was never, even as a young man, greatly attracted to love or to young women. Their charms, such as they are, seem to me to depend upon nothing but a single garment.'

'Take away their frocks,' said Checkley, 'and what are they? All alike—all alike. I've been married myself—women are expensive frauds.'

'Well—things being as they are, Checkley, I am going to take a partner.'

'You'll do as you like,' said his servant. 'Mark my words, however; you've got ten years more of work in you yet—and all through these ten years you'll regret having a partner. Out of every hundred pounds his share will have to come. Think of that!'

'It is eight years, I remember,' Mr Dering went on, 'since first I thought of taking a partner. Eight years—and for much the same reason as now. I found my memory going. There were gaps in it—days, or bits of days, which I could not recollect. I was greatly terrified. The man whom I first thought of for partner was that young Arundel, now'—

'Who forged your name. Lucky you didn't have him.'

'Who ran away in a rage because certain circumstances seemed to connect him with the crime.'

'Seemed? Did connect him.'

'Then the symptoms disappeared. Now they have returned, as I told you. I have always regretted the loss of young Arundel. He was clever and a quick worker.'

'He was a forger,' said the clerk, stoutly.—'Is there anything more I can do for you?'

'Nothing; thank you.'

'Then I'll go. On Saturday afternoon I collect my little rents. Not much—in your way of thinking. A good deal to me. I hope you'll like your partner when you do get him. I hope I shan't live to see him the master here and you knuckling under. I hope I shan't see him driving away the clients.'

'I hope you will not see any of these distressing consequences, Checkley.—Good-day.'

The old clerk went away, shutting the outer door after him. Then the lawyer was the sole occupant of the rooms. He was also the sole occupant of the whole house and perhaps of the whole Square. It was three o'clock.

He sat leaning back in his chair, looking through the open window upon the trees in the Square garden. Presently there fell upon his face a curious change. It was as if the whole of the intelligence was taken out of it: his eyes gazed steadily into space with no expression whatever in them: the lips slightly parted, his head fell back: the soul and spirit of the man had gone out of him, leaving a machine which breathed.

The watch in his pocket ticked audibly: there was no other sound in the room—the old man sat quite motionless.

Four o'clock struck from the Clock Tower in the High Court of Justice, from St Clement's Church, from Westminster, from half-a-dozen clocks which could be heard in the quiet of the Saturday afternoon. But Mr Dering heard nothing.

Still he sat in his place with idle hands, and a face like a mask for lack of thought.

The clocks struck five.

He neither moved nor spoke.

The clocks struck six—seven—eight.

The shades of evening began to gather in the corners of the room as the sun sank lower towards his setting. At twilight in the summer there is never anybody to fear—man, woman, or cat—in the chambers, and at that hour the mice come out. They do not eat parchment or foolscap or red tape, but they eat the luncheon crumbs. Mr Checkley, for instance, always brought his dinner in a paper parcel in his coat-tail pocket, and ate it when so disposed, sprinkling crumbs lavishly—the only lavishment of which he was ever guilty—on the floor. Junior clerks brought buns and biscuits, or even apples, which they devoured furtively. Mr Dering himself took his luncheon in his own room—leaving crumbs. There was plenty for a small colony of mice. They came out, therefore, as usual; they stepped at sight of a man, an unwonted man, in a chair. But he moved not: he was asleep: he was dead: they ran without fear all about the rooms.

It was past nine, when the chambers were as dark as at this season of the year they ever are, that Mr Dering returned to consciousness.

He sat up, staring about him. The room was dark. He looked at his watch. Half-past nine. 'What is this?' he asked. 'Have I been asleep for seven hours? Seven hours? I was not asleep when Checkley went away. Why did I fall asleep? I feel as if I had been somewhere—doing something. What? I cannot remember. This strange sensation comes oftener. It is time that I should take a partner* before something

worse happens. I am old—I am old.' He rose and walked across the room erect and with firm step. 'I am old and worn out and spent. Time to give up the keys—old and spent.'

(To be continued.)

FLUORINE.

THE French chemist, M. Moissan, has compelled that extraordinary substance, Fluorine, to expose reluctantly to view nearly the whole of its secrets, and has published his discoveries in the October number of the *Annales de Chimie et de Physique*. For years the element completely baffled scientific investigation. Its energy and power of combination with other bodies was so intense, that nothing could induce it to forsake its union with them and appear in *proprid personâ*. Its hydrogen compound was discovered by Schwankhardt, a chemist of Nürnberg, as long ago as 1670, who first observed that the gas given off by a mixture of fluor-spar and oil of vitriol etched glass. All the figures on thermometers and barometers are now etched by this process. The glass is covered with a thin coat of white wax; and when all the necessary marks have been made by a steel point, the instrument is laid on a long leaden trough filled with the fuming mixture, and the gas eats into the glass wherever the wax has been removed.

In 1771, just one hundred years afterwards, the celebrated Scheele, to whom, among other things, we owe the vivid arsenical green which bears his name, and which, fortunately, is a much less frequent constituent of wall-paper than it used to be, contributed a work on Fluor-spar to the Memoirs of the Stockholm Academy, in which he stated that it was composed of lime and a new acid, named by him fluoric acid, which produced the etching on glass. This fluor-spar is one of our most beautiful minerals, and is variously known under the names of Blue John and Chlorophane, being found in considerable quantities both in Derbyshire and Cornwall. It possesses a glassy lustre, is more or less transparent, sometimes colourless, and perfectly so; but is, as a rule, beautifully tinted, presenting every variety of the purest and most exquisite shades of yellow, green, blue, and red. It crystallises in the cubical system. The crystals are large, and very frequently occur in the most remarkable and charming complications—an octahedron of one colour being in the middle of a cube of another, and so on. Muscalonga Lake, in Jefferson county, New York, was once a noted locality for these wonderful crystals. On its borders were found huge cubes of a greenish tinge, and sometimes more than a foot through, imbedded in granular limestone. Unlike most minerals, the colour is not produced by traces of foreign substances or by organic impurities, but seems to depend entirely on their physical structure. Connected with this is another curious phenomenon: when heated to just below redness,

the crystals exhibit a vivid phosphorescence; and still more curiously, the light emitted, which is of various tints, is perfectly independent of the external colour. If, however, the heat be carried too far, the phosphorescent power is lost, but may be restored to some extent by an electric current.

Scheele did not succeed in isolating the elementary constituents of his new acid; but it is really marvellous how accurate all his work was, when we come to consider that he was working at the time in Scharenberg's apothecary's shop with antiquated and primitive apparatus, and very little even of that. Three years before, Margraaf had attempted the analysis of fluor-spar, but without arriving at any result. It was not, indeed, until about fifty years afterwards that the composition of Scheele's fluoric acid was definitely fixed. Gay-Lussac and Thénard strove hard to prove, though unsuccessfully, that it contained oxygen; and it was Ampère who finally assigned the compound to its proper place in chemistry and named the element itself Phtor, or the destroyer, on account of its violent action. It was renamed Fluorine, as it had been first discovered in fluor-spar; and the hydrogen compound—Scheele's fluoric acid—was called Hydro-fluoric Acid.

Humphry Davy, in 1809 and 1813, tried, but without success, to isolate fluorine; and many earnest and gifted workers, both in our own country and abroad, followed on similar and different lines, only to meet with failure. It is probable that many of them did succeed in obtaining it for an instant in the free state, but it immediately attacked the glass or metal of the containing vessel and formed a fresh combination. Gore did a great deal of valuable work on it, trying to liberate it from its silver salt. He also made several investigations on the hydro-fluoric acid just mentioned and other compounds. Messrs Thorpe and Hambly have done much useful service in determining the physical constants of the same body, from which they were able to calculate the vapour density of fluorine itself; as has also M. Dumas by another method. Even in the end, the resources of chemistry alone proved unequal to the task, and it was by passing a strong current of electricity from twenty-six or twenty-eight Bunsen batteries through hydro-fluoric acid in which was dissolved a metallic compound to increase the conductivity, that M. Moissan, in 1887, was enabled to first obtain the element fluorine in a state of purity. Since then, he has considerably enlarged and improved his apparatus, which is now capable of turning out nearly four litres of the gas per hour. Every part of it is constructed of platinum with stoppers of fluor-spar, through which the wires conveying the current pass. The purifying vessels, tubes, and connections are also of the same metal, fastened together by nuts and flanges with lead-washers, which when acted on by the escaping gas, expand and seal any leak. As the price of platinum is two-thirds that of gold, the pecuniary sacrifices involved in the research are by no means insignificant. The U-shaped tube

in which the generation takes place is kept at a temperature of -9° Fahrenheit by the evaporation of a very volatile organic liquid contained in an outer vessel, and the first member of the purifying series at -58° Fahrenheit by the same means; the greatest care having to be taken that even the vapour of the refrigerating liquid does not enter any part of the apparatus, or else violent explosions occur.

Fluorine gas is of a yellow colour, with a smell resembling bleaching-powder. It has not been liquefied, and still remains gaseous at -140° Fahrenheit. Every precaution has to be taken in studying its action on other bodies, both on account of its dangerously irritating action on the eyes and mucous membrane of the operator; and its marvellous and wonderful energy, far exceeding that of anything hitherto discovered. There is hardly a gas, liquid or solid, that it does not attack, usually with the greatest violence; in fact, its mere contact with any other substance is nearly always signalled by the sudden evolution of intense heat and light and fierce detonations. It almost realises the fondest dreams of the alchemists, and might fitly be their long-sought Liquor Alkahest or universal solvent, for even dull inert flint takes fire instantly it is exposed to the vapour, and the whole mass becomes luminous with a grand incandescence. As a supporter of combustion it leaves oxygen far behind. Lampblack bursts immediately into brilliant flame and gets red-hot in a current of fluorine gas; and charcoal is made to give an interesting exhibition of its porosity by first filling its interstices with the gas and then burning spontaneously with sparkling scintillations. The diamond, however, is able to withstand its action even at high temperatures. Silicon, a crystalline substance closely resembling the diamond, gives a very beautiful reaction, showers of brilliant spangles being scattered in all directions from the white-hot crystals, which are finally melted. As they do not fuse under 2190° Fahrenheit, one can gain some idea of the immense energy set free during the combination. Both lime and chalk under the same circumstances give a most gorgeous incandescence. Phosphorus, as one might expect, does not fail to illustrate its powerful affinity when exposed to the gas. Prussian-blue reacts very beautifully, and burns with a pink flame. A crystal of iodine placed in a current of the gas gives a pale flame, and a heavy liquid distils over, which etches glass, and hisses like red-hot iron when thrown into water.

All the metals, with the exception of gold and platinum, are rapidly attacked by fluorine, and even these in less degree. Iron combines in the cold with splendid energy, becoming white-hot; and rust, when heated, behaves in a similar manner. Magnesium, aluminium, and many other metals, burn with great brilliancy, the combustion of the last named being especially beautiful. Zinc, if slightly warmed, bursts into gorgeous luminosity, accompanied by bright white flames so intense as to be almost blinding. Mercury is attacked violently in the cold. M. Moissan attempted on one occasion to pass a quantity of the gas into a tube standing over mercury protected by an inert fluid; but when inclining the tube, the two elements came into contact, there

was a violent detonation, and the containing vessels were broken to atoms. Copper, on the other hand, combines very quietly even when heated. This is rather curious, as, judging from its analogy in most points to lead and mercury, one would anticipate quite the opposite result. Silver requires some persuasion before it will take up fluorine, and very little action occurs until 212° Fahrenheit—the boiling-point of water—is reached. At a red-heat, however, incandescence is observed, the product melts, and on cooling, has a sheen like satin. Gold, on heating, forms a volatile fluoride, which, when carried to a slightly higher temperature, splits up again into the metal and the gas.

The behaviour of liquids with fluorine is usually very energetic, and experiments have to be conducted with much caution. If the gas be passed into the middle of alcohol, the result is very striking: the whole mass is violently agitated, and each bubble as it appears becomes incandescent in the middle of the liquid, finally vanishing in flame. A very similar reaction occurs with chloroform. If a few drops of this last liquid are shaken up in a tube full of fluorine gas, a violent explosion takes place, and the tube is reduced to fragments. An ingenious little apparatus was constructed for the study of the interaction of other gases with fluorine. It consisted of a fair-sized platinum tube provided with the necessary small tubes for the entrance and exit of the gases, and having at each end a window of fluor-spar, through which the phenomena occurring within could be observed. Hydrogen combines fiercely with fluorine even in the dark and at -9° Fahrenheit, the issuing stream burning with a blue flame bordered with red. In every other known case, heat or some form of extraneous energy is required to induce the combination of elementary gases. Some watchfulness was necessary to prevent back-pressure accumulating in the apparatus during these different experiments, as, if it did occur, fluorine was driven up the hydrogen limb of the generating tube, a violent detonation followed, and everything was shattered. Oxygen is one of the few bodies that appear to have no affinity for fluorine. Even when they are heated together up to 932° Fahrenheit, nothing is observed to take place between them. If a few drops of water are placed on the floor of the experimenting tube and fluorine gas is passed in, a dark fog is seen surrounding each drop, which presently clears and resolves itself into a characteristic blue vapour, apparently more than an inch in thickness, and which is found to be that most interesting condensed form of oxygen, ozone, in a state of great density.

Such are a few of the most beautiful and interesting results of M. Moissan's researches, and even a layman cannot fail to be struck by the marvellous and unprecedented manifestations of energy which the element seems capable of. The next problem for the consideration of chemists is, what reason can be assigned for this wonderful display of force? Why should these infinitesimal atoms rush together with such sound and fury? Is the heat and light evolved due to loss of rotatory motion, as if a whirling fly-wheel were brought suddenly to rest? or

what? It seems probable from recent discoveries in electrical science, which have a very close bearing on the subject, that we shall not remain much longer in ignorance.

SUNSTRUCK.*

CHAPTER XIII.

BURNS bent down and tried to raise Josephine to her feet, that he might lead her to a chair; but she resisted.

'No,' she said in a low passionate voice; 'you have not cast me down. It is he who has done this.'

'Yes,' said Greville sternly. 'It is I who have done this, by my charge; and it is I who should raise you up, and humble myself to you, child, but not yet—not yet.'

He turned and walked slowly to the door, to stand there with his back to them, waiting; and Burns followed almost directly, to turn before he passed out, and meet Josephine's eyes fixed upon his with a grateful look.

'It is impossible, Captain Greville,' he said in a quick angry whisper, as they approached Manton's room; but his host made no reply, merely going on before him with bowed head and a look of agony in his countenance which seemed to have aged him by ten years. They entered the room very gently; but Renée heard them, and started up to look piteously in her father's eyes; while Manton opened his, and gazed from one to the other questioningly, as if asking for help and relief.

Greville felt his head and hands, and then bent lower over him. 'Still in so much pain?' he whispered.

Manton made no answer but a smile, which told all; and the captain wiped the clammy dew from his temples.

'Can't—can't you do something?' came in a hoarse whisper.

'I am doing something,' said the captain; 'but we must wait. When did you drink that water?'

'Some time toward morning, I think—or was it morning?' said the sufferer faintly. 'I don't think I touched it in the night, and yet I seem to fancy I heard the glass strike against the vessel.'

'Yes: in the night,' said Burns quickly. 'I heard you.'

'No,' said Manton, after a few minutes' pause, during which he had struggled hard to bear a terrible paroxysm of pain—'no; I did not touch it in the night. I am sure it was morning.'

'He is wrong,' said Burns in a whisper to Greville. 'I distinctly heard him touch the bottle and glass.'

Greville looked from one to the other curiously, and then walked to the window, and stood there thinking whether there was anything he could do to help his guest.

As he left the bedside, Renée let her head sink again in despair, for she could gather no hope from the face before her; and once more a terrible silence fell upon the group; while Burns,

after looking intently at the pain-drawn countenance of his friend, crossed on tiptoe to speak to Greville, who was leaning out of the window, and seemed to be trying to reach something below him amongst the flowers which covered the top of the veranda and climbed up round the jalousies.

The next moment he was standing upright examining a kind of chaplet or necklace formed of the bright red seeds of the snake-wood.

'Have you seen this before?' he whispered to Burns.

'That? Yes. I have seen our nurse, 'Miramis,' wearing it constantly. Why?'

'The creeper is broken and torn down about the window,' said Greville hurriedly; 'and the person who did it seems to have dropped the necklace on the veranda top. What should you say it meant?'

'Some one must have climbed out.'

'Or climbed up,' said Greville excitedly.—'Come down with me. We can do nothing here.'

Puzzled and wondering, Burns followed him into the room where Josephine crouched upon the matting in the same attitude as that in which they had left her.

'Josephine, my child,' said Greville so sharply that the girl started up and looked at him wildly, 'whose is this?'

She took the necklace he held out, and Greville watched her closely as she replied: 'It belongs to 'Miramis.'

'When did you see it last?'

'Last night, I think, when she came to my window.'

'Ah!' cried Greville. 'She came to your window?—When?'

'It was when I went up to bed.'

'Why?—Tell me the truth.'

'I am telling you the truth,' said the girl coldly. 'She often comes to my window of a night. It is nonsense; but she thinks she is a wise woman, and she makes me tell her my troubles, and promises me that they shall all depart.'

'Hah!' said Greville sharply; 'and you told her of your trouble last night?'

Josephine was silent for a few moments.

'Why do you not speak, girl?' said Greville sternly.

'I was thinking,' said Josephine slowly. 'I was in so much trouble that I hardly know what I said. She told me, though, that my trouble should not last.'

'You foolish girl!' cried the captain angrily. 'I believe you innocent, child; but it is through you that this horror has been caused.'

'I—I—don't understand.'

'Then I will not explain.—Burns, come with me.'

The young man gazed at him wonderingly, and then followed him out into the garden, where the rough palm stem which supported the veranda beneath Manton's window showed traces such as would have been made by one who had climbed up. The piece of trunk was rugged with the great dry footstalks of the old palm-leaves, which had been left so as to form a support to the creeper that had been planted to run up, so that an ascent was easy enough, but not without

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disturbing the clustering stems and leafage of a beautiful Bougainvillea, which was in several places broken and torn away.

'There is no doubt here,' said Burns sharply. 'Some one has climbed up by this post.'

'Yes,' replied Greville, as he bent down to examine the creeper; 'and look here; some of this has been clumsily thrust back. Here is a piece tucked in that has been broken right off.'

There was a hard, set look in Greville's face as he turned from the veranda.

'What are you going to do?' said Burns, who was startled by the fierce look in his companion's eyes.

'Do, boy? What would you do to the reptile you have fostered—to the half-savage creature you have fed and tended for years, when it has turned and stung you to the heart? Hunt it out and crush it.—Ah!' he added after a pause, 'it is not the first. Such a creature is not fit to live.'

He hurried Burns on to the densely wooded part where the cottages of the blacks were clustered. As they approached one of the best of the cottages, superior to the rest, and with the garden better kept, Greville uttered an ejaculation. 'I might have known,' he said. 'I was mad not to have had it destroyed.'

'What—what is it?' cried Burns.

'There it is,' said Greville bitterly, as he pointed to a good-sized tree rising behind the cottage—'the manchineel.'

Burns looked eagerly at the tree with its small apple-like fruit.

'A deadly Euphorbia, teeming with virulent poison.'

He was about to enter the garden, when a black woman came toward them from one of the cottages with a curious shrinking look.

'Where is Semiramis?' said Greville sternly.

'Don't know, massah. Tink she go to de house.'

'No: we have come from there. She is hiding.'

He went on, followed by Burns.

'I have been a father to these people,' said Greville angrily, 'and yet there is no one I can trust. That woman lies to me at once. They say anything to escape blame.'

He thrust open the door of the cabin and entered.

'Not here,' he said fiercely. 'But she shall be found. They will all try and hide her.'

'From love?'

'From hate. There is not a black in the island who will not help her, for fear that she should work some spell—in other words, drug food or the water, out of revenge.'

He hurried Burns to where the men and women were at work in his fields, and everywhere there was a shake of the head in answer to his questions. No one had seen 'Miramis that morning; and at last, faint with the heat, Greville turned back.

Burns followed him, and at the gate they were met by one of the black labourers.

'Yes: what is it?' cried Greville.

'Massah look for 'Miramis, dey say. She gone.'

'Gone?—Gone where?'

The man pointed to the sea.

'Rutus go fishin' dis mawnin', sah; and 'Miramis come down and shout to man wiv a boat; and he come ashore and talk, talk; and den 'Miramis get in de boat, and de man lif in um big bundle and set de sail and go right away.'

'Is this true?' cried Greville, catching the man by the throat.

'Oh 'ss, massah, all de troof. 'Miramis gone right away.'

'Ah!—and why?'

'Cause a buckra massah very ill.'

'That will do. Go!' said Greville; and the man, who was trembling in every limb, hurried away.

'Her confession of her guilt,' said the captain slowly.

'Then you will have her followed and punished for the crime?' said Burns.

'If he dies—yes. If I save him—no. The chances are that I should never have her found. The woman has the reputation of being a follower of Obeah; and, as I have told you, such as she are supposed to bring death to those who are their enemies, and the people fear them. No: we shall never see her more.'

Greville whispered to Burns to stay where he was while he went back to the room where Josephine was seated alone; and ten minutes passed before he returned, to sign to the young man to follow him to the bedroom, where, to all appearance, the minutes of Manton's life were drawing to a close.

CHAPTER XIV.

After a short stay, they left the room once more and went out into the garden.

'I cannot bear it, Burns,' cried Greville in agony. 'It will kill her too. I must do something.'

He stopped short, with his brow rugged and teeth set, thinking intently. Then, with a look of rage, he turned suddenly upon his companion.

'It was a lie,' he said—'I ought to have known—a beggarly, transparent invention; but it tricked me for the time.'

'I do not understand you, sir.'

'That black scoundrel, Brutus: she sent him with that tale to put me off the scent. She has not left the island, but is hiding in the woods.'

'But the man?—'

'I tell you they will all lie, and invent childish stories to save one another from punishment. I know them by heart. Come to the plantation again. I'll have the truth from them, or!—'

At that moment a low, deep-mouthed baying rose from beyond the house. 'Ah!' said Greville, 'he never lies! Come quickly. Now I shall know the truth.'

Burns followed him as he hurried to the far side of the house, where Renée's great heavy-chested Cuban bloodhound was chained, and which now rose up on its hind-legs and pawed and fought to get at its master.

'Down, Nep!—down, Nep!' he cried; and the dog crouched at once while his chain was slipped from his collar.

'But surely you are not going to hunt the woman, sir, with that savage beast?'

'I am not going to hunt a woman, sir, but a vile murderer. You need not be alarmed: a word from me is enough to restrain that dog.'

Burns was silent; and at a word, the dog bounded before them on their way back to the woman's cabin, about which several women were grouped as they approached; but all fled in horror at the sight of the dog.

Greville laughed bitterly. 'You see,' he said. 'One would think I hunted my people with this hound.—Here, Nep! In with you, boy!'

He strode right into the cabin, and after a few moments' consideration, snatched up a gown lying on the bed.

'Here, boy, here!' he cried, shaking the cotton dress; and the dog made a plunge, buried his head in it, snuffed about, and then barked.

Greville snatched up other articles of attire which lay about as if their owner had just made a change; and the dog tore at them, seized them in his powerful jaws, and shook and turned them over, growling and snuffing about.

'That will do now—steady!'

Greville took a leather thong from his pocket, fastened it to the dog's collar and led him to the door. 'Now,' he said, 'you will soon see.'

The dog tried to bound off, but settled down directly with its nose close to the ground, and led them in and out to one of the cottages, where a woman within set up a wild cry; but the dog came out again directly, and made for another, threading the narrow pathway quickly, and dashing through the low doorway at once.

'Hah!' cried Greville; 'that's good.'

The dog ran round the room, came out, and, nose down, made straight for the plantation, where a group of labourers stood to watch them approach; and as the dog paid no heed to them, but went on along a narrow path by a patch of cane-ground, they one by one left their work and followed at a distance.

'Another proof,' said Greville in a low voice; 'they tell me plainly that she has taken to the forest. They will follow us to see her taken.—Look at Nep.'

Burns was already watching the sagacious beast, which was straining hard at the thong as, with nose down, he followed a narrow winding track right in among the trees beyond the captain's clearings; and, forgetting the heat in his excitement, Burns hurried on behind in the dark overgrown track, one which was rarely used.

'Where does this lead to?' said Burns at last.

'To a kind of meeting-house in the forest. I never interfere with them in this. It is of no use. Tired?'

'No, I think not,' said Burns, who seemed to be endued with fresh strength. For the next hour neither spoke, but with the dog tugging silently at the thong, followed the path in and out among the trees, till, all at once a large roughly thatched hut blocked further progress, the path going in under the low doorway, and Burns's heart leapt to his mouth as the dog uttered a growl and bounded upon something dimly seen in the windowless shelter at the farther end.

'Hah!' ejaculated Greville as the dog seized what proved to be a gaily coloured handkerchief. 'We are on the right track.—Good dog!' he con-

tinued, patting the animal and taking the kerchief from his jaws.—'Seek her, then.'

The dog made a plunge forward through a screened opening at the back out into the forest again; but the path had ceased. There were, though faintly visible, footsteps on the moist earth, and the scent was strong enough for the dog to go on as rapidly as he could, with the shade growing less deep, the trees more open, and it was evident now that they were ascending a steep slope, but diagonally.

'She has made for the mountain,' said Greville quietly.

Few words were spoken in their breathless ascent, but from time to time the scent seemed so fresh, and the dog tugged so that Greville grew excited.

'Keep a lookout forward,' he said. 'We must be near her now. I want to run her down before she can reach the woods again.'

Blue sky above them, the glistening rocks at their feet, and, beyond the glorious green trees below, there was the dazzling sea; but they had no eyes for the beauty of the scene, but toiled panting on behind the dog, which now led them into quite a chaos of piled-up masses of lava, for they had reached a gap in the edge of the crater, and Greville uttered a cry of satisfaction as he drew Burns's attention to a curl of smoke rising up some little distance ahead.

'There she is,' he whispered.—'Quiet, Nep!—She has not heard us. Keep level with me now,' he continued; 'and as soon as we are close up, seize her. I'll hold the dog.'

It was a time of breathless interest as they drew nearer the softly rising vapour which betrayed the woman's halting-place, and, making every effort not to tread on the loose stones which promised to rattle beneath their feet, they gained the mouth of a hollow, out of which the smoke rose; but, to their surprise, the dog turned off to their left, and suddenly threw up its head, whined angrily, and snapped at a tiny curl of smoke which rose from between its feet.

'Sulphur!' cried Greville. 'Pah!'

Burns had already stepped aside, for he had inhaled the choking fumes which they could now see were escaping from cracks in the loose volcanic soil, upon which the vapour was being condensed in a pale yellow efflorescence.

'I thought we had run her down,' said Greville. 'Proofs that the old volcano is not quite dead.—Go on then, boy. We shall overtake her soon. She must have been here before, perhaps to fetch sulphur or to perform some mumbo-jumbo tricks to frighten the weak fools.'

For the dog was tugging to get on, and, after dragging them in and out amongst the huge vesiculated masses of pumice, bare of all vegetation and glistening in the sunshine, it suddenly made a dash downward for about a hundred feet, turned in at a broad cavernous rift in the mountain side, and then drew back, threw up its head, and uttered a deep-mouthed bay.

'Run to earth!' cried Greville excitedly. 'In with you, Burns, and bring her out. No: she is my servant. Hold the dog. I'll go.'

Burns, with his heart beating heavily, thrust his hand beneath Nep's collar, and held him fast.

This rift led into quite a little cavern, whose

interior was lit up by the sun; and there, not twenty feet from them, lay the figure of the black woman, apparently sleeping after her toilsome climb.

Greville pressed forward into the cavern, and staggered back, choking violently.

'Good heavens!' he ejaculated. 'I could not breathe. Burns!—that woman!'

He said no more, but turned his head to the sharply blowing breeze, took a deep inhalation, and then plunged into the cave, and staggered out dragging after him the body of the wretched woman, till he was a few yards from the opening, where he lowered her softly down.

'Dead?' gasped Burns.

'Yes. There must have been a fresh escape of fumes,' said Greville slowly. 'There has not been a cloud about the crater for months. Poor foolish wretch! She must have staggered in there, worn out, to lie down and rest, and been overcome.—Let us get back, and send the people to fetch her down.—Look!'

Burns gazed in the direction pointed out, and saw that about a dozen of the blacks had followed them at a distance, and were standing waiting for leave to come farther.

Ten minutes later Greville and Burns were toiling down the mountain, the latter beginning to feel an exhaustion against which he could hardly fight.

It was quite dark when they reached the plantation house; and upon Greville hurrying to the sick chamber, he found that there had been apparently but little change. Manton was gazing with a fixed stare in Renée's eyes, too much prostrated now to be able to struggle against the paroxysms. But as Greville approached, he read hopeful signs in his patient's face; and a couple of hours later, he drew a long deep breath, and whispered words in Renée's ear which made her start to her feet, fling her arms about her father's neck, and burst into an hysterical fit of weeping, just as a low wailing chorus came through the open window from the direction of the cabins of the blacks, which was answered by a mournful howl and the rattle of a chain.

Semiramis had been borne down from the mountain, and was being carried to her hut.

CHAPTER XV.—CONCLUSION.

The next morning dawned with Manton plunged in a deep sleep, which lasted for nearly twenty hours, and from this he awoke weak once more as a child.

But the convalescence was one long dream of happiness, from which he seemed to be rudely awakened one day by the return of the ship and the call back to duty.

'Yes,' said Greville, as the time for parting came. 'Some day, if Renée does not change her mind.'

Two years after, she was Commander Manton's wife; and the captain accompanied her and her young husband back to England, where he had elected to end his days. For the time had come when the dreamy plantation life had begun to pall, and he had found a successor in Burns, who quitted the service upon wresting a long withheld promise from Josephine that she would be his wife.

Ten years had passed away before the young people met again, and it was in answer to a question that Josephine said: 'I was a foolish girl, and knew no better than Renée. Yes, I loved him dearly. Then in a minute my love was turned to hate, and I told that wretched woman, as I told her all my troubles then. Yes, I hated him; but I would sooner have died than caused him pain, and if he had— There, say no more, dear; we are sisters and the past is dead.'

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

It will be remembered that at the beginning of last year an exploring party started on an expedition into Central Australia, one of the objects being an exhaustive scientific survey of those blank spaces on the map which lie between latitude fifteen and thirty degrees south, an area which hitherto has been unexplored. Another object in view was to search for traces of Ludwig Leichardt, whose party started on the same errand more than forty years ago, and has not since been heard of. The present expedition has now returned from their arduous journey, after having experienced many trials and privations. At one time they travelled for thirty-four days without finding water. The natives were friendly in most cases; but it was impossible to hold communication with them, because their language was not understood. Altogether, the expedition has not resulted in any great discovery; but it has certainly corroborated the previously known fact that Central Australia is a country so exceedingly arid that it must always remain sparsely inhabited. The party consisted of ten, and every credit is due to them for risking their lives in an expedition so full of peril. We are glad to know that the medical officer of the expedition was also a photographer, so that in time we may hope to see pictures of a region previously unknown to the white man.

The proposed Antarctic expedition, about which so much was heard a few months back, and which was to start this year at the joint expense of the Australian colonies and Baron Oscar-Dickson of Sweden, will, according to all accounts, not take place, owing to the want of interest shown by the Australians in the enterprise. Sir Thomas Elder promised five thousand pounds on certain conditions, Baron Oscar undertaking to give a similar sum, or to double that amount should it be necessary; but the Australian colonies have not contributed their far smaller share, so that, although Baron Dickson had actually selected the two ships suitable for the work, the scheme appears to have fallen through. There is certainly plenty of money in Australia which would have been devoted to the enterprise had it been brought before the people in a right manner; but it seems that the scientific men who advocated the expedition were not in touch with the people generally, and owing to this circum-

stance, the matter has, we trust only for the present, fallen into abeyance.

An interesting paper was lately read before the North British Association of Gas Managers on the subject of Gas Leakage. It is well known that a heavy percentage of the gas made is lost by leakage. In clay soils the pipes naturally are sealed more securely in the ground, and the loss is not so great; but in porous soils such as gravel, the loss to the gas companies is sometimes as much as seventeen per cent. of the total output. In the paper referred to, the author of which was Mr D. Robertson of Dunoon, the chief outlets for this unaccounted-for gas were pointed out. Beyond the general leakage from the mains, loss accrued from careless connections where the supply-pipe for the houses entered the main, chiefly due to bad workmanship. It was also stated that an old wet meter might, for want of water, fail to register at least one-fourth of the gas passing through it. Street lamps, it was stated, are a certain source of loss in every town, owing to a separate service-pipe being required for each, thus multiplying the number of connections to the main. Condensation has been supposed by some to account for a large proportion of the loss; but Mr Robertson, from direct inquiry, has found that this is not the case. The reader concluded by pointing out, that although the responsibility of the gas company ended when they delivered gas into the consumer's premises, it was politic to educate the consumer into the most economical and efficient way of using the gas for lighting, heating, and cooking. This course would surely lead to a larger consumption per householder, and would thus decrease the percentage of unaccounted-for gas.

A new kind of life-belt has been brought out in Prussia. It consists of a canvas bag stuffed with reindeer hair. This hair being hollow and containing air is lighter than cork, and has indeed sufficient buoyancy to sustain a weight of twenty-two pounds of iron in water, although the bag itself weighs only one-tenth of that amount. The material can be used for stuffing mattresses, seats of chairs, sofas, or can be utilised for clothing or travelling rugs. Should these various necessities be provided on board ship, there will be plenty of life-saving appliances at hand in case of need.

In a paper by the Principal of the Hawkesbury Agricultural College, New South Wales, it is stated that the climate and a great portion of the soil of Australia are well suited for the culture of the olive. An interesting description is given of the manner in which green olives are preserved. They are picked from the trees when full grown, but while perfectly green, and are handled as carefully as eggs, for if they are bruised, they soon become black and rotten. While green the olives contain gallic acid, and to remove the unpleasant acrid taste caused by it, they are steeped in an alkaline solution, such as lime-water or soda. When the alkali has had time to penetrate the fruit, which it does in about ten hours, they are soaked in clear water until all alkaline taste has disappeared. They are next put into brine, and are finally stored in air-tight receptacles for export.

The submarine volcano which some time ago

rose up out of the sea near the island of Pantelaria has disappeared. Such volcanic phenomena are not uncommon in volcanic districts, and their sinking is more easily accounted for than their appearance, for they are mostly composed of ash and similar materials, which are quickly acted upon by the ever-moving waters around them.

A new railway brake has recently been invented which has the advantage of acting upon the rails instead of upon the wheels. The brake comprises four blocks of the usual kind, which are furnished with soft iron shoes, and these are pressed on to the rails by the action of eccentrics. Sufficient power can be transmitted to these blocks to actually raise a locomotive or railway truck from the track, if necessary. The great advantage of the new system seems to lie in the fact that the wheel is not dragged along the rail, as it is by existing brakes, an action which often causes a slight flattening of the wheel. We trust this brake will be fully tested by the authorities, in order that it may be seen whether it has other advantages over those in present use.

Every now and then a report reaches us that some unfortunate has been poisoned by means of tinned foods, and the particular food to which the disaster is generally attributed is tinned fish. It is believed that the food is contaminated by means of the tin or lead in the solder becoming soluble in the acid liquor in which the fish is preserved. It is now reported that a wholesale merchant and importer of tinned salmon at Manchester has determined to pack fish for the future in glass receptacles. A glass jar of salmon which had been sealed for twelve months was recently opened, and the contents were found in a perfectly fresh condition. We may soon hope to see salmon preserved in this manner in the English market.

An ingenious apparatus called 'a Wreck Indicator' has recently been invented by an officer of the United States navy. The contrivance consists of a copper ball about eighteen inches in diameter, which is hollow, and is securely glued to a base plate by means of soluble cement. It is intended that this apparatus should be secured to any portion of the upper works of a ship, so that, if the vessel should founder, after a certain time the soluble cement would melt, with the result that the ball would be left free to float. It would thus rise from the sunken vessel to the surface; and as it has fastened to its lower part a reel with a line attached, it will remain anchored above the surface where the wreck occurred. By this means the exact spot would be indicated where the wreck had taken place, and the number of vessels which sail from port and are never again heard of would tend to be greatly reduced.

Many householders and manufacturers in this country have occasionally been inclined to envy the inhabitants of Pennsylvania and other districts where natural-gas wells abound; for this natural gas has been an unspeakable boon to all. Not only has it represented a vast saving of expense, but it has done its work without the dirt and dust inseparable from coal-fires. But there are indications that the gas is being exhausted. Some years ago the theory was broached

that the gas was still being formed in the earth; but this theory has been given up, and the general opinion is, that certain subterranean reservoirs originally charged with the gas are now being rapidly emptied; and the reign of coal-fires must be recommenced. But the people have been so used to gas, that they are now turning their attention to its artificial production by the volatilisation of oil; and it is said that several large manufacturing establishments in certain western cities of the States are making use of the method with good results. That the system is feasible has long ago been proved in isolated districts in our own country, and it is quite possible that it will in the future be further developed.

Of all road-vehicles ever contrived by man, surely the London cab is at once the most ugly, the most uncomfortable, and the one which is worst adapted to its purpose. It is astonishing that a conveyance of this kind should not long ago have been improved upon, and it is difficult for the uninitiated to explain the reason why. We are glad to learn that the Coach and Coach-harness Makers' Company are about to hold a competition for prizes among British subjects engaged in the trade and resident in the United Kingdom. Three prizes of thirty, twenty, and ten pounds are offered by the company for the best three models of an improved four-wheeled cab suited to the traffic of London. There are also other prizes offered for various vehicles, but the one that is quoted will be of most interest to the public generally. Detailed particulars of these competitions—the drawings and models pertaining to which must be delivered by the end of April next—may be obtained of the clerk of the company at Noble Street, London.

A paper was recently read before the Shipmasters' Society by Captain Froud, the subject being the Heating of Ships and their Cargoes, and the Waste of Heat in Steamers. After detailing the different kinds of cargoes which generated heat, among which were certain minerals such as copper, antimony ores, and coal; animal matter such as wool; vegetable products like cotton, jute, flax, coffee, sugar, &c., which will all generate heat if not well dried, it was pointed out that the heat of ships depended also upon the materials of which they were constructed and on their colour. He considered that passenger ships would be painted in light tints be rendered cooler, and those carrying frozen meats and petroleum would also benefit largely. It was also pointed out that all parts of marine engines where the maintenance of heat was essential should be painted of the lightest colours, and that railway companies would effect economy by using light-coloured paints for their locomotives. With regard to ships, damp cargoes should always be avoided, and full ventilation should be maintained, especially in dry weather.

It would seem that the rocket apparatus which has been so often used with grand results on our shores will fail when too much is expected of it. In the case of a recent wreck near Dover, the rockets failed to reach the distressed ship, although several were fired by experienced hands. A rocket has nominally a range of five hundred yards; but this is necessarily curtailed when the projectile has a head-wind to contend against.

It has a line to drag after it weighing forty-three pounds, and should that line be wet its weight is doubled. It is doubtful whether a more perfect rocket can be made, for the present pattern is the outcome of many experiments. Perhaps it might be replaced by some form of shot fired from a gun; but great care would be necessary in handling such an engine, in case life should be destroyed instead of preserved by it. The suggestion has been more than once made that ships should carry their own life-rockets, on the ground that in cases of shipwreck the wind is nearly always towards the shore, and the rocket would thereby have a much enlarged range.

An official Report states that the copper mines of the French Congo are likely to prove of extreme importance. At present, under native auspices they are worked in a very primitive fashion, the tools employed being of hard wood only. The ore is the beautiful green carbonate of copper known as malachite, which is procured from holes dug in the ground to a depth of about six feet. This ore is broken up, pulverised, and submitted to heat on a tray with charcoal, with the help of bellows, after which the metal is poured into sand-moulds. The entire district is said to be wonderfully rich in copper.

It is said that the use of the electric head-light for locomotives is becoming general on the railways of Indiana, and that many advantages are found in its employment. The arc-light is fed by a small dynamo worked by the engine itself at a very slight expenditure of steam. On a clear night the engine-driver can see for a mile ahead, so that if any obstruction were in his way he would have plenty of time to pull up even though he were travelling at a high speed. Collisions have already been prevented by the use of these head-lights.

A novel 'wonder of the deep' has recently been experienced by those who go down to the sea in ships. On the recent arrival of the British barque *Hesper* at San Francisco, the captain reported a strange occurrence which took place when the ship was at a distance of about seventy-five miles from the coast of Japan. A rumbling noise was suddenly heard, and the sea was agitated to such an extent that the waves broke over the deck. But the most terrible and unusual feature of the disturbance was that the water was boiling hot, and the crew had to remain in the rigging for five hours to avoid it, where they were half suffocated by the heat as well as by blasts of hot sulphurous gas which continually escaped from the ocean. We believe that this is the first recorded instance of a ship being caught in the actual embrace of a submarine volcano, for such the awful phenomenon evidently was.

The recent earthquake in Japan will probably be found to be one of the most severe ever recorded. There is little doubt that much of the terrible loss of life is due to the houses being built on exactly the same principles of construction as those which are observed in countries not subject to visitations of the kind. Again and again it has been pointed out that earthquake countries should adopt special plans of house construction, and in Japan itself much attention has been given to this subject. In the recent

earthquake, forty-one thousand houses fell, and in most cases buried or imprisoned their inhabitants, who were some of them slowly burned to death in the conflagration which followed. A house made of basket-work, could such an erection be contrived, would be the ideal residence for a country subject to earthquakes. It has also been suggested, and in some cases the idea has been carried out, that the dwelling should consist of a wooden house resting upon iron balls, so that when the dreaded shock came the edifice would merely roll to and fro upon its supports without breaking up.

An excellent paper was recently read before the Shipmasters' Society, London, by Mr William Allingham, on Ocean Meteorology. Mr Allingham urged strongly the necessity of gathering together carefully all the lessons that could be read from the aspect of sky and sea, and, so to speak, codifying them for the use of navigators. It is interesting to learn that, in the matter of sea-routes, 'the large Liverpool lines trading to New York have agreed among themselves to run their steamers on clearly defined outward and homeward routes in order to lessen the risk of collision end on between their own ships proceeding in opposite directions, to avoid fog and ice in the vicinity of the Banks of Newfoundland, and to spare the fishermen riding at anchor there.'

A HUNDRED AND THREE DAYS ON A DESERT ISLAND.

THE shipwrecked crew of the barque *Compadre*, eight hundred tons register, Captain Jones, bound from Calcutta to Talcahuano, Chili, recently arrived in New Zealand, after a series of remarkable adventures, having escaped the successive perils of fire and shipwreck, and the hardships of a prolonged sojourn on the bleak and desolate islands to the south of New Zealand, known as the Auckland Islands.

The vessel left Calcutta on the 22d of January, last year, bound for Talcahuano with a cargo of jute bags. All went well until the 16th of March, when a fire was discovered by the captain in the after-hold. The subsequent events are very well told in a clear and graphic narrative which the chief-mate, Mr F. Bates, has given of the affair. The captain, it appears, at once called all hands on deck to cope with the fire. Holes were cut in the cabin deck, and water was poured in incessantly from ten A.M. to six P.M., but without much result. Finding it impossible to extinguish the fire, the captain ordered his men to batten all down, and then shaped a course for the Benff, a harbour in the extreme south of the Middle Island of New Zealand, that being the nearest port. Before finally closing the hatches, several men tried to obtain bread from below, but were rendered insensible by the smoke, and had to be carried on deck. The attempt therefore had to be abandoned. The vessel made fair way until the night of the 18th of March, when to the peril of fire that of tempest was added. A furious westerly gale came down upon the ill-fated vessel, accompanied by terrific squalls. At seven A.M. on the 19th of March land was discovered on the

starboard bow, distant about twelve miles. It was very hazy at the time, and, owing to the fearful sea, the vessel laboured heavily. One tremendous wave swept the foresail and foretopmast staysail out of the bolt ropes, burst the fore-castle ports, smashed the scuttle forehatches, and swept the decks of everything movable. Worse than this, it burst in the cabin, thus giving air to the fire, which could not be prevented from breaking out, though immense quantities of water were flooded in. The men could not man the pumps, being washed away by the seas which continually broke on board.

It is almost impossible to imagine a situation of greater peril. The carpenter sounded the well and found eight feet of water in the hold. The vessel was rapidly sinking under foot, and it was quite impossible to lower the boats in such a sea. Only one hope remained, and that of the slenderest possible character. The land which had been sighted was the Auckland Islands, and the vessel was now to the windward of the North Cape. The captain therefore ordered the mainyard to be squared, and steered for the land in the hope of saving life. It must, however, have indeed seemed a forlorn hope in such an angry sea, with a rock-bound coast backed by precipitous cliffs towering hundreds of feet above the sea-level. Still, with the indomitable pluck and resolution of British seamen, those on board determined to make the best fight they could for their lives. Just before the vessel struck, oil was poured on the waters over the stern, which greatly reduced the violence of the sea; and then all hands hastened to the bow and hung on the bowsprit, waiting for the critical moment. Their coolness and prudence were rewarded with good fortune. The vessel struck with a great crash, every one making a jump for the rocks; and all got safely to land, although some were much bruised by the violence of the concussion. In ten minutes nothing of the vessel but loose wreckage was to be seen.

Although the men had safely reached land they were in a pitiable plight. The Auckland Islands in the winter are as drear and desolate a place as one can imagine. They are swept by furious tempests and almost incessant rain. They are the homes of such seabirds as love the storm; but except for the occasional visits of sealers or of a Government steamer searching for shipwrecked mariners, the islands see no trace of human life, save only, as in the present case, when shipwrecked seamen are cast upon their inhospitable shores. On several occasions the place has been the scene of disastrous wrecks. The *Invercauld*, *Grafton*, *General Grant*, and *Derry Castle* are the names of a few of the vessels which occur to the mind. In many cases the loss of life has been total and complete. In the case of the *Invercauld*, out of nineteen men who scrambled ashore, three only were rescued after twelve months of fearful suffering.

The surface of the islands for the most part is mountainous, and a great deal of it is covered either with dense bush or a wilderness of high tussock, standing in deep peat, almost equally impassable. The prospect which met the *Compadre* castaways therefore was by no means hopeful. They had of course been able to save nothing in the shape of food from the vessel, and

were barefooted and scantily clothed, each man having partially stripped, preparing for a swim for life. It so happened, however, that assistance in the shape of food and clothing was within their reach, although they were not aware of it, and only discovered the fact by a sad and curious accident, although it turned out fortunately for the bulk of them. After getting on the rocks, the whole ship's company climbed the cliffs, which, as already stated, were several hundred feet in height. They saw a mountain in the distance, and made straight for it, to get a better view of the island they were cast upon. They reached it with some difficulty, and looking round, saw a flagstaff close to the beach. They at once went towards it; but losing their way in the bush, and night coming on, they made for the nearest beach, where they found a few limpets and one little fish, which they divided into sixteen parts, one for each man. This scanty fare was greedily devoured, as they had only had one meal since the fire broke out, four days before. What stores were saved from the lazarette had been kept for the boats, and were therefore lost when the ship went to pieces. While the men were dividing their miserable meal, it was discovered that one of the seamen, named Peter Nelson, was missing. An attempt was made to find him; but the night was so dark that the attempt had to be given up. A miserable night was spent owing to the rain and snow, which fell incessantly. In the morning, they divided themselves into parties, and proceeded to search for Nelson, but with no success. In the course of their wanderings, however, they came upon a neatly-built hut, and on examining it, found that it contained a store of food and clothing. It was a dépôt, established by the New Zealand Government for the relief and succour of shipwrecked seamen cast upon the islands. By a strange oversight, however, the existence of such a dépôt is not mentioned in any of the shipping directories; and but for the fact of poor Nelson wandering away to his death in the bush, his comrades might never have hit upon the dépôt, and, like him, might have perished of starvation.

From a record in the hut, the castaways learned that the New Zealand Government steamer *Hinemoa* had visited the islands only a week before on her periodical cruise, and they made up their minds that they would have to make a prolonged stay on the islands before there was any chance of being rescued. Consequently, they had to be very careful with the food in the dépôt. There is scarcely any fish to be caught at the Auckland; and the castaways found that the seabirds and seals, which were comparatively easy to approach at first, became so wild after a week or so of contact with human beings that it was impossible to get near them. The shipwrecked people, however, found some goats and sheep, which had been placed on the island by the New Zealand Government. Of the former they caught three, and of the latter eight. The sheep never having been shorn were covered with very long fine wool, which also proved very serviceable to the men.

It is not necessary to enter into details of the life of the castaways on the islands. They suffered a good deal of pain and discomfort from

the exposure; but the Government stores preserved them from danger of absolute starvation, and they enjoyed fairly good health during their stay. On Monday the 6th of July, to their great joy, the sealing-schooner *Janet Ramsay* called at the islands; and the men having been there exactly one hundred and three days, were taken on board and brought to New Zealand. At the nautical inquiry which was held, the court, it is needless to say, adjudged that the wreck was entirely due to misadventure, and that the captain and crew had done all that was possible under the circumstances.

VANISHED DREAMS.

BEAUTIFUL stories, in shielings wild,
They told of the fairies when I was a child—
How with feet like the foam-bells, so light and fair,
They entered the dwellings of want and care;
And as morning dew melts off from the grass,
So the cloud of sorrow was sure to pass;
No blight on the crops which the fairies had blest,
For day they brought gladness, for night they brought rest.

Oh heart of my childhood! what vigils vain
Were mine as I watched for the fairy train;
But the feet of the fairies came not nigh;
No glimpse of their beautiful wings flashed by;
And the peasants said: 'Ah, they know too well
Where peace and gladness and riches dwell!
Wait—and if clouds darken over your sky,
Surely then will you see them nigh.'

Alas! for the home of our childhood days—
Its weed-choked gardens, its moss-grown ways—
I heard them tell how, one autumn night,
Over heather and moor flashed the weird corpse-light;
I heard them whisper: 'The fairies know—
O'er the homestead they love falls the shadow of woe;
The fire will be quenched, and the hearth be lone,
Ere the winter has past, or the March winds blown.'

The fires are quenched, and the hearth is lone;
Dear names are carved on the gray headstone;
Only, I think, in my heart remains
The echo of long-ago joys and pains;
The half-believed legends have passed away;
Life grew too real—they could not stay.
The earth-lights have faded—the night is drear;
But the stars of heaven were never so clear!

MARY GORGES.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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NOTES ON BIRD-MUSIC.

TOWARDS the latter end of changeful April, when winter has been fairly conquered by the returning warmth, is the beginning of the full development of Bird-music. Then the stream of song from our native birds, which has been gradually increasing from the virtual silence of winter, is reinforced by the arrival of our summer visitors. For the silence of winter is only comparative, and all through the dreary season—except for short intervals when frost binds the earth in iron fetters—there is bird-music to be heard. The Robin sings all through the winter months, and every now and then may be heard his companion, the Wren. And it only requires a gleam of sunshine to call forth the music of the Missel Thrush in the very midst of storm and cold. It is one of the treats of January and February to hear him during one of these intervals. Taking his stand on the top of some tall tree, he will pour forth his cheerful notes with a fine ring of wild enjoyment—a determination to be happy in spite of circumstances. It is only a little spell of fine weather between the snow and sleet, or hard frost, of the season, and yet he sings as if spring and nesting-time were already here. There is in the song a resemblance to that of blackbird and song thrush, but it lacks the luxuriance of phrase—meet for the leafy luxuriance of its surroundings—which we hear in the former; nor has it the reiterated, exulting happiness of the latter.

And there is much less variety. The songs of the three great musicians of the Thrush family are clearly defined and distinct from each other, just as are their eggs and nests; and yet, without a little careful observation, most people will confound the missel thrush with the blackbird and song thrush, or mix all three in hopeless mental confusion. A useful point for those to notice who wish to learn their songs is that the missel thrush sings first. Neither song thrush nor blackbird sings so early in the year; and I think the song thrush begins before the black-

bird. The special characteristic of the Song Thrush is its habit of frequent repetition. The repeated part consists, rarely of one, usually of two, three, or four notes, and is given from three to six times in rapid succession; then, perhaps without a pause, another phrase—if the word may be used—is repeated in a similar way. One of the bird's favourite repetitions, of which he never seems to tire, may easily be interpreted: 'Cheer up, cheer up, cheer up;' and this may be taken as the keynote and purpose of his music.

Richness and variety characterise the Blackbird's song: we would recognise the tone even if he sang the song of some other bird. This has led to the terms silvery and fluty applied to it: 'The blackbird fluteth in the elm,' which recalls the mellow clearness of his music; 'The blackbird's silvery tones,' which suggests the full richness of his voice.

Most birds seem to possess more or less of the imitative faculty; and even the blackbird, which has such a distinct and wonderful song of its own, is sometimes a mimic. I have also heard the skylark take the last four notes of the chaffinch's song and repeat them several times in succession as a part of his own; but whether this was imitation or coincidence I will not venture to say.

But our great mimic is the Starling. He will imitate many of our common songsters, and has been known to whistle for a dog, &c. There is a time when the starling forsakes his familiar haunts on the top of the old house with that convenient hole in the masonry which he entered to his nest. We miss his frequent song, which he was wont to give us from the corner of the roof or from the adjacent tree. He has gone to the moors to recruit after the cares and fatigues of family life. There he associates with the plover and curlew, and on his return reproduces perfectly the wild cry of the latter. And by the succeeding spring he will not have forgotten it, although then very busy imitating the blackbird and thrush. His various imitative snatches are

intercalated with a peculiar guttural gurgling screaming of his own, accompanied by a shaking of wings and ruffling of neck feathers. There is something weird and mysterious about the starling as he sits giving utterance to these strange cries of his; there is even a touch of what is called 'uncanniness' in the North. 'Tha're an inwörd kind of börd,' remarked a Northumbrian pitman while gazing on one perched on a telegraph wire and giving vent to these peculiar sounds. And I think he meant to convey the idea that the starling is of a meditative turn, and knows a thing or two which he doesn't tell to everybody.

I have never experienced greater pleasure in the pursuit of ornithology than in learning the song of the Dipper. There is a special charm in the habits of the bird, and its haunts are among the loveliest of Nature's scenes. That it is so much less known than many others increases the fascination. For I find from my dippings into ornithological literature that this is so. Yarrell, for example, states that he had never seen a dipper alive; and that well-known naturalist, the Rev. J. G. Wood, states that he has only once found its nest and never heard it sing.

The dipper sings both early and late in the year. The first time I heard it was, I think, early in February. A dipper flying over the water disappeared beneath it, and came up again to settle on a stone at the edge of the stream. He sat there and sang, his almost insular rock splashed by the passing water—a pleasing song, sweet and cheerful, with its meet accompaniment of murmuring waters. A voice less rich and powerful than that of blackbird and song thrush, and less variety in the song, yet with a striking resemblance. There is the song thrush's habit of repetition, but less pronounced; while certain trills and turns recall to my mind the canary more than anything else.

A few hundred yards farther up the stream another sat on a stone washed by the frequent spray. His glorious white breast, set off by dark plumes, gleamed like snow while he poured forth his welcome notes. Another time a January walk down a rocky stream was enlivened by the cheery music of several as they winged their way over the water or settled on their favourite stones. And he may be heard in November, a time when there is little bird-music. As I wandered by the stream-side one hazy November day, the familiar gleam of white passed up the water before me. A dipper sat on a stone in mid-stream and cheered the November solitude with his music. And in December also, if the weather is mild, he may be heard.

There is an exhilarating wildness about the Curlew's cry, in harmony with the wild moorland where we usually hear him. There goes one sailing leisurely along on those great wings of his, uttering slowly his characteristic cry. Now he begins to descend, and the notes get quicker and shriller. They reach their maximum, and then he utters a few slowly, by way of finish.

Wonderful bird-music is to be heard from 'the swamp where hum the dropping snipe,' as we wander through their favourite marshy haunts during the breeding season.

It was long before I could identify the strange

sounds. But it was soon perceived to come from a bird flying round and round rather high in the air, and rising and falling alternately in its flight. Somehow or other, a line written by the poet Hogg, in which he speaks of 'the airy bleeter's rolling howl,' associated itself in my mind with this strange cry; I was convinced he was referring to the same bird. And then I found that the Snipe is sometimes called the bleeter, and the mystery was solved.

The peculiar sound emitted by the snipe during the breeding season is doubtless a thing very difficult to describe accurately; but I think no single word in our language comes so near to it as 'hum.' For my own part, if asked to describe the sound, I should say: 'Imagine the hum of the bee magnified very many times, and then mingled with a little of the peculiar tremulous stammering characteristic of the bleating of the lamb and kid.' This latter quality has led to the term 'bleeter,' applied to the snipe in Hogg's line, and to the French name, *chèvre volante*; also to the term 'lamming' used in Norfolk to denote its cry.

After wandering among the swamps many times during the breeding season listening to the strange sounds, and watching the airy ascending and descending curves, I was fast coming to the conclusion that the asserted bleating was a myth, or at least an exaggeration, when the resemblance struck me in a convincing manner.

Most diminutive and beautiful of our native birds is the dainty Gold-crest; not rare, but somewhat difficult to see on account of its small size and retiring habits. Away among the fir-tops, especially in the autumn, its shrill chirp draws attention to the tree-tops. But it is one of those deceptive sounds so difficult to follow. Now it appears to come from that tree in front; but when attention is directed there, it seems to come from behind. At last the bird is seen hopping briskly about among the higher branches of a larch-tree. Perhaps, if fortune favours, the song is heard also. But it is very low and soft, and therefore easily missed. The first time I heard it was from the middle of a thick hawthorn hedge, where I got a sight of the bird at the same time. On another occasion, the soft notes came from a fir-tree on a hazy November day.

A great contrast to these notes so sweet and low of the gold-crest is the song of another tiny bird, the Wren. Its song is loud and clear—a perfect little torrent of music. One of the most difficult of ornithological facts to realise is that it comes from such a tiny throat. The wren gets through its song in a somewhat business-like manner; he has something to say, and he says it right off.

The Larks are an interesting family of songsters. Chief among them is the familiar skylark, famous for its early rising. 'Stir with the lark to-morrow, gentle Norfolk,' says King Richard, when he would exhort his follower to make an early start.

To be urged to early rising by an appeal to the lark was one of the pet aversions of Charles Lamb. That we should go to bed with the lamb and rise with the lark was one of those popular fallacies which he exposed so humorously. And no doubt the lark is unconsciously early in this

matter of rising; yet it is good to hear it when the summer day is still young. And perhaps even Lamb, had he been able to enjoy the lark's music without rising from his couch and losing the thread of his waking dreams, might have even praised him for his early song. The little sea-side resort of Silloth, on the Cumberland coast, is a place where this refinement of enjoyment can be obtained. Its main street runs parallel with the Solway Firth, and between it and the sea is a strip of waste sandy ground covered with grass and wild-flowers, and diversified with hillocky sand links. Here larks abound, and all the summer day from early morn till evening fill the air with their melody. And in the very early morning we may, just awakened from slumber, lie and listen with open window to the sweet sounds which herald the summer day. Motion seems an essential part of the skylark's music, and so it is with others of the family.

In the song of the treelark we find a wonderful combination of the poetry of motion and the sweetness of melody. Sometimes he may be heard singing seated on the tree-top; but if watched, will presently be seen to rise into the air. He will ascend some twenty or thirty yards in silence, then turn and begin to sing. Slowly, with outspread wings, he returns, pouring out a succession of sweet notes: he reaches the tree-top, and finishes with a few notes of melting sweetness, long drawn out.

The song of the meadow-lark, inferior in tone and variety to the sky- and tree-larks, is yet one we love to hear. It is best when there are many together and they can be both seen and heard. I have heard them to greatest perfection on a Northern moor where dwarf birch grew among the heather, and graceful yellow globe flowers shed a golden glory around. Dozens of meadow-larks were rising on all sides, and descending, singing as they dropped slowly down, and making the air vibrate with their frequent notes. Their lively music was varied by the call of the cuckoo and the wild sweetness of the curlew's whistle.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER III.—THE SELECT CIRCLE.

At half-past nine on this Saturday evening, the parlour of the *Salutation Inn*, High Holborn, contained most of its customary visitors. They came every evening at eight: and they sat till eleven, drinking and talking. In former days every tavern of repute kept such a room for its own select circle; a club, or society, of habitués, who met every evening, for a pipe and a cheerful glass. In this way all respectable burgesses, down to fifty years ago, spent their evenings. Strangers might enter the room, but they were made to feel that they were there on sufferance: they were received with distance and suspicion. Most of the regular visitors knew each other: when

they did not, it was tavern politeness not to ask: a case is on record of four cronies, who used the *Cock* in Fleet Street for thirty years, not one knowing either the name or the trade of the other three. Yet when one died the other three pined away. This good old custom is now decayed. The respectable burgess stays at home, which is much more monotonous. Yet there may still be found a parlour here and there with a society meeting every evening all the year round.

The parlour of the *Salutation* was a good-sized room, wainscoted and provided with a sanded floor. It was furnished with a dozen wooden chairs, and three small round tables, the chairs disposed in a circle so as to prevent corners or cliques in conversation. Sacred is the fraternity, liberty, and equality of the parlour. The room was low, and, in the evenings, always hot with its two flaming unprotected gas jets: the window was never opened except in the morning, and there was always present a rich perfume of tobacco, beer, and spirits, both that anciently generated and that of the day's creation.

Among the frequenters—who were, it must be confessed, a somewhat faded or decayed company—was, to put him first because he was the richest, the great Mr Robert Hellyer, of Barnard's Inn, usurer or money-lender. Nobody quite likes the profession—one knows not why. Great fortunes have been made in it; the same fortunes have been dissipated by the money-lenders' heirs. Such fortunes do not stick, somehow. Mr Hellyer, for instance, was reputed wealthy beyond the dreams of the wildest desire. It was also said of him, under breath and in whispers and envious murmurs, that should a man borrow a five-pound note of him, that borrower would count himself lucky if he escaped with the loss of seventy-five pounds; and might generally expect to lose the whole of his household furniture, and the half of his income, for the rest of his natural life. To be sure, he sometimes had losses, as he said himself, with a groan; as when an unscrupulous client jumped off the Embankment, when he had not paid more than fifty pounds on the original five; or when a wicked man sold off his furniture secretly, in contempt of the bill of sale, and got clean out of the country with his wife and children. But on the whole he did pretty well. It was further said, by old clients, that his heart was a simple piece of round granite, for which he had no use, and that he made money out of it by letting it out at so much an hour for a paving mallet.

Mr Robert Hellyer was not a genial man or a cheerful or a pleasant man to look upon: he neither loved nor comprehended a jest: he never smiled: he kept his mind always employed on the conduct of his business. Every night—forgive the solitary weakness—he drank as much as he could carry. In appearance, he was red-faced, thick-necked, and stout: his voice was thick even in the morning, when he was under no compulsion to thickness: it was believed by his friends that his education had been imperfect: perhaps because he never gave anybody reason to suppose that he had ever received any education at all. To such men as Mr Hellyer, who every night take much strong drink and on no occasion whatever take any exercise, sixty is the grand

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climacteric. He was, a year ago, just fifty-nine. Alas! he has not even reached his grand climacteric. Already he is gone. He was cut off by pneumonia, or apoplexy, last Christmas. Those who saw the melancholy cortège filing out of the narrow gates of Barnard's Inn, mournfully remarked that none of his money was taken with him, and asked what happiness he could possibly find in the next world, which he would begin with nothing—nothing at all—not even credit—an absolute pauper.

Mr Robert Hellyer sat on one side of the empty fireplace. On the opposite side, a great contrast to his coarse and vulgar face, sat an elderly man, tall, thin, dressed in a coat whose sleeves were worn to shininess. His face was dejected: his features were still fine: he was evidently a gentleman. This person was a barrister, decayed and unsuccessful: he lived in a garret in Gray's Inn. There are a good many wrecks at the Bar, but few quite so forlorn as this poor old man. He still professed to practise, and picked up a guinea now and then by defending criminals. On these casual fees he managed to live. His clothes were threadbare: it was many years since he had had a greatcoat: on rainy and cold days he had a thin cape which he wore over his shoulders. Heaven knows how he dined and breakfasted; every evening, except in the hot days of summer, he came to this place for light and warmth. Unless he was very poor indeed, he called for a pint of old and mild and read the day's paper. Sometimes he talked, but not often: sometimes one or other of the company would offer him a more costly drink, which he always accepted with all that was left to him of courtesy. Outside, he had no friends: they had all forgotten him or died—it is very easy for a poor man to be forgotten: he had no relations: they had all died, emigrated, and dispersed; the relations of the unsuccessful are easily lost. When he talked, he sometimes became animated, and would tell anecdotes of the Bar and of the time when he was called, nearly fifty years ago, by the Benchers of Gray's Inn. What had become of the hopes and ambitions with which that young man entered upon the profession, which was to lead him to the parlour of the *Salutation* and the company that gathered there—and to the bare and miserable garret of Gray's Inn, forgotten and alone?

Another man, also elderly, who sat next to the barrister, was a gentleman who sold an excellent business and retired, in order to betake himself more completely to toying. He drank in three taverns during the day. One was in Fleet Street, where he took his chop at three: one was near Drury Lane Theatre, where he dallied with a little whisky from five to nine: and this was the third. He was a quiet, happy, self-respecting, dignified old man. In the evening, he spoke not at all—for sufficient reasons: but he benevolently inclined his head if he was addressed.

Next to him sat a younger man, a solicitor, whose practice consisted of defending prisoners in the Police Courts. He had with him two friends, and he had a confident swagger, which passed for ability. Next to him and his friends was a house agent, who had been a member for an Irish borough: and there was a gentleman, whose wife sang in music halls, so that this

fortunate person could—and did—sit about in taverns all day long. His appearance was that of a deboshed City clerk, as he was. Not to mention other members of the company, Checkley was there, occupying a chair next to the money-lender.

Here he was called Mr Checkley. He came every evening at nine o'clock, Sundays included. Like the money-lender, he wanted his little distractions, and took them in this way. Here, too, he was among those who respected him, not so much on account of his public and private virtues, or for his eminence in the law, as his money. It is not often that a solicitor's clerk becomes a 'warm' man, but then it is not often that one of the calling deliberately proposes to himself early in life to save money, and lives till seventy-five steadily carrying out his object. If you are good at figures, you will understand how Mr Checkley succeeded. Between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five he had an income which averaged about seventy-five pounds. He lived upon fifty pounds a year. From twenty-five to thirty-five he made an average of one hundred and fifty pounds: he still lived upon fifty pounds a year. At thirty-five he was induced by prudential considerations to marry: the lady, considerably his senior, had a thousand pounds. She was even more miserly than himself, and in a year or so after marriage, she fell into a decline, owing to insufficient nourishment, and presently expired. On the whole he calculated that he was the better man for the marriage by a thousand pounds. From thirty-five to forty-five his income rose to two hundred pounds: it then for twenty-five years stood at three hundred pounds a year: at the age of seventy Mr Dering gave him four hundred pounds. Therefore, to sum up, he had put by out of his pay the sum of £11,675—and this without counting the compound interest, always mounting up from his investments, which were all of a careful kind such as he understood: tenement houses, of which he had a good number: shares in building societies: money lent on bills of sale or on mortgage. At home—Mr Checkley lived on the ground floor of one of his own houses—he grew more miserly as he grew older. The standard of luxury is not high when fifty pounds a year covers all: but of late he had been trying to keep below even that humble amount. He conducted his affairs in the evening between his office hours and nine at his own house, or among the people where his property lay. It was in the district, visited by few, lying east of Gray's Inn Road: his own house was in a certain small square, a good half of the houses in which belonged to him.

At nine o'clock he arrived at the tavern. Here his drinks cost him nothing. A custom had grown up in the course of years for the money-lender to consult him on the many difficult points which arise in the practice of his profession. He was one of those who like to have one foot over the wall erected by the law, but not both. In other words, he was always trying to find out how far the law would allow him to go, and where it called upon him to stop. With this view he schemed perpetually to make his clients sign bonds under the delusion that they meant a hundredth part of what they really did mean. And as, like all ignorant men, he had the most

profound belief in the power and the knowledge and the chicanery of lawyers, he was pleased to obtain Checkley's advice in return for Checkley's drinks.

It was a full gathering. The old clerk arrived late: he was gratified at hearing the ex-M.P. whispering to his friends that the new arrival was worth his twenty thousand pounds if a penny. He swelled with honourable pride. Yes. Twenty thousand pounds! And more—more. Who would have thought, when he began as an office boy, that he could ever achieve so much?

The money-lender, bursting with a new case, real or supposed, took his pipe out of his mouth and communicated it in a hoarse whisper.

'Suppose'—it began.

'Then'—Checkley replied when the case was finished—'you would lay yourself open to a criminal prosecution. Don't you go so much as to think of it. There was a case twenty-five years ago exactly like it. The remarks of the judge were most severe, and the sentence was heavy.'

'Ah!' The usurer's red face grew redder. 'Then it can't be thought of. Pity, too. There's a house full of furniture and a shop full of stuff. And a young man as it would do good to him just to start fair again. Pity.—Put a name to it, Mr Checkley.'

'Rum. Hot. With lemon,' replied the sage. 'You get more taste in your mouth, more up-liftin' for your heart, as they say, more strengthenin' for the stomach, better value all round for your money out of rum than any other drink that I know.'

At this point, and before the waiter could execute the order, voices and steps were heard outside the room. The voices of two men. That of one loud, eager, noisy. That of the other quiet, measured, and calm.

Checkley sat upright suddenly and listened.

'That is young Cambridge,' said the old barrister. 'I thought he would be here—Saturday night and all.' He smiled, as if expectant of something, and drank off the rest of his beer at a draught.

'Most distinguished Cambridge man,' whispered the ex-M.P. to his friends. 'Wanst a Fellow of Cambridge College. Great scholar. Ornament to any circle. Dhrinks like an oyster. Son of a Bishop too—Son of an Irish Bishop—Talks Greek like English. He'll come in directly. He's taking something outside. He's always half-dhrunk to begin, and quite dhrunk to finish. But he only talks the better—being Oirish. Most remarkable man.'

The voice of this distinguished person Checkley knew. But the other voice. That he knew as well. And he could not remember whose voice it was. Very well indeed he remembered the sound of it. Some men never forget a face: some men never forget a shape or figure: some men never forget a voice: some men never forget a handwriting. A voice is the simplest thing, after all, to remember, and the most unchanging. From eighteen till eighty a man's voice changes not, save that in volume it decreases during the last decade: the distinguishing quality of the voice remains the same to the end.

'Have a drink, my dear fellow.' That was the voice of the Pride of Cambridge.

'Thanks. I don't want a drink.'

Whose voice was it? Checkley sat up eager for the door to be opened and that doubt to be resolved.

It was opened. The two men came in first, the Cambridge man leading the way. He was a good-looking, smooth-faced man of thirty-two or so, with bright blue eyes—too bright—a fine face, full of delicacy and mobility, a high, narrow forehead, and quick sensitive lips; a man who was obviously in want of some one to take him in hand and control him: one of those men who have no will of their own, and fall naturally before any temptation which assails them. The chief temptation which assailed Freddy Carstone—it seems to stamp the man that his friends all called him Freddy—a Freddy is amiable, weak, beloved, and given to err, slip, fall, and give way—was the temptation to drink. He was really, as the ex-M.P. told his friends, a very fine scholar: he had been a Fellow of his college, but never received any appointment or office of Lecturer there on account of this weakness of his, which was notorious. When his Fellowship expired, he came to London, lived in Gray's Inn, and took pupils. He had the reputation of being an excellent coach if he could be caught sober. He was generally sober in the morning; often a little elevated in the afternoon; and always cheerfully—not stupidly—drunk at night.

'You must have a drink,' Freddy repeated.—'Not want a drink? Hang it, old man, it isn't what you want, it's what you like. If I only took what I wanted, I should be—what should I be? Fellow and Tutor of the college—very likely Master—most probably Archdeacon—certainly Bishop. Wasn't my father a Bishop? Now, if you take what you like, as well as what you want—what happens? You go easily and comfortably down hill—down—down—down—like me. Tobogganing isn't easier: the switchback railway isn't more pleasant. Always take what you like.'

'No—no, Freddy; thanks.'

'What? You've got ambitions still? You want to be climbing? Man alive! it's too late. You've stayed away from your friends too long. You can't get up. Better join us at the *Salutation* Club. Come in with me. I'll introduce you. They'll be glad to have you. Intellectual conversation carried on nightly. Romantic scenery from the back window. Finest parlour in London. Come in and sample the Scotch.—Not want a drink? Who ever saw a man who didn't want a drink?'

The other man followed, reluctantly—and at sight of him Checkley jumped in his chair. Then he snatched the paper from the hands of the ancient barrister and buried his head in it. The action was most remarkable and unmistakable. He hid himself behind the paper. For the man whom the Cambridge scholar was dragging into the room was none other than Athelstan Arundel—the very man of whom Mr Dering had been speaking that very afternoon: the very man whose loss he had been regretting: the man accused by himself of forgery. So great was his terror at the sight of this man, that he was fain to hide behind the paper.

Yes: the same man: well dressed, apparently, and prosperous—in a velvet jacket and a white waistcoat, with a big brown beard—still carrying himself with that old insolent pride, as if he had never forged anything: looking not a day older, in spite of the eight years that had elapsed. What was he doing here?

'Come in, man,' said Freddy again. 'You shall have one drink at least, and as many more as you like.—Robert, two Scotch and soda.—We haven't met for eight long years. Let us sit down and confess our sins for eight years. Where have you been?'

'For the most part—abroad.'

'You don't look it. He who goes abroad to make his fortune always comes home in rags, with a pistol in his coat-tail and a bowie-knife in his belt. At least we are taught so. You wear velvet and fine linen. You haven't been abroad. I don't believe you've been farther than Camberwell. In fact, Camberwell has been your headquarters. You've been living in Camberwell—on Camberwell Green, which is a slice of Eden, with—perhaps—didn't pretty Polly Perkins live on Camberwell Green?—for eight long years.'

'Let me call upon you in your lodgings, where we can talk.'

'I haven't got any lodgings. I am in Chambers—I live all by myself in Gray's Inn.—Come and see me. I am always at home in the mornings—to pupils only—and generally at home in the afternoon to pupils and toppers and Lushingtons.—Here's your whisky. Sit down. Let me introduce you to the company. This is a highly intellectual society—not what you would expect of a Holborn Parlour. It is a club which meets here every evening—a first-class club. Subscription, nothing. Entrance fee, nothing. Order what you like.—Don't pretend not to know your brother-members.—Gentlemen, this is my old friend, Mr Athelstan Arundel, who has been abroad—on Camberwell Green—for the sake of Polly Perkins—for eight years, and has now returned.'

The ex-M.P. nudged his friends to call their attention to something good. The rest received the introduction and the remarks which followed in silence.

'Arundel, the gentleman by the fireplace, he with the pipe—is our Shylock, sometimes called the Lord Shylock.' The money-lender looked up with a dull and unintelligent eye: I believe the allusion was entirely above his comprehension.—'Beside him is Mr Vulpes—he with his head buried in the paper—you'll see him presently. Mr Vulpes is advanced in years, but well preserved, and knows every letter of the law: he is, indeed, an ornament of the lower branch. Vulpes will let you a house—he has many most charming residences—or will advance you money on mortgage. He knows the law of landlord and tenant and the law regarding Bills of Sale. I recommend Vulpes to your friendly consideration.—Here is Senex Bibulus Benevolens.' The old gentleman kindly inclined his head, being too far gone for speech. 'Here is a most learned counsel, who ought, had merit prevailed, to have been by this time Lord Chancellor, Chief Justice, Judge or Master of the Rolls, or Queen's Counsel at least. So far he is still a Junior, but we hope for his speedy advancement.—Sir, I entreat the

honour of offering you a goblet of more generous drink.—Robert, Irish whisky and a lemon for this gentleman.—There'—he pointed to the ex-M.P., who again nudged his friends and grinned—'is our legislator and statesman, the pride of his constituents, the darling of Ballynacuddery till they turned him out.—There'—he pointed to the debosched clerk—'is a member of a great modern profession, a gentleman with whom it is indeed a pride to sit down. He is Monsieur le Mari: Monsieur le Mari complaisant et content.'

'I don't know what you mean,' said the gentleman indicated. 'If you want to talk Greek, talk it outside.'

'I cannot stay,' said Athelstan, looking about the room with scant respect. 'I will call upon you at your Chambers.'

'Do—do, my dear fellow.' Athelstan shook hands and walked away. 'Now, there's a man, gentlemen, who might have done anything—anything he might have done. Rowed stroke to his boat. Threw up everything eight years ago and went away—nobody knew why. Sad to see so much promise wasted. Sad—sad. He hasn't even touched his drink. Then I must—myself.' And he did.

Observe that there is no such lamentation over the failure of a promising young man as from one who has also failed. For, by a merciful arrangement, the failure seldom suspects himself of having failed.

'Now, Mr Checkley,' said the barrister, 'he's gone away and you needn't hide yourself any longer—and you can let me have my paper again.'

Mr Checkley spoke no more that evening. He drank up his rum-and-water, and he went away mightily perturbed. That Athelstan Arundel had come back portended that something would happen. And like King Cole's prophet, he could not foretell the nature of the event.

INSTINCT.

ON the threshold of this subject we are met by the difficulty of defining the term. Darwin says: 'An action which we ourselves should require experience to enable us to perform, when performed by an animal, more especially by a very young one without any experience, and when performed by many individuals in the same way, without their knowing for what purpose it is performed, is usually said to be instinctive.' All writers on the subject agree that Instinct exists prior to all individual experience, and is in a state of perfection from the very first.

The biological law by which all living creatures tend to repeat themselves is called heredity, and by well-ascertained facts it extends over all the functions of the organisms, both internal and external, and the most unobservant must be aware of this truth. From the lowest organisms to the most highly developed, each animal receives from its parents certain kinds of senses. In the formation of instincts, heredity reigns supreme, for it conserves and accumulates, thus producing stability, and fixing what at first was acquired and variable. Longevity is not

due to climate, race, or the care we take of ourselves, but to heredity, and life-assurance offices recognise this fact by asking the age at death of our ancestors.

Immunity from contagious diseases, muscular strength, energy, stammering, lisping, loquacity, harelip, insanity, phthisis, &c., are all transmitted. Habits are transmitted; and Darwin gives a well-marked case which came under his notice of a man who moved his fingers in a peculiar manner when excited, and who transmitted the trick to his eight children. Blumenbach avers that 'an injury such as a badly-set finger may be inherited.' The Eskimos cut off the tails of their dogs, and the pups are often born tailless. Manx cats, which have no tails, are supposed to have had a similar origin. Accidental modifications, however, tend to return to the normal type and are not perpetuated. Instincts are not rigid, but admit of modification, and are plastic in adapting themselves to changed conditions in the life of the individual, and also in the life of the species, whenever these variations exist for so lengthened a period as to call into operation the laws of heredity.

The two great causes of variability are—external surroundings and domestication; and it is by the latter that the action of man is more powerful to effect changes than Nature; for, as hereditary modifications occur frequently, man, through selection, is able to accumulate these slight variations, and thus produce a new variety, which will tend to propagate its new form. Wheat, which is one of our oldest cultivated plants, still yields new varieties; and our oldest domesticated animals are capable of fresh modifications. Domestic instincts are by some said to be long-continued and compulsory habits which have become transmitted; but this cannot be altogether true, for the teaching of a dog to point would have occurred to no one had not some dog shown a well-marked tendency, and which, after all, would merely have been an exaggeration of the attitude of animals about to spring on their prey. Instincts are unconscious forms of intelligence. The white butterfly will lay her eggs on the cabbage plant, but she cannot know why she does it. A young squirrel has its store-house before it can have any experience of winter, and a duckling will make for the water although hatched by a hen. Instinct never compares or judges, but advances with certainty to its goal. The cuckoo places her eggs in other birds' nests because she lays them at intervals of three days, and were she to sit on them the hatching would be too prolonged, as there would be eggs of different ages in the same nest, and as she migrates at a very early period few young would in consequence be reared. In America, as a rule, the cuckoo hatches her eggs, but occasionally she adopts the plan of her European cousin, and probably in time will adopt it altogether. The young cuckoo has the instinct to thrust out of the nest its foster-brothers in order that it may get sufficient food. This act was probably caused in the first place by unintentional restlessness, which was improved upon and transmitted.

Organic instincts are sometimes lost under domestication, as we see in young chickens which have lost that fear of dogs and cats which

must originally have been instinctive in them; and there are some breeds of fowls which have lost the sense of sitting on their eggs. In incubation it is difficult to conceive that the animal could have had any intelligent idea of hatching the contents of the eggs, and it was probably due to the feeling of protection; those that cuddled their eggs most would have a larger offspring, and the instinct would thus be developed by natural selection. Even after a lengthened period of domestication natural instincts will persist, as is seen in the ass and the camel disliking to cross streams of water, both animals having originally come from desert countries where water is scarce. Lambs will skip on the smallest hillock, and this is a relic of their former Alpine habits. It is related of a little dog that an old piece of wolf-skin having been placed before it, the animal was convulsed with fear—a fact which can only be explained by the hereditary transmission of dread of that animal.

Acquired instincts are transmitted, but it takes about four generations to fix them. Without the heredity of acquired instincts, man in attempting to domesticate animals would have laboured in vain. The pups of pointers, collies, retrievers, and spaniels will act as their ancestors have done when taken out for the first time. A young fox in a country where they have been much persecuted will show more cunning on first coming out of its hole than an old one living in the midst of less dangerous surroundings. Large birds in inhabited lands are more shy than small ones, simply because they are more shot at, whereas in uninhabited countries they are equally fearless. Some instincts are stronger than others, and we may frequently observe the struggle going on between them, as when a dog rushes after a rabbit, is rebuked, hesitates, pursues again, or returns to his master; or when a bitch hesitates between following her owner or returning to her pups. The maternal instinct is strong in all animals, and yet it has to yield to the migratory, the offspring being left to perish miserably. It may be mentioned that birds when migrating fly as a rule by night, and in some species the young ones do not accompany the older, and must therefore perform their first journey, sometimes over immense tracts, without guidance. Darwin suggests that migration is due either to the feeling of pleasure or pain, or is the result of the force of inheritance. Audubon relates the case of a pinioned goose starting at the proper moment on foot for its long journey.

Every variation of instinct that places an animal in a better position to defend itself against new enemies or to seize some new prey is a clear gain, and will render it likely to survive under more complex surroundings. The grouse of North America burrow a tunnel just below the surface of the snow, sleeping securely at one end, and when any enemy approaches the mouth, the bird to escape has only to fly through the thin covering of snow. This action was probably due originally to the craving for warmth or concealment, or both, and the birds making the longest tunnel would be more easily survive, and thus the instinct would be perpetuated by natural selection. A plover with a brood

will, when frightened, pretend to be wounded, thus drawing the attention on herself while her young escape. This action was an intelligent one at first, due to the strength of the maternal feeling. Those parents who adopted this plan would raise a larger number of young than the more stupid, and when in time the young birds became mothers, the tendency to act in a similar manner would be transmitted.

It is not a universal law that each organ and tissue of the animal has a special function, and that from these are developed the instincts. If it were true that from the physical form the mental form arose, and that the organisation corresponded exactly with the instincts, each time the organisation differed the instincts would also vary; but this is not the case, for American and European beavers are alike outwardly, but the one builds and the other burrows. Spiders have the same organs for weaving their web, but the methods adopted are different, and some do not weave at all but merely live in holes. Certain species of wasps lay up a store of spiders to feed their larvae, and to enable them to do this the spider is stung on a certain spot, so that it is not killed outright but merely paralysed, and is thus kept without decomposing until the young are hatched. This is the result either of instinct or of the form of the wasp being such that the sting naturally strikes the proper spot.

In the following remarks on ants we have derived our information chiefly from Sir John Lubbock's book on the subject.

It would be a serious error to believe that all instincts are due to habits acquired in one generation, and transmitted by inheritance to another, for some of the most wonderful instincts could not have arisen in this manner, as, for example, those of the working or sterile ant. These differ greatly in structure and instinct from the males and fertile females, yet, from being barren, they cannot have progeny. Again, the neuters differ not only from the fertile males and females, but from each other to such a degree that three castes sometimes exist. Westwood states that 'the inhabitants of the nest have the instinct so to modify the circumstances producing this state of imperfection that some neuters shall exhibit characters at variance with those of the common kind.' This credits them with a wonderful instinct, but it is the most probable explanation. Bees have the power, by difference of food, &c., of obtaining at will from the same eggs either queens or ordinary workers, and it is possible that ants act in like manner. In them we have animals so highly endowed that they may fairly claim to rank second to man in the scale of intelligence. They make roads so as to clear obstacles from their path; when necessary, they tunnel, and an observer in South America states that he has seen one under a river as broad as the Thames at London Bridge. They possess milch-cows (aphides), which they carefully tend and protect; for the winter, they lay up a store of provisions; they engage in sportive exercises, take part in mock-combats, and play hide-and-seek. Certain individuals of a genus found in Mexico serve as 'animated honey-pots' through having their abdomens greatly dilated. In some countries they thatch the entrances to their subterranean homes, thus pro-

tecting themselves from rain; while in others, leaves are used to form beds for mushrooms, which they cultivate and eat. In Texas, some plant, harvest, and store rice; and on these rice-fields nothing else is allowed to grow. Should the grain get wet it is brought up and dried.

The slave-making ants have been brought into a state of degradation through their weak nature; for they have lost their power of building, their domestic habits, their industry, and even the habit of feeding, as, when placed in the midst of plenty, they will rather starve than help themselves. The origin of slave-making must have arisen through the pupæ of other species stored as food becoming developed, and the foreign ants following their proper instinct, immediately proceeded to work, and in course of time, instead of collecting pupæ as food, they would store them for the sake of rearing slaves. It is possible that these slave-making ants will in the battle of life cease to survive, making way for others which have reached a higher stage of civilisation.

Ants removed from the nest in a state of larvæ will, if nursed by friends, be readmitted to the nest from which they were taken; and the result is similar even when they are tended by strangers. The pupæ of one nest tended by ants from another nest will, if placed when hatched in the nurse's nest, be savagely attacked. It has therefore been supposed that each nest must have a special signal or password; but we think the recognition must be due to smell; and although it is difficult to believe that each nest has a separate odour, yet we must remember that each human being possesses an odour peculiar to himself; for, otherwise, dogs could not track the footsteps of their masters.

The different species of ants present different conditions of life, curiously resembling the earlier stages of human progress. The '*Formica fusca*' live principally on the produce of the chase; they frequent woods, live in small communities, and hunt singly; their battles are single combats like those of the Homeric heroes. These ants probably retain the habits common to all ants. They resemble the lower races of men who subsist mainly by hunting. The '*Lasius flavus*' are a higher type; they have greater skill in architecture, and own domesticated milch-cows; their communities are larger, and they act in concert. They resemble pastoral man, who lives on the produce of his flocks and herds. Lastly, the harvesting ants represent the agricultural nations.

Whether there is or is not an absolute difference between instinct and intelligence is a moot-question. According to Herbert Spencer, instinct is but one of the first stages in the ascending evolution of the mind, and there is no real difference between instinct, memory, reason, &c.—these names being useful as a convenient method of grouping phenomena. Instinct is variable, so is intelligence. The latter is, as a rule, conscious, but sometimes becomes unconscious; and it is possible that the loftier instincts in the higher animals are accompanied by a confused consciousness. Actions which are frequently repeated become automatic—that is, instinctive or unconscious; one movement follows another in a sort of rhythm. If any one is

interrupted when reciting, he has to go back to recover the thread; so a caterpillar, if it has completed its hammock up to the third stage and is placed in one finished to the sixth, is unable to derive any benefit from the fact, for it has to go back to the point where it left off, and thus does work already completed.

The state of somnambulism is nearly akin to instinct in that the acts performed are unconsciously done, and are habitual ones: the poet writes verses, the musician composes music, and the philosopher describes philosophy. Cuvier says: 'We can gain a clear notion of instinct only by admitting that animals have in their sensorium images or constant sensations, which determine their action as ordinary and accidental sensations determine action in general. It is a sort of dream or vision which haunts them constantly; and so far as concerns their instinct, animals may be regarded as a kind of somnambulist.'

The mental faculties of animals have been described as instinctive, while those of man have been termed rational. Instinctive actions are mechanically performed; rational actions require a conscious effort of thought, and with thoughtful adaptation of means to ends. That man possesses certain instincts in common with the lower animals is admitted; but that animals possess reason in common with man is warmly denied. Modern discoveries all tend to prove that man is evolved from the animal kingdom. The comparative anatomy, physiology, and psychology of man and the other animals show how closely they are connected in conformation, organs, and functions; paleontology, the transformations and transitions of forms, and embryogeny, reveal the lower type whence they were evolved. The gaps between the fossil fauna and flora are important, but proofs are accumulating daily in support of this theory.

The perceptions act in the same way; the imagination and the emotions are likewise identical. The higher animals may be regarded as an undeveloped form of man; while man may be called a complex animal. One great cause of the difference between the reason of man and the reason of animals seems to be the fact that man possesses speech; and by speech we do not mean the mere faculty of articulating words, but that each word shall be a sign representing an idea. Deaf mutes reach a high stage of abstraction by means of an elaborate series of signs; parrots articulate, but do not understand what they say. It is true that animals are able to communicate with each other. The bark and the howl of the dog signify by their difference very different things; the fowl has a note for excitement, a cluck for maternal anticipation, and a shrill cry for warning.

'Intelligence,' says Ribot, 'is a mirror which reflects the universe. It is a wonderful instrument, and is in some cases infinite as the world itself which it encompasses and measures. By the accumulated progress of generations it tends to correspond more perfectly with its object. In its development through time and space and through the infinite variety of living creatures, it ever pursues its ideal—that is, to comprehend all things from common phenomena up to the eternal and sovereign laws of the Cosmos. In-

stinct is much more humble; it reflects the world only at a small angle; its relations are limited; it is adapted to a restricted medium; it is fitted only to a small number of circumstances. Instead of being an immense palace, whence a boundless horizon may be seen, it is a lowly cottage with only one window. But if we look at both, instinct and intelligence, from without, their processes are the same.' C. T. E.

URGENT PRIVATE AFFAIRS.

By RICHARD DOWLING,

AUTHOR OF 'THE MYSTERY OF WILLARD,' 'THE WEIRD SISTERS,' &c.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.

CHAP. I.—CROCODILES OF THE THAMES.

'I—I beg your pardon,' said a hesitating male voice.

The girl started, looked round, but saw no one.

'I'm on the wall,' said the male voice in apologetic tones.

She cast her eyes up. The head and shoulders of a light-haired young man, clad in flannels, appeared almost directly over her.

The young man mounted a rung higher on the ladder and said: 'I hope I haven't startled you? I was looking for something I had lost when I saw you. I spoke because I thought you might be frightened if you came on it unawares.'

'What is it?' she asked with great dignity, stepping back a pace, and tilting her cream-coloured umbrella further back over her dainty shoulder.

'Only my crocodile, Jacko.'

'What!' she cried, gathering her dress together and glancing round the ground with apprehension.

'Indeed,' said the young man penitently, 'you must not be alarmed. He's quite tame and very small, and he's almost blind. I bought him cheap—a damaged lot,' he added, laughing, to reassure the girl.

She looked at him in silent indignation. She was not accustomed to being addressed by strange young men, and she was accustomed to being treated with respect and deference—the respect and deference due to her age, eighteen.

'I am not joking,' said he; 'I would not think of doing such a thing. I'm awfully sorry; and I should not have spoken at all—I should not have dared—only I was afraid you might come on Jacko unexpectedly and be alarmed.'

She was mollified somewhat by the concern in the speaker's voice. 'A crocodile?' she said, condescending to admit wonder into her voice.

'Yes,' he said, bringing his chest above the wall by raising himself another rung on the ladder, this causing her to retreat another pace. 'But you really mustn't be afraid. He's only a very small chap. He never goes for people, you know.'

'I don't know,' said she stiffly. She had not been in a good humour at all when taking her solitary walk through these strange grounds, and this affair annoyed her; and this young man—although he seemed really sorry, was very easy

in his address, and should not use slang to her. He annoyed her too.

'Of course not,' said he very humbly. 'I mean he would not think of attacking people. I lost him at our side of the wall, and thought he might have got into Mr Bathurst's grounds through a hole or drain—there is an unbarred drain higher up. I'm very sorry for frightening you—I am indeed; and, of course, I couldn't be so rude 'as to make a joke about such a thing. If you only knew how distressed I am, you'd—you'd believe me,' he ended somewhat incoherently.

Miss Ellen Morton felt that here her dialogue with the unknown young man on the wall ought to end. She was in these grounds of Garwood House, on the Thames, twenty miles above London, for the first time in her life that day. She had no reason to believe that young men in flannels were desperadoes. Still propriety, with the strictest rules of which she was familiar, demanded that this dialogue should end.

But then a crocodile! No rule, of which she had ever even as much as heard, took into account the contingency of a crocodile at large. In historic times, anyway, a crocodile had never before entered into a situation of this kind on the banks of the Thames. It was easy for conventionality to say Go away. But whither? If she moved, she might be walking straight towards the odious reptile, or—worse still—might suddenly hear him running after her behind.

Plainly, it was impossible for her to move. She was not at all timid by nature. But before she came upon this adventure she had not been very happy. She stood still, glancing about her in shivering watchfulness.

'I don't know exactly what I ought to do,' said the young man on the wall in accents of perplexity. 'Mr Bathurst forbids people landing on his grounds from the river or getting over his walls or fences. He is death on trespassers.'

'Is he?' said she, feeling that it was a great pity this exclusiveness did not operate effectually against saurians.

'Oh yes. He's awfully particular about keeping every one out. If I might only slip over and stand beside you, you'd be all right, you know.'

It was hard for Ellen Morton, notwithstanding her eighteen years' experience in life, to deal with this speech. Here was a complete stranger talking in a reproachful tone of her host. This ought to be resented, although she had never met Mr Bathurst yet. Then there was the impudent assumption on the part of this young man that if he were only by her side she should be 'all right!' Still the speaker meant well. And then there was the dreadful thought of the lurking crocodile! She felt as though she must cry. Fancy her, Ellen Morton, crying like an ordinary silly girl! she who always held in scorn and contempt girls who cried for nothing! But, on the other hand, was a crocodile nothing? If she was sure this crocodile was nothing, she should not feel in the least inclined to cry. She should feel very indignant. Why had this young man spoken at all? Why had he not held his tongue, and allowed her to be torn asunder by the crocodile in peace?

'What—what am I to do?' she asked with a little quaver of pathos in her voice.

'Oh, pray, don't!' said he; and before she knew what was happening, he had swung himself over the top of the wall, dropped down, and was standing in front of her, and saying: 'I am sorry I spoke at all. I distressed you without any need. There was no danger from Jacko, except the danger of giving you a fright, if you saw him unexpectedly. And here have I terrified you and nearly made you cry. I'd give all the world,' he said desperately, 'I had held my tongue.'

'I am not going to cry, and I am not terrified,' she said, her dignity giving way before his manifest sincerity, and under the relief afforded by his presence. She turned towards the house, quarter of a mile distant, and began walking towards it.

'You see,' said he, 'I hadn't the least idea there was any one near when I got up the ladder. And, of course, I did not expect to find a lady here. Mrs Bathurst is never about the grounds, and I don't remember any other lady at Garwood.'

'I came only this morning.'

'You are not a member of the family?'

'No. I am not a relative; but I am going to stay a while.'

'Good gracious!' cried he with involuntary astonishment. 'Going to stay at Garwood House for a while!'

'Yes. Why are you astonished?' she asked, widening the distance between them as they walked.

'Oh, nothing,' he said in momentary confusion, and then foundered a moment, and then partly recovered himself. 'I'm sure I beg your pardon; only, you know, you are so unlike Mr Bathurst, I thought you could not be closely related. You must think me very rude to ask. I assure you I did not mean to frighten you, and I didn't mean to be rude; and it is horribly awkward about the crocodile.'

She smiled. His compunction was disarming, engaging. He almost required protection from himself. 'You did not do or say anything so very dreadful. Of course, it is awkward to have the crocodile wandering about, and a pity you lost your—pet.'

'Oh, that's no consequence at all,' said he. 'I wish he were at the bottom of the Red Sea.'

'A crocodile,' said she, with another smile, 'is a fresh-water creature.'

The young man said nothing; he merely made an impatient gesture, as if he were dismissing the reptile to still more unsuitable depths.

'And as to asking me if I were related to Mr Bathurst, there was no harm in that, for I do not know him, have never seen him yet.'

'What!' he cried, pulling up suddenly and staring at her in consternation. 'You don't know him! You haven't seen him! Why, this is worse than anything! This is the worst of all!'

The girl looked at him with displeasure and suspicion. 'What is the matter now?—I can see the house from this. Thank you for your escort so far. Will you not come in?' She moved her hand in formal invitation, but voice and manner conveyed his dismissal.

'To the house?' said he in amazement. 'Oh no, thank you. I am dreadfully afraid you may

not know much, may not know anything about Mr Bathurst!

This was really going too far. 'I must thank you for your kindness and say good-day,' said she frigidly, bowing.

'Oh, pray don't speak in that way. I wouldn't offend you for the world; but I fear you do not know much about Mr Bathurst, and may tell him about—about me and Jacko'— He paused, unable to go on.

'Well?' she asked mercilessly, and conveying grave reproof for the bare notion of making a secret of this meeting.

'Oh! well, indeed, you mustn't tell anything about it to Mr Bathurst, or, I think, to Mrs Bathurst either.—You may well look insulted and astonished; but I assure you I am speaking only to prevent a horrid mess. You don't know that Mr Bathurst has a nickname in the City?—No. I felt you couldn't have heard. How could you? It's horribly unkind and beastly, but—but they call him the Crocodile.'

'What!—And your story of the escaped creature?'

'Oh, believe me, that is quite true. Indeed, indeed, every word I have told you is quite true. It was Mr Bathurst's nickname made me think of buying Jacko, and Jacko really got out of his basket just before I saw you first. Mr Bathurst does not at all like his nickname, and if you told him about me, it would be most unpleasant. I don't care what you may tell him about me, but, for goodness' sake, don't mention the crocodile. If you mention the crocodile, he may think—he may think—I don't know what he may think. But you can see it would be very awkward for you to say anything about a crocodile at your first meeting.' The young man took off his cap. 'I'll watch you safe into the house from this. Jacko must surely be at the other side of the wall. I shall write you to say I have recovered him, so that you may not be afraid to walk about the grounds—that is, if you will tell me to whom a letter for you should be addressed. You see, I can't write to Mr Bathurst or his mother about Jacko; and I couldn't bear to think my carelessness was the means of keeping you in endless dread.'

'My name is Morton,' she said with dignity, and then, with grave politeness and a bow: 'Good-day, and thank you.'

'And my name is George Chaytor.—Good-day.' He bent his bare head, and then raising it, watched the figure of the girl cross the lawn and enter Garwood House. Then, forgetting that he still held his cap in his hand, he plodded back to the boundary wall with eyes bent on the ground and in complete forgetfulness of the whole reptile creation.

A year back Nellie Morton had left school and gone to live with her gentle, sympathetic, childless, maternal aunt Sophie, wife of Colonel Pickering, in Deighton, a quiet garrison town of the south. This June morning her uncle had left her at Garwood House, bidding her final adieu. She was the only child of the widower, Christopher Morton, civil engineer, now residing in Brazil. Mr Bathurst was Morton's business man in London. When Colonel Pickering was ordered abroad, Mr Bathurst's mother wrote to Brazil, offering the girl a home at Garwood House.

Mr Morton replied, thanking Mrs Bathurst for her kindness to his motherless daughter, and saying he should be home for good in the autumn, as he had now made enough for himself and his girl. He had been far from well, but was then much better, almost as well as ever.

Nellie had never seen Mrs Bathurst until this morning, and the interview had proved anything but reassuring to the young girl. Mrs Bathurst was short and very stout, about seventy years of age, with dark, peering, inscrutable eyes, and a heavy portentous manner and delivery. She was not tall or thin or haggard enough for a witch. She looked a dark, unwieldy sorceress.

When bluff, outspoken Colonel Pickering had resigned Nellie into the hands of her new guardian and taken his leave, the old woman said: 'Child, I cannot get about easily. As soon as you have seen your room and taken off your things, come back here. I wish to talk to you.' The tone was not one of request or command; but of a person accustomed to speak and find the words carried into acts as inevitably and automatically as one's limbs obey one's will.

Nellie returned from her room subdued and awed by the gloom of this vast silent house, dark throughout, despite the white sunlight of June morning shining abroad on wood and river and field.

'Take a chair, Ellen,' said Mrs Bathurst as though Miss Morton was the new housemaid, for some unwelcome reason privileged to be seated in the presence of the mistress. 'You will find this place dull. There are the grounds to walk in, and books in the library. I am practically an invalid, although I suffer from no ailment or pain. I never cross the threshold of this house. A young lady cannot walk on country roads alone; you will be obliged to make the most of the grounds, for we keep no horses. We entertain no company. We breakfast at half-past seven, lunch at two, and dine at half-past six. My son is the soul of punctuality. He never varies a minute—never half a minute. Go, explore the grounds between this and luncheon; a bell will ring a quarter of an hour before it is ready.'

Nellie felt far from comfortable as she entered the dreary, hollow, resounding house after her interview with George Chaytor. That great desolate house had oppressed her like a portentous cloud. The meeting with Mrs Bathurst had filled her with tremulous misgivings and vague chilling fears, never even suspected before in her clear, bright, open, happy life. For the first time she now had a secret—she was to say nothing about that incident at the boundary wall. It was a poor, paltry, mean, unhand-some secret, connected with the trivial circumstance of her meeting with that young man, and learning the lowering fact that her father's business man, whom she had never seen and under whose roof she now lived, was known by an uncomplimentary and damaging nickname.

She would have repelled with scorn the idea that there was anything romantic or even interesting in her encounter with young Chaytor. Such a thought could not have occurred to her, and no one was by to suggest it. She had been startled by hearing his voice from the wall. She

had been alarmed at the notion that a hideous reptile might be within reach of her; and she had been disgusted at learning that Mr Bathurst, whom her father and aunt and uncle always spoke of with respect as the custodian and wise investor of her father's fortune, should be treated with such want of feeling and courtesy as to be named after the most loathsome of reptiles.

Mrs Bathurst and Garwood House had filled her with inexpressible fears. She deplored but could not help this. No doubt in time she should overcome these unpleasant feelings. One thing she could do, and that one thing she would do, namely, to yield Mrs Bathurst constant and dutiful respect.

She remained in her room until the bell rang for luncheon. With what alarming shrillness the sound tore through the weird quiet of that lonely house! She wondered, did that clangorous bell peal through the corridors when the old woman was alone? or had it been set going to honour or terrify the guest? It made her shudder to think of rousing all the far-off sleeping echoes of this sombre house for two lonely women.

Luncheon was served in the large dining-room, on the left of the front entrance hall. Here, notwithstanding the brightness and warmth of the day, all was dim and damp. The heavy dark oak furniture, upholstered in deep purple leather, was moist and chilly to the touch. The air of the room was moist, not with the sweet moisture of leafy June, but with faint mouldy exhalations from the banquets of buried generations. The dark wainscoted walls seemed to stand back in sullen distance from the shrunken dining-table. The room looked out upon the front lawn, and the cloth was laid at the end farthest from the curtained windows. Bright as the summer day was, it seemed as though lamps would be indispensable—they would have been regarded with pleasure by any one not morbidly enamoured of gloom.

Mrs Bathurst was standing at the back of the room when Nellie entered. 'Ha!' she said, moving across the floor with difficulty and apparent pain and great slowness, because of her unwieldy bulk. 'You are punctual, child. That is right; we are very punctual in this house.'

The meal was served, and the two women sat down. The parlour maid who attended the table was middle-aged, stolid, stupid-looking. For a long time no word was spoken. Nellie felt glad of this. She did not desire conversation. The desolate genius of this house had begun to work, and was filling with shadowy terrors this girl, who up to that time had lived her life unafraid.

Mrs Bathurst ate little, and Nellie had no appetite at all. Mrs Bathurst made no pretence of entertaining her visitor. She spoke such words as were necessary in the progress of the meal, and now and then bent her inscrutable eyes on her guest. She did not look at the girl as though she wished to see her. Those sorceress eyes never betrayed any thought or emotion. They were the outward organs of a spirit always occupied on itself within. They peered at the girl, but did not stare at her. They did not make Nellie uncomfortable about herself,

as do eyes which stare; but they set her wondering in chilled awe what could this strange old woman be contemplating that made her look so weird.

No pleasant or cheerful thoughts were at the disposal of the girl. Her life up to that day had been one of peaceful happiness at school, and of delicious awakening amid sympathetic surroundings at Deighton, in the society of her soft-mannered, affectionate aunt, and the hearty, outspoken, chivalrous, kind-hearted Colonel. The twelve months spent with her aunt had been a time of complete happiness. No one moment had been marred by unpleasantness of any kind. She loved her gracious and affectionate aunt as she might her mother, if that mother had been spared; and her courteous, honest uncle as though he were the father far away in Brazil, who was no more to her than the beneficent figure of a dream.

This strange gloomy house and this strange mysterious woman had struck into Nellie's young heart the first chill she had ever experienced. She already had the feeling of being in a prison, and she found the air of the house thickening in her throat and suffocating her. She was alone now, in such a solitude as she had never conceived before. She was not to see the Pickerings again; she had stayed with them until the very last moment. If she were to obey her impulse, she would there and then flee from that house; but she was more helpless than a child. She had never yet acted for herself in any affair of consequence. With the disposition to fly, she felt flight was as impossible as though she were fettered with irons a thousand pounds in weight.

The girl was not of a nervous or fanciful nature. She was blithesome and light of heart. She had never known the luxury of a grievance. Her disposition was to look at the cheerful side of things. She had never been ill since the ailments of childhood. She could not believe her present condition of depression and apprehensiveness was the result of spending a few hours in this gloomy house with this silent and self-absorbed old woman. The girl was beginning to think her health must be failing her.

At the end of luncheon the old woman pushed away her plate, and keeping her unfathomable eyes on Nellie, said, with startling unexpectedness: 'What change has come over you since morning? You are not the same. Did you not find the grounds interesting? Have you lighted on no books to your liking in the library?'

The girl could not have been more astonished if one of the grim carved heads in the black oak chimney-piece had addressed her. She had been thinking that if she came into the room and sat down at the table with her hat on, Mrs Bathurst would not notice anything unusual in her appearance; and that if she had fainted or fallen off her chair, Mrs Bathurst would have contented herself with summoning a servant and giving orders that Miss Morton should be carried to her room and attended to. And here was her hostess showing herself, on this very short acquaintance, able to detect a slight alteration in manner or appearance.

'I think the grounds are beautiful,' said Nellie,

when she had recovered from her astonishment sufficiently to be able to speak.

'And you have not been to the library yet?'

'No; I reserved that pleasure for after luncheon.'

'Ah! I hope you may find the library a pleasure. I don't think you took any benefit from the grounds to-day. I hope none of those audacious boating-parties landed and disturbed your walk?'

'No; I did not see any boating-party.' This answer was given with extreme reluctance. It was of course truthful, but it was not the whole truth.

'You are keeping something back from me,' said the old woman; 'but you need not tell me. I am not interested. I do not ask you what. If I wanted to know, you would tell me, but I do not want to know.'

A UNIQUE REPUBLIC.

NOT many persons are aware—or, at least, remember what they may have learned incidentally at some time or other—that between the two kingdoms of France and Spain there lies a Republican community, which has been to some extent associated with the history of both nations, but has been unaffected by the political vicissitudes of either. Among the mountains which separate these two great nations there is a valley which reaches to the French frontier on the one side, and to the borders of Catalonia on the other. This is the Valley of Andorra, in which, for eleven centuries, has dwelt undisturbed probably the most remarkable community in the world. In this Pyrenean valley has rested in practical oblivion, in undisturbed repose, and in a state of independence secured in a unique manner, a Republic, which, through centuries of feudal conquest and disorder, of dynastic change and national revolution, of social upheaval and political reformation, of religious change and intellectual development, has preserved its own manners, its own ideas, its own laws, its own language, its own civil and political organisations, and its own religious opinions and practices, absolutely without alteration or admixture. As it was in the days of Charlemagne, so, one may say, is Andorra to-day. Surely this is a sufficiently startling anachronism at the close of the nineteenth century to merit a little attention and study.

The geographical position of Andorra has been its salvation. Away up among the Pyrenees—not, perhaps, among the very highest and steepest summits, such as the Canigou or the Mont-Perdu, but among the more closely-packed masses where the valleys are narrower and the passes more dangerous—it is situated in a region which is impassable during some parts of the year. It is far away from the regular routes of communication between France and Spain, and outside the lines which invading armies going in either direction must follow. The people, simple in character and rustic in occupation, have never had any foreign sympathies, and have kept themselves in a marvellous degree free from foreign influence. They are poor, and their lands are

mostly pastoral, so there has been nothing to tempt either the ambition or the avarice of their neighbours. By a strange combination of circumstances, indeed, the Republic of Andorra, which is also a feudal State, is able to present to modern society an organism which has neither progressed nor retrograded for a thousand years, and which links us with a long-past ante-feudal society.

To Charlemagne the Andorrans are fond of attributing their independence. The long lines of French and Spanish kings are to them but as idle tales, and it is doubtful if any outside political entity has impressed itself on the Andorran mind save only that of the Great Napoleon. The news of his battles alone seem to have penetrated to Andorra, and have made an impression on the Andorrans, not so much because of the dynastic and national interests involved, as because Napoleon restored the Convention which had been renounced by the French Republic. This Convention was part of the ancient constitution of Andorra; and Napoleon restored it because he regarded Andorra as too curious an organism to be effaced without reason.

Andorra is not only itself a wild and roadless country, but it is surrounded on all sides by wild and roadless country. There is not a single highway leading into it on either side, and the mule-paths through mountain-passes are closed for long portions of the year.

To reach it from France, one starts from the quaint old town of Viedessos, in the department of the Ariege, itself some two thousand feet above the sea. The path is rough, rocky, and crooked to about a height of eight thousand feet to the Port du Rat, from which the descent is equally rough and more precipitous, through a wild and desolate region, to Serrat, the frontier village of Andorra. This is a whole day's journey on horseback, or muleback, and the traveller may think himself fortunate who reaches the Andorran village before nightfall, otherwise he may make acquaintance with either brigands or wolves.

Serrat is picturesque enough as to situation, but is a wretched hamlet, shut in by the mountains, without any inn—there is only one inn in Andorra, and that is in the capital—without even a spare bed or decent food. There are about a dozen houses built of rough stone, without mortar and without windows, and a small rude church.

A journey of four hours will bring the traveller to Andorra town—Andorra-la-Vella—the capital of the country, where is a plain but decent hostelry. This is a place of about seven hundred inhabitants, and here it may be noted that the entire population of the whole State—which is some twenty-eight miles long by twenty miles broad at its longest and broadest—does not exceed six thousand.

Andorra-la-Vella contains the Parliament House of the Republic, a building almost as old, and certainly as quaint, as its institutions. Here the Council-General hold their sittings, and here are kept the State records, in an armoury with six locks, one for each commune, a representative of which carries the key, so that the precious documents can only be reached in the presence of representatives of all the communes.

This Council-General is the governing body, and is composed of twenty-four members—four

representatives from each of the six provinces, or communes, into which the country is divided. These representatives are chosen from among the men of most substance in each commune, and are elected by the heads of families—namely, the householders. Two 'Consuls' are elected every year; in the second year they become 'Councillors;' in the third year, 'Caps-Grossos,' an honorary office without a seat in the Council; and in the fourth year they are eligible for re-election as 'Consuls.' Thus the Parliament never dies, and is never dissolved, and there is no such thing as a general election.

The elected members of the Council-General elect the President and Vice-President not from their own numbers, but from outside. These are termed First and Second Syndics, who are not paid, and who may be turned out of office at any time by a vote of the Council. A Secretary is also elected by vote, and he is the only paid official.

It is sufficiently remarkable to find this system of representative government and democratic institutions existing in an aristocratic and feudal State for over a thousand years; for the system to-day is as it was confirmed by the charter of Louis the Pious; but it is still more remarkable to find in Andorra a perfect system of Home Rule of equal antiquity.

Each of these six communes has also a Parliament of its own—a Communal Council, whose functions are to attend to purely local affairs. They have to manage the communal lands, look after the roads and bridges, preserve order, and give a general superintendence to the industries of their districts. Five of these communes, again, are divided into Quarters, or Cuarts, each with its own Council, elected by the householders, with similar functions in a more limited area. These Provincial and Quarter Councils have no power to levy taxes. Their revenue is derived from the rents of communal lands and woods, out of which they defray expenses and contribute a certain annual amount to the Council-General for the expenses of the State.

The State expenses are practically limited to the tributes paid to Spain and France and the insignificant expenses of the Central Parliament. A government official in each district makes out annually a list of the men who have any property, and of the crops and herds upon the farms; and upon the basis of this return the only tax known in Andorra is assessed. Whatever other public revenue there is, is derived from the rents of the public lands and from forest rights to cut wood.

The Syndics of the Council-General are designated 'Illustrious,' and the First Syndic holds the executive power. There are no written laws to guide him; there is no foreign policy to trouble him; there is no public debt to tax his ingenuity as a financier; there is no annual Budget requiring dexterity in the manipulation of figures and in the anticipation of debits and credits; and there are no Acts of Parliament to be framed or opposed. He has simply to preside over the assembly to see that its deliberations and decisions are conducted in accordance with precedents and time-honoured rules. When any question arises as to custom or precedent, it is decided by the Illustrious Syndic after conference with the Caps-Grossos (or

experienced Councillors), whose duties are to see that no infringement of ancient right or breach of traditional custom shall occur.

While the Andorrans have thus an absolute democratic government, the administration of justice partakes of the old feudal association. The judicial power is exercised by two magistrates called *Veguers*, who are appointed by the Co-Princes—that is to say, France names one and Spain another. These are not only Magistrates, but, as representing the Co-Princes, have the chief command of the Andorran army or militia, although for the purpose of preserving internal law and order only.

Minor cases, and the first processes in civil cases, are dealt with by Bailiffs appointed by the *Veguers*, but all serious cases go before the *Veguers*, or Tribunal de Corts. There is a third officer of justice, a civil judge of appeals, who is appointed for life, and is nominated alternately by the Bishop of Urgel and the French government. He presides at the supreme tribunal to which appeals are carried. In extreme cases there is right of appeal, as a last extremity, to the Co-Prince by whom the sitting judge of appeals was appointed; but this is seldom resorted to.

The salaries of the judges and all the costs of the courts are paid by the litigants; and when the fees are insufficient the balance is made up out of the State funds.

Mention has been made of the army. This is composed of all the able-bodied heads of families, and nominally amounts to six hundred men. Each soldier must provide his own gun; and every householder is bound to keep on hand always a certain amount of ammunition for use when required. This militia is liable to be called to arms at any time; but as a matter of fact, the liability has seldom been enforced to its full extent. They are not paid, and have neither uniform, accoutrements, flags, nor bands.

Such, then, are the institutions of this remarkable State and primitive people, who present to us a type of character and custom absolutely without change for ten centuries. There is surely no other community in the world where one can find the same habits and usages as obtained in the time of the immortal Charlemagne.

Almost perfect as a political organism, Andorra, however, has been stagnant as a society. The people live in the same simple, primitive manner as their forefathers—cultivating the ground and attending to their flocks and herds, but wholly indifferent to education or the advancement of civilisation. They are pious, after the manner of medieval religionists, and it is believed that no Andorran has ever embraced the Protestant faith. They have had neither backslidings nor 'revivals,' and are alike strangers to agnosticism and fanaticism.

The country is remarkably picturesque—a series of fertile valleys surrounded by wild and savage mountains. Through the chief valley flows the river Valira into Spain, and along the banks of this river are situated the principal villages. Six of these only are of any size, even as villages, and they are the chief towns of the several communes. There are a score or so of small hamlets, irregularly built, without any attempt at street-making, and with no appliances for lighting. The houses—with some very few exceptions belonging to the

wealthier citizens—are small and poor, of barn-like and comfortless appearance. They are built of rough stone without mortar, as there is no chalk in the country; and many of them are without glass windows. The ground floor is used for storage and for the housing of the live-stock, and the living-rooms are above.

There are some small lakes, which are well fished by the people; and there is game in the mountains, even game of the larger and more dangerous kinds, such as bears and wild-boars, not to mention wolves and eagles. The Andorrans are all sportsmen after a fashion, and some few of them are smugglers, but the most of them are engaged in agriculture or in timber-felling.

Perhaps the most important industry is the breeding and rearing of mules for the Spanish markets; and next to that, the felling of timber both for domestic use and for sale in Spain, to which it is floated down the Valira. This timber is felled in the mountain forests which belong to the State or commune, and one of the principal sources of revenue is in the licenses, or rents, for tree-cutting.

The arable farms are small in extent, and produce fair crops of wheat, rye, maize, haricot beans, potatoes, and vegetables. Tobacco is grown to a considerable extent, but is not very skilfully manufactured. Most of it is exported to Spain, as is also the surplus fruit, such as walnuts, chestnuts, apples, and pears.

The few imports required by the Andorrans come for the most part from France, one of the rights of the community being to draw from the department of the Ariège all the merchandise it requires without payment of Customs dues.

As a matter of fact, Andorra requires a great many things, but she has so little to offer in exchange that her foreign trade is practically *nil*. She has no Customs tariff herself, and the profits of the Andorran smugglers are made in running the gantlet of the Spanish *douaniers*. She has, however, considerable mineral deposits, which might be developed if she had the means and the energy to make canals and construct machinery; and there are also numerous thermal and mineral springs which may, in some more or less distant future, be transformed into health-resorts. At present they are quite neglected, like most of the natural riches of the country. Perhaps in time the industrial awakening of Spain may extend to this Republic of the mountains, but even Spain is yet far behind the rest of Europe in many things.

Meanwhile, however, Andorra remains at once an example and a warning—admirable in its political institutions, in the law-abiding and industrious character of its people, in its freedom from crime and strife; deplorable in its stagnation and backwardness. It is a land without a literature, and almost without education. There are a few elementary schools of a humble type, and all the people are bound by law to know Catalan, of which the Andorran language is a variant. But they do not read, and there is not a library in the whole Republic. There is not even a newspaper; and only a few of the wealthier inhabitants think of subscribing to French or Spanish newspapers. They are not a very musical people, and there is not a piano in the whole country. They are not given to out-

door recreations, like their neighbours of France and Spain, and public entertainments are unknown. They do not care for flowers or pictures, and would as soon think of flying as of cultivating roses to look at. An Andorran artist has not yet been evolved, nor, apparently, an Andorran mechanician. It is a curious fact that, beyond a few saw-mills and a small weaving-mill, there is no machinery of any kind in the State. Steam is an unapplied force, and electricity a thing as yet undreamed of. Needless to say there is neither railway nor telegraph; there is not even a wheeled vehicle of any kind, for there is not a road on which one could be moved. There is not even an Andorran currency, for the people use the coins of France and Spain, as also the postage stamps, with equal indifference.

A gentleman who has lived much among them tells us that the Andorrans, although not what we call educated, are a religious, well-conducted, peace-loving, and temperate people, sensible and clear-headed up to the point of their own requirements, reserved and taciturn, but wholly trustworthy. They are contented with their lot, and proud of their independence; and yet, perhaps, that independence has been their misfortune. It leaves them in the ninth century, although of the nineteenth.

THE WEDDING RING.

WEDDING rings have been worn in all ages; but no information respecting their origin can be discovered. It is known they were used by the ancient Greeks and Romans; but their use was then at the ceremony of betrothal, and not marriage. Pope Nicholas, writing of the ninth century, says that the Christians first presented the woman with espousal gifts, including a ring, which was placed on her finger; the dowry was then agreed on; and afterwards came the nuptial service. These rings of the Romans were made of various metals, as iron, brass, copper, and gold; and while betrothal and marriage were distinct, the rings were ornamented; but when formal betrothal became obsolete, the marriage ring took a plain shape, as at present.

The ancients wore the betrothal ring, as now, on the next least finger of the left hand. Many reasons are assigned for this, as the erroneous idea that a vein or nerve went direct to the heart, and therefore the outward sign of matrimony should be placed in connection with the seat of life: the left hand is a sign of inferiority or subjection: the left hand is less employed than the right, and the finger next least the best protected. At one time, it was the custom to place the wedding ring on the right hand of the bride. The Anglo-Saxon bridegroom at the betrothal gave a *wed* or pledge, and a ring was placed on the maiden's right hand, where it remained till marriage, and was then transferred to the left.

During the times of George I. and II. the wedding ring, though placed upon the usual finger at the time of marriage, was sometimes worn on the thumb, in which position it is often seen on the portraits of the titled ladies in those days. It is now absolutely necessary to use a ring at the English marriage service. The placing of the ring on the book is a remnant of

the ancient custom of blessing the ring by sprinkling holy water in the form of a cross. This is still done by the Roman Catholic priest. The Puritans attempted the abolition of the ring. The Quakers don't use a ring at the service because of its heathenish origin; but many wear them afterwards. The Swiss Protestants do not use a ring either at the service or afterwards.

Rings have not necessarily been made of gold, in order to be used in the English service. They may be of any metal or size. At Worcester, some years ago, a registrar was threatened with proceedings for not compelling the use of a gold ring. At Colchester, at the beginning of this century, the church key took the place of the ring; and this has been the case elsewhere. A story is told of a couple going to church and requesting the use of the church key. The clerk, not thinking it lawful, fetched a curtain ring, which was used at the ceremony. The Duke of Hamilton was married at Mayfair with a bed-curtain ring. *Notes and Queries* of October 1860 relates the cutting of a leather ring from the gloves of the bridegroom and the use of it at the service. An Indian clergyman stopped a wedding because the ring contained a diamond; and in Ireland all rings except plain gold ones are rigidly forbidden.

One of the earliest forms of rings was the gemel or gimmel ring. It was a twin or double ring, composed of two or more interlaced links, which turned upon a hinge or pivot. These links could be shut up into one solid ring. Each hoop had one convex, and the other flat side; when the two flat sides were in contact, the links formed one ring. Mottoes and devices were often engraved on the inner or flat side. At the time of betrothal, it was customary for the man to put his finger through one hoop, and the woman through the other. They were thus symbolically yoked together. The links were then broken, and the two kept a link until the marriage. Some gimmel rings with three links were made for the purpose of a witness keeping the middle one. There is a gimmel containing nine links still in existence. A gold one given by Edward Seymour to Lady Katharine Grey had five links and a poesy of his own composition.

The *Exeter Garland*, written in 1750, contains:

A ring of pure gold she from her finger took,
And just in the middle the same then she broke;
Quoth she: 'As a token of love, you this take;
And this is a pledge I will keep for your sake.'

Wedding rings, also, were not always worn plain, the common emblem being clasped hands or hearts. Two silver-gilt rings were used for the marriage of Martin Luther and Catherine von Borgia. Luther's ring is still in Saxony, and bears the following: 'D. Martino Luthero, Catherina v. Borgia, 13 Junii 1525.' The other is in Paris, and has a figure of Christ upon the cross, and the Latin inscription as above. On the ring given by Henry VIII. to Anne of Cleves was inscribed, 'God send me well to kepe,' in allusion to the fate of Anne Boleyn. Lady Cathcart, on her fourth marriage in 1713, had the following: 'If I survive, I will have five.' Dr John Thomas, Bishop of Lincoln, 1753, had a similar inscription.

Many superstitions attach to the wedding ring, probably arising from the Roman Catholic custom of its receiving the blessing of the priest before putting it on. In Ireland, the rubbing of the ring on a wart or sore was sure to cure it; also, the belief still remains that by pricking a wart with a gooseberry-bush thorn through a wedding ring it will gradually disappear. In Somersetshire they say that a sty on the eyelid may be removed by the rubbing of the ring. The Romans believed a peculiar virtue lay in the ring finger, and they stirred their medicines with it. Another superstition is that if a wife lose her ring, she will also lose her husband's love; and if she breaks it, the husband will shortly die. Many married women would not remove their rings, for fear of the death of their partners. An old saying is, 'As your wedding ring wears, your cares will wear away.'

THE WORLD AND THE POET.

A BIRD sang out in the meadows,
And took of the ripening grain;
But the people grudged their barley,
And the golden-throat was slain.

A poet brake into music,
Striking the silvern chords;
But the people whispered together,
As they gazed on their glittering boards:

'Where is the substance of music?
What is the value of song?
A breath and a wail and an echo
Out of the heart of the throng;

'A breath that would stir our patience,
The wail of a sometime wrong,
The echo of deeds heroic,
A-throb with the passion of song.

'We were sent for the sowing and reaping,
The labouring early and late;
We are striving, and jostling, and crowding
At Fortune's narrowing gate.

'We dare not linger to listen,
We dare not hearken the song,
Lest we turn our thoughts from the winning,
And are pushed aside by the strong.'

So the people whispered together
Over their piles of gold,
And looked askance at the singer,
Bare-throated, a-hungered, and cold.

He took up the lyre and brake it,
Brake it across his knee,
And despair sat chill on his shoulder
As he laboured out on the lea.

But the people laughed in the market,
Applauding the wiser choice—
And a world was stayed in its progress
For lack of that silent voice.

C. A. DAWSON.

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ANNUITANTS.

A CERTAIN rich man once declared that, with all his wealth, he believed he was neither so happy nor free from anxiety as were some of his old servants on whom he had been pleased to bestow pensions as rewards for their faithfulness. Were he to begin life over again, his aim would be to attain what, in his view, was the *summum bonum* of human life—a restful and independent old age, enjoying the consciousness of a useful and meritorious career. A great deal can be said in favour of such a cheerful philosophy of life. To have but few and simple wants, and to be assured that these wants are ever to be supplied, either as the reward of personal meritorious services, or the result of individual prudence and thrift practised for many years, is a condition of life which kings have been known to envy. And yet it is a condition of life not so difficult to attain as many persons suppose. The ranks of those in enjoyment thereof are being increased in number every year. Not to speak of those who are in receipt of private annuities conferred for various reasons, there are at the present time in the United Kingdom no fewer than 29,832 individuals who have Government annuities amounting in the aggregate to over £540,000, payable half-yearly either through Post-office or Trustee Savings-banks. It is believed that ninety per cent. of these annuitants belong exclusively to the industrial and humbler classes of society, who have been enabled to acquire their assured incomes (averaging nearly twenty pounds a piece) because of their habits of thrift and providence long and patiently practised. Taking the average age of those referred to above at sixty years, and allowing for the slightly increased cost of purchase in the case of female annuitants, the actual amount of money that has been 'sunk' in the hands of the Treasury Commissioners or Postmaster-general in order to yield the foregoing yearly return is something over seven millions sterling!

But of course there are, in addition to those who enjoy Savings-bank or Government annuities,

as they are popularly called, many thousands of persons who take advantage of the annuity system now in operation at most of the life-assurance companies. A large number of these annuitants are likewise to be classified as 'industrial,' or belonging to the humbler ranks of life: many of them, also, have acquired their yearly competencies as the result of a prudential career. Besides these, however, there is another and a wealthier class of annuitants who are more familiar with the precincts of Threadneedle Street than with the headquarters of the Postmaster-general, and who, instead of taking some twopenny 'bus to proceed cityward on quarter-days, can afford the luxury of a cab or brougham, or can even employ the attorney himself to 'ca' for the annuity.' It is more with the former than with the latter class of annuitants that the present paper has to do—with those, rather, who have happily graduated from humble but honourable conditions of labour and service to that state of comparative independence and happiness which the possession of an annuity is supposed to confer.

How, when, and by whom was the system originated of buying and selling annuities, as commonly known at the present day, is not quite certain. The system, however, is comparatively modern. Some authorities incline to the opinion that the credit of the conception of the annuity principle belongs to the famous Italian, Lorenzo Tonti, who 'flourished' at Naples about two and a half centuries ago. The chief feature of the Tontine annuity method was, unfortunately, the speculative element which predominated, an element which to this day permeates—in the lottery system, for example—much of the business methods of the country where, it is stated, it had its origin. According to a late writer on the subject: 'The principle of Lorenzo Tonti's annuity plan was as follows: a certain number of persons clubbed together a specified sum of money—without reference to age or sex—and at the expiration of each year the interest of this fund was divided amongst the subscribers who were living; and so on from year to year, until

the last survivor received the whole of the interest. This novel scheme had all the appearance of a profitable investment, until an inquiry was instituted to ascertain what became of the principal sum subscribed after the death of the last annuitant, the interest fund only having been awarded to the subscribers. This inquiry proved fatal to the plan, for it was found that the principal sum was appropriated by the founders of the scheme to their own uses. A modification of the scheme was then attempted. A number of years was fixed for the continuation of the Tontine, and the entire amount originally subscribed was to be received by the member who last survived. This plan did not meet with general approbation. It possessed great inequalities, as many died without receiving any advantage whatever for their subscriptions; while others, longer lived, received, in many cases, nearly three hundred times the amount advanced. In 1689, the last survivor of a Tontine in France, a widow, prior to her death at the age of ninety-six, enjoyed an income of 73,500 livres (£3062, 10s.) for her original subscription of three hundred livres, or £12, 10s. Surely the type of annuitant that Outram has so graphically delineated!

Other authorities, however, insist that our modern annuity system, including the method of fixing the rate of annuity according to the probability of life, judged of from sound scientific 'experience' calculations, owes its origin to De Witt, the famous Dutchman. At the request of the Government of Holland, De Witt 'investigated all the available data on the subject, and his report and treatise on the terms of Life Annuities was the first known production of the kind.' Happily, there was nothing of the Tontine character in the new system, which gradually became adopted by this and other countries, the absolute fairness of the principle—to both buyer and seller of the annuity—causing the system at once to become popular.

For a long time after annuities became to be regarded in this country as desirable possessions, and the annuitants to be esteemed as persons peculiarly favoured—because, who ever heard of an annuitant becoming bankrupt or 'shuffling off the mortal coil' before fourscore?—the old insurance companies had the monopoly of trafficking in the business of selling annuities. As money went in these days—that is, about the beginning of the present century—the holder of an annuity, say of forty or fifty pounds, with nobody depending upon the return but himself or herself, could keep the wolf a long way from the door. There was, however, always a certain amount of risk from failure of the company, for instance, from which present-day annuitants are happily almost entirely exempt, especially if their money has been 'sunk' in the State funds.

But it was with the introduction of savings-banks into this country, some sixty or seventy years ago, that annuitants as a distinctive and really representative class of people began to increase in number. We cannot honestly say that they 'multiply,' because, as a pretty general rule, annuitants 'neither marry nor are given in marriage,' but occupy, in blissful spinsterhood or bachelordom, a peculiar place in the social economy by themselves! And long may they continue to do so, especially in these times, as—

so the scientists affirm—they help very materially to keep the sometimes over-weighted scales of population in respectable adjustment! As the savings-banks became in the course of time a useful thrift agency, and a right successful one withal, the Government of the day wisely made provision for a means of disposing, to the best advantage, of the deposits accumulated by those depositors who had added nest-egg to nest-egg and had no market for the same. In a few years after their establishment, many such accumulations lay in bank, a large number of the owners being well-to-do servants now getting on in years, plodding tradesmen and mechanics whom no extravagance could tempt to reduce their balances, teachers and governesses, and such-like slender-salaried folks escaped from the matrimonial net, and therefore at liberty to invest their well-earned and carefully-saved money as they were disposed. From these classes chiefly were the annuitants of fifty or sixty years ago recruited. Nor has the lapse of half a century made any considerable change in that particular regard. For the bulk of Government annuitants are drawn from the same classes still, and probably will be so to the end of the chapter. A year or two ago, when Canon Blackley's scheme of 'National Provident Insurance' was before the House of Commons, an interesting table was submitted, showing the following analysis of occupations of a hundred proposers for deferred annuities, from which it appeared that nineteen were domestic servants; twenty-nine were schoolmistresses, teachers, or governesses; eight were married women or spinstresses without any occupation; twelve, clerks or book-keepers; and the remainder—excepting six clergymen, one actor, one doctor, one solicitor, and a few of no stated occupation—belonging entirely to the industrial or artisan classes.

With the establishment of the Post-office system of savings-banks in 1861, and its phenomenally rapid growth throughout the length and breadth of the country, it was only to be expected that a large addition to the number of annuitants would take place. Within a few years—the facilities and advantages to purchasers of annuities being almost the same as in the case of the other system of savings-banks—the ranks of annuitants were recruited from many districts hitherto barren of them. And yet, though their number has increased fifty-fold, an analysis of their character, in so far as occupation can afford a clue thereto, reveals precisely the same fact that the majority of annuitants—at least female annuitants—belong to the three or four classes already referred to.

There is certainly something in the old saying, 'Buy an annuity and worry the sexton!' for the undue age attained by many annuitants is a most remarkable fact, which statistics in superabundance can prove. At the census of 1851, in London alone no fewer than 3072 persons were self-described as 'independent gentlemen,' while 4719 more were returned as annuitants. A few years later—in 1856—only thirty-four—not ten per cent.—of these annuitants had died, a fact which the *Times* referred to in the following terms: 'It has always been usual to regard annuitants as endowed with peculiar tenacity of life, and in the occasional bitterness

of irony, they have been described as the real undying ones of the human race. We confess, however, that we never accepted the impression so completely as in the light of the fact as it has been stated in the Table before us.' It would be interesting to know how many, if any, of these gentlemen are still 'to the fore!' But, after all, the remarkable longevity of annuitants is not so difficult to account for. Everything apparently conspires to their old—very old age. The mere possession of an assured competency, be it big or little, must help potently to prolong life, under ordinary circumstances, in average men and women, inasmuch as it materially conduces to that heart's-ease, that sweet serenity of mind—an elixir such as no empiric can concoct—which can only be extracted from a life spent as prudently as is possible under the existing conditions of society.

But the great age to which many annuitants attain very naturally suggests the question, Does the contract pay the seller? In not a few cases it is undoubtedly a very profitable investment for the annuitant, instances being not unfrequent where the purchasers have actually lived long enough to get their money repaid them twice or even thrice over; but these are of course the exceptions. Thus, a female aged fifty, pays, say, five hundred pounds as the purchase price of an annuity. For this capital sum she obtains an assured annual income of thirty pounds for the rest of her life—that is to say, an unchangeable six per cent. investment for her money, which, however, as capital, is never returnable to her. On attaining her sixty-sixth year, she will have got all her money paid back again, but without interest; and should she survive for fifteen years more—and the presumption that she will do so is a fair one in most cases—she will have got it returned to her twice over. As, however, the fiftieth year is rather under than over the age for annuitants to buy, let us suppose the case of a male aged, say, sixty-five, investing only one hundred pounds in the hands of the National Debt Commissioners—who, by the way, are the agents of the Government in this matter—for that amount he will receive an annuity, payable half-yearly, of £10, 6s. 10d. In less than ten years he will have fully reimbursed himself for the outlay. But even with this splendid return for the invested capital, the question arises on the other hand, Does it pay the purchaser? For a few comparatively safe investments, such as house-property, can be found to yield nearly as high a rate of interest as ten per cent., while leaving the capital always at the disposal of the owner. Both questions may be answered satisfactorily. A very large proportion of Government annuitants are unmarried persons, and consequently in most cases have no dependents whatever, in the ordinary significance of the term, to whom to leave their money; hence their preference to obtain the most they can on the best security while they live. Annuities—and especially Government annuities—being generally considered absolutely safe against all possible contingencies, the annuitants obtain the *maximum of return with the minimum of risk*. This fact goes far to explain the growing popularity, in these days of so many hazardous investments, of the Govern-

ment annuity system; and considering the vast number of financial traps that, from the days of the Great South Sea Bubble affair down even to the present time, have been laid to despoil the over-simple and credulous classes of the people, it is not in the least surprising that it should have become so. There is no worry or anxiety involved. Of course, the money paid to buy the annuity is 'sunk' irretrievably; but the astute and satisfied annuitant knows that the periodical 'yield' from the little mine is payable as regularly and as surely as the seasons come round; and therefore, happy in the assurance of the fact, 'She lives for her annuity!' and has a good right to do so.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER IV.—A REBELLIOUS CHILD.

ELSIE left her lover at the door. Most accepted suitors accompany their sweethearts into the very bosom of the family—the gynæceum—the parlour, as it used to be called. Not so George Austin. Since the engagement—the deplorable engagement—it was understood that he was not to presume upon entering the house. Romeo might as well have sent in his card to Juliet's mamma. In fact, that lady could not possibly regard the pretensions of Romeo more unfavourably than Mrs Arundel did those of George Austin. This not on account of any family inequality, for his people were no more decidedly of the middle class than her own. That is to say they numbered as many members who were presentable and quite as many who were not. Our great middle class is pretty well alike in this respect. In every household there are things which may be paraded and things *tacenda*: members successful, members unsuccessful, members disgraceful. All the world knows all the things which must be concealed: we all know that all the world knows them; but still we pretend that there are no such things, and so we maintain the family dignity. Nor could the widow object to George on account of his religious opinions, in which he dutifully followed his forefathers; or of his abilities, manners, morals, culture, accomplishments, or outward appearance, in all of which he was everything that could be expected of a young man who had his own fortune to make. A rich young man has no need of manners, morals, abilities, or accomplishments: a thing too often forgotten by satirists when they depict the children of Sir Midas Gorgias and his tribe. The lady's objection was simply and most naturally that the young man had nothing, and would probably never have anything: that he was a managing clerk without money to buy a partnership in a highly congested profession. To aggravate this objection, he stood in the way of two most desirable suitors who were supposed to be ready should Elsie give them any encouragement. They were a rich old man whose morals could no longer be questioned; and a rich young man

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whose morals would doubtless improve with marriage—if, that is, they wanted improvement, for on this delicate subject ladies find it difficult to get reliable information. And, again, the exalted position of the elder sister should have been an example and a beacon. Which of you, Mesdames, would look on with patience to such a sacrifice—a young and lovely daughter thrown away, with all her charms and all her chances, upon a man with two hundred pounds a year and no chance of anything much better? Think of it—two hundred pounds a year—for a gentlewoman!

There are some families—many families—with whom the worship of wealth is hereditary. The Arundels have been City people, married with other City people—in trade—for two hundred years and more: they are all members of City Companies: there have been Lord Mayors and Sheriffs among them: some of them—for they are now a clan—are rich: some are very rich: one or two are very, very rich: those who fail and go bankrupt quickly drop out of sight. All their traditions are of money-getting: they estimate success and worth and respect by the amount a man leaves behind—it is the good old tradition: they talk of money: they are not vulgar or loud or noisy or disagreeable in any way: but they openly and without disguise worship the great god Plutus and believe that he, and none other, is the God of the Christians. They have as much culture as other people, at least to outward show: they furnish their houses as artistically as other people: they buy pictures and books: but ideas do not touch them: if they read new ideas, they are not affected by them, however skilfully they may be put: they go to Church and hear the parable about Dives and they wonder how Dives could have been so hard-hearted. Then they go home and talk about money.

Elsie's father, a younger son of the richest branch of this family, started with a comfortable little fortune and a junior partnership. He was getting on very well indeed: he had begun to show the stuff of which he was made, a good, stout, tenacious kind of stuff, likely to last and to hold out; he was beginning to increase his fortune: he looked forward to a successful career; and he hoped to leave behind him, after many, many years, perhaps three-quarters of a million. He was only thirty-five years of age, yet he was struck down and had to go. His widow received little more than her husband's original fortune: it was small compared with what she might fairly expect when she married, but it was large enough for her to live with her three children in Pembroke Gardens. What happened to the son, you know. He went away in a royal rage and had never been heard of since. The elder daughter, Hilda, when about two-and-twenty, as you also know, had the good fortune to attract the admiration of a widower of very considerable wealth, the brother of her guardian. He was forty years older than herself, but he was rich—nay, very rich indeed. Jute, I believe, on an extensive scale, was the cause of his great fortune. He was knighted on a certain great occasion when Warden of his Company, so that he offered his bride a title and precedence, as well as a great income, a mansion in Palace Gardens,

a handsome settlement, carriages and horses, and everything else that the feminine heart can desire.

The widow, soon after her husband died, found the time extremely dull without the daily excitement of the City talk to which she had been accustomed. There was no one with whom she could discuss the money market. Now, all her life, she had been accustomed to talk of shares and stocks and investments and fluctuations and operations and buying in and selling out. She began, therefore, to watch the market on her own account. Then she began to operate: then she gave her whole time and all her thoughts to the business of studying, watching, reading, and forecasting. Of course, then, she lost her money and fell into difficulties? Nothing of the kind: she made money. There is always plenty of virtuous indignation ready for those foolish persons who dabble in stocks. They are gamblers: they always lose in the long run: we all know that: the copy-books tell us so. If two persons play heads and tails for sovereigns, do they both lose in the long run? If so, who wins? Where does the money go? Even a gambler need not always lose in the long run, as all gamblers know. *La Veuve Arundel* was not in any sense a gambler. Nor was she a dabbler. She was a serious and calculating operator. She took up one branch of the great money market and confined her attentions to that branch, which she studied with so much care and assiduity that she became a professional; that is to say, she threw into the study all her energies, all her thoughts, and all her intellect. When a young man does this on the Stock Exchange he may expect to win. Mrs Arundel was not an ordinary young man; she was a sharp and clever woman: by hard work she had learned all that can be learned, and had acquired some of that prescience which comes of knowledge—the prophet of the future is, after all, he who knows and can discuss the forces and the facts of the present: the Sibyl at the present day would be a Journalist. She was clear-headed, quick to see and ready to act: she was of a quick temper as well as a quick perception: and she was resolute. Such qualities in most women make them absolute sovereigns in the household. Mrs Arundel was not an absolute sovereign—partly because she thought little of her household, and partly because her children were distinguished by much the same qualities, and their subjection would have proved difficult if not impossible.

This was the last house in London where one might have expected to find a girl who was ready to despise wealth and to find her happiness in a condition of poverty. Elsie was completely out of harmony with all her own people. There is a good deal of opinion going about in favour of the simple life: many girls have become socialists in so far as they think the amassing of wealth neither desirable nor worthy of respect: many would rather marry a man of limited means who has a profession than a rich man who has a business: many girls hold that Art is a much finer thing than wealth. Elsie learned these pernicious sentiments at school: they attracted her at first because they were so fresh: she found all the best literature full of these sentiments: she developed in due course a certain natural

ability for Art: she attended an Art school: she set up an easel: she painted in pastel: she called her room a studio. She gave her friends the greatest uneasiness by her opinions: she ended, as you have seen, by becoming engaged to a young man with nothing. How could such a girl be born of such parents?

When she got home on Saturday evening, she found her mother playing a game of double *vingt un* with a certain cousin, one Sydney Arundel. The game is very good for the rapid interchange of coins: you should make it a time game, to end in half an hour—one hour—two hours, and at the end you will find that you have had a very pretty little gamble. Mrs Arundel liked nothing better than a game of cards—provided the stakes were high enough to give it excitement. To play cards for love is indeed insipid: it is like a dinner of cold boiled mutton or like sandwiches of veal. The lady would play anything, piquet, *écarté*, double dummy—and her daughter Elsie hated the sight of cards. As for the cousin, he was on the Stock Exchange: he came often to dinner and to talk business after dinner: he was a kind of musical box or barrel organ in conversation, because he could only play one tune. His business as well as his pleasure was in the money market.

'So you have come home, Elsie?' said Mrs Arundel coldly.

'Yes, I have come home.' Elsie seated herself at the window and waited.

'Now, Sydney'—her mother took up the cards. 'My deal—will you take any more?'

She was a good-looking woman still, though past fifty: her abundant hair had gone pleasantly gray, her features were fine, her brown eyes were quick and bright: her lips were firm, and her chin straight. She was tall and of good figure: she was clad in black silk, with a large gold chain about her neck and good lace upon her shoulders. She wore many rings and a bracelet. She liked, in fact, the appearance of wealth as well as the possession of it: she therefore always appeared in costly raiment: her house was furnished with a costly solidity: everything, even the bindings of her books, was good to look at: her one manservant looked like the responsible butler of a millionaire, and her one-horse carriage looked as if it belonged to a dozen.

The game went on. Presently, the clock struck ten. 'Time,' said the lady. 'We must stop. Now then. Let us see—I make it seventy-three shillings.—Thank you. Three pounds thirteen—an evening not altogether wasted.—And now, Sydney, light your cigar. You know I like it. You shall have your whisky and soda—and we will talk business. There are half-a-dozen things that I want to consult you about. Heavens! why cannot I be admitted to the Exchange? A few women among you—clever women, like myself, Sydney—would wake you up.'

They talked business for an hour, the lady making notes in a little book, asking questions and making suggestions. At last the cousin got up—it was eleven o'clock—and went away. Then her mother turned to Elsie.

'It is a great pity,' she said, 'that you take no interest in these things.'

'I dislike them very much, as you know,' said Elsie.

'Yes—you dislike them because they are of real importance. Well—never mind.—You have been out with the young man, I suppose?'

'Yes—we have been on the river together.'

'I supposed it was something of the kind. So the housemaid keeps company with the potboy without consulting her own people.'

'It is nothing unusual for me to spend an evening with George. Why not? You will not suffer me to bring him here.'

'No,' said her mother with firmness. 'That young man shall never, under any circumstances, enter this house with my knowledge! For the rest,' she added, 'do as you please.'

This was the kind of amiable conversation that had been going on day after day since Elsie's engagement—protestations of ceasing to interfere, and continual interference.

There are many ways of considering the subject of injudicious and unequal marriages. You may ridicule: you may cajole: you may argue: you may scold: you may coax: you may represent the naked truth as it is, or you may clothe its limbs with lies—the lies are of woven stuff, strong, and home-made. When you have an obdurate, obstinate, contumacious, headstrong, wilful, self-contained maiden to deal with, you will waste your breath whatever you do. The mother treated Elsie with scorn, and scorn alone. It was her only weapon. Her elder sister tried other weapons: she laughed at the makeshifts of poverty: she cajoled with soft flattery and golden promises: she argued with logic pitiless: she scolded like a fishwife: she coaxed with tears and kisses: she painted the loveliness of men who are rich, and the power of women who are beautiful. And all in vain. Nothing moved this obdurate, obstinate, contumacious, headstrong, wilful Elsie. She would stick to her promise: she would wed her lover even if she had to entertain Poverty as well all her life.

'Are you so infatuated,' the mother went on, 'that you cannot see that he cares nothing for your happiness? He thinks about nobody but himself. If he thought of you, he would see that he was too poor to make you happy, and he would break it off. As it is, all he wants is to marry you.'

'That is indeed all. He has never disguised the fact.'

'He offers you the half of a bare crust.'

'By halving the crust we shall double it.'

'Oh! I have no patience. But there is an end. You know my opinion, and you disregard it. I cannot lock you up, or beat you, for your foolishness. I almost wish I could. I will neither reason with you any more nor try to dissuade you. Go your own way.'

'If you would only understand. We are going to live very simply. We shall put all unhappiness outside the luxuries of life. And we shall get on if we never get rich. I wish I could make you understand our point of view. It makes me very unhappy that you will take such a distorted view.'

'I am glad that you can still feel unhappiness at such a cause as my displeasure.'

'Well, mother, to-night we have come to a final decision.'

'Am I to learn it?'

'Yes; I wish to tell you at once. We have

been engaged for two years. The engagement has brought me nothing but wretchedness at home. But I should be still more wretched—I should be wretched all my life—if I were to break it off. I shall be of age in a day or two and free to act on my own judgment.'

'You are acting on your own judgment already.'

'I have promised George that I will marry him when he pleases—that is, about the middle of August, when he gets his holiday.'

'Oh! The misery of poverty will begin so soon? I am sorry to hear it. As I said above, I have nothing to say against it—no persuasion or dissuasion—you will do as you please.'

'George has his profession, and he has a good name already. He will get on. Meantime, a little plain living will hurt neither of us. Can't you think that we may begin in a humble way and yet get on? Money—money—money.—Oh! Must we think of nothing else?'

'What is there to think of but money? Look round you, silly child. What gives me this house—this furniture—everything? Money. What feeds you and clothes you? Money. What gives position, consideration, power, dignity? Money. Rank without money is contemptible. Life without money is miserable, wretched, intolerable. Who would care to live when the smallest luxury—the least comfort—has to be denied for want of money. Even the Art of which you talk so much only becomes respectable when it commands money. You cannot keep off disease without money: you cannot educate your children without money: it will be your worst punishment in the future that your children will sink and become servants. Child!' she cried passionately, 'we must be masters or servants—nay—lords or slaves. You leave the rank of lord and marry the rank of slave. It is money that makes the difference—money—money—money—that you pretend to despise. It is money that has done everything for you. Your grandfather made it—your father made it—I am making it. Go on in your madness and your folly. In the end, when it is too late, you will long for money, pray for money, be ready to do anything for money—for your husband and your children.'

'We shall have, I hope, enough. We shall work for enough—no more.'

'Well, child,' her mother returned quietly, 'I said that I would say nothing. I have been carried away. Let there be no more said. Do as you please. You know my mind—your sister's mind—your cousins'—'

'I do not wish to be guided by my cousins.'

'Very well. You will stay here until your wedding day. When you marry, you will leave this house—and me and your sister and all your people. Do not expect any help from me. Do not look forward to any inheritance from me. My money is all my own to deal with as I please. If you wish to be poor you shall be poor. Hilda tells me that you are to see your guardian on Monday. Perhaps he may bring you to your senses. As for me—I shall say no more.'

With these final words the lady left the room and went to bed. How many times had she declared that she would say no more?

The next day being Sunday, the bells began

to ring in the morning, and the two ladies sallied forth to attend divine service as usual. They walked side by side, in silence. That sweet and gracious nymph, the Lady Charity, was not with them in their pew. The elder lady, externally cold, was full of resentment and bitterness: the younger was more than usually troubled by the outbreak of the evening. Yet she was no nearer surrender. The sermon, by a curious coincidence, turned upon the perishable nature of earthly treasures, and the vanity of the objects desired by that unreasoning person whom they used to call the Worldling. The name has perished, but the creature still exists, and is found in countless herds in every great town. The parsons are always trying to shoot him down; but they never succeed. There was just a fiery passage or two directed against the species. Elsie hoped that the words would go home. Not at all. They fell upon her mother's heart like seed upon the rock. She heard them, but heard them not. The Worldling, you see, never understands that he is a Worldling. Nor does Dives believe himself to be anything more than Lazarus, such is his modesty.

The service over, they went home in silence. They took their early dinner in silence, waited on by the solemn man-servant. After dinner, Elsie sought the solitude of her studio. And here—nobody looking on—she obeyed the first law of her sex, and had a good cry. Even the most resolute of maidens cannot carry through a great scheme against great opposition without the consolation of a cry.

On the table lay a note from Mr Dering:

MY DEAR WARD—I am reminded that you come of age on Monday. I am also reminded by Hilda that you propose to take a very important step against the wish of your mother. Will you come and see me at ten o'clock to talk this over?—Your affectionate Guardian.'

Not much hope to be got out of that letter. A dry note from a dry man. Very little doubt as to the line which he would take. Yet, not an unkind letter. She put it back in her desk and sighed. Another long discussion. No: she would not discuss—she would listen, and then state her intention. She would listen again, and once more state her intention.

On the easel stood an almost finished portrait in pastel, executed from a photograph. It was the portrait of her guardian. She had caught—it was not difficult with a face so marked—the set expression, the closed lips, the keen eyes, and the habitual look of caution and watchfulness which become the characteristics of a solicitor in good practice. So far it was a good likeness. But it was an austere face. Elsie, with a few touches of her thumb and the chalk which formed her material, softened the lines of the mouth, communicated to the eyes a more genial light, and to the face an expression of benevolence which certainly had never before been seen upon it.

'There!' she said. 'If you would only look like that to-morrow, instead of like your photograph, I should have no fear at all of what you would say. I would flatter you, and coax you, and cajole you, till you had doubled George's

salary and promised to get round my mother. You dear old man! You kind old man! You sweet old man! I could kiss you for your kindness.'

DRURY LANE.

WHEN, in the year 1663, Charles II. granted patents for the existence of two theatres in London, one of these was assigned to Davenant, who was at the head of the Duke of York's Company of players, and the other to the King's Company, under Thomas Killigrew. The latter body of actors enjoyed a peculiar position. Honoured by the title of 'His Majesty's Servants,' they formally swore before the Lord Chamberlain faithfully to serve the King; ten of their number were enrolled among the Royal Household as 'Gentlemen of the Great Chamber,' and wore liveries of scarlet and silver.

On the receipt of his patent, Killigrew decided to build himself a theatre on a spot in Drury Lane, close to where the famous Cockpit had stood, and very nearly on the site of the present house. Drury Lane was at that time in high favour with the aristocracy—the Marquis of Argyll and the Earl of Anglesey, amongst others, having their residences in the neighbourhood. And so, in the autumn of 1663, the first Drury Lane Theatre opened with a performance of Beaumont and Fletcher's *Humorous Lieutenant*.

Killigrew's company included many whose names became famous—Hart, Kynaston (renowned as a youth for his impersonations of female characters in the days before women were seen on the English stage, and subsequently an excellent actor of men's parts), Mohun, 'Scum' Goodman, Reeves, and Shirley. Amongst the ladies the two beautiful Misses Marshall were the most prominent, until, two years later, the fascinating Nell Gwynne put all her companions into the shade. 'Pretty, witty Nell,' after being carefully coached by the actor Hart, made her first appearance in Dryden's *Indian Emperor*, and speedily captivated the hearts of all who saw her.

Everything conspired to give brilliant success to the first years of the new house. The public, after their protracted theatrical starvation during the civil war and the years that followed it, had the keenest appetite for dramatic fare; at the same time the performances were exceedingly good, and were rendered the more acceptable by the fact that the female parts were undertaken by women, instead of by boys or shaven men as had been the case before the Restoration. This innovation was originally introduced by a company of French players, and for a while met with the most violent opposition. Gradually, however, the sense of dramatic propriety asserted itself; and in the King's patent it was stated that 'whereas the women's parts in plays have hitherto been acted by men, at which some have taken offence, we do give leave that for the time to come all women's parts be acted by women.' The crowded state of both theatres at this time may be inferred from Pepys's entry in his Diary on May 28, 1664: 'By water to the Royal Theatre [Drury Lane]; but that was so full they

told us we could have no room. And so to the Duke's House; and there saw *Hamlet* done, giving us fresh reason never to think enough of Betterton.' Unfortunately, the life of the first Drury Lane Theatre was but brief, for in January 1672 it was burnt to the ground.

In little more than two years a second house, designed by Sir Christopher Wren, sprang from the ashes of its predecessor, and opened its doors on March 26, 1674. The prices of admission were: Boxes, from half-a-crown to four shillings; pit, one-and-sixpence to half-a-crown; first gallery, a shilling to one-and-sixpence; upper gallery, sixpence to a shilling. The auditorium must have been seriously encroached upon by the manner in which the stage was constructed. It projected, as we learn from Cibber's *Apology*, as far as the front rows of the pit, in a semi-oval form, so that the whole action of the play was carried on beyond the proscenium. Though this, no doubt, enabled subtle shades of expression and play of feature to be closely observed by all in the house, the inconvenience of the fashion was obviously felt, as the size of the stage was before long reduced and stage boxes constructed at the sides.

The competition between the King's company and Davenant's was great. Both contained excellent performers, and by both were presented plays of the first rank. For a while, in spite of the strong counter-attraction of Betterton at the Haymarket, the superiority of the acting at Drury Lane maintained the lead. But eventually the fortunes of both companies began to droop: as neither seemed strong enough to stand alone, the Lord Chamberlain ordered them to unite, and in 1682 the joint companies commenced playing at Drury Lane.

This did not prove to be altogether a wise move. Hart, Mohun, and Nell Gwynne retired from the company at the amalgamation, thus weakening its powers of attraction, and, moreover, there appears to have been at this period a sensible falling-off in the interest exhibited by the public. This was probably caused partly by reaction from the excessive enthusiasm of a few years before, and partly by the visit of certain French and Italian companies, which for a time became the vogue. At anyrate, some five years later, we find the patent rights of the theatre sold for a miserable sum to Christopher Rich, a lawyer and thorough scamp. His treatment of the long-suffering actors ended by causing a revolt among them; and at last, on their petition, King William granted to such as wished to secede from the company a license to open the old theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields. All the leading actors, including Betterton, Mrs Barry, and Mrs Bracegirdle, eagerly seized the opportunity, and with Congreve as their dramatic author tried their fortunes independently, and with no small success. Meanwhile, Rich was left at Drury Lane with the dregs of the company, who, as the manager still persevered in his sharp practices, revolted again; and the upshot of the matter was that in 1709 the Lord Chamberlain closed the theatre.

Two years later commenced the famous triple management of Colley Cibber, Doggett, and Wilks, whose discretion and honest dealing secured for the house twenty years of almost

untroubled prosperity. Wilks as a light comedian, and Doggett as an eccentric-character actor, were unapproachable; and with such female support as Ann Oldfield and Mrs Porter it is easy to understand how it was that crowded audiences once more became the order of the day. From the business point of view the management, if we may believe Colley Cibber, was unimpeachable—and Cibber, though disposed to arrogate too much to himself, was, as Dr Johnson said, 'no blockhead.' 'In the twenty years we were our own directors,' says Cibber, 'we never had a creditor that had occasion to come twice for his bill; every Monday morning discharged us of all demands before we took a shilling for our own use; and from this time we neither asked any actor, nor were desired by them, to sign any agreement whatsoever. The rates of their respective salaries were only entered in our daily pay roll, which plain record every one looked upon as good as city security.' After the dissolution of this management by the death of two of its members and the retirement of the third, a period of disaster ensued; and it was not until the appearance of Macklin in 1741 that the fortunes of the theatre showed signs of mending. The freshness and unconventionality of Macklin's acting took the town by storm, and for a time the Drury Lane 'treasury' was well filled. But it was not long before differences arose between Fleetwood (the then manager) and his actors. The quarrels became serious and led to riots at the theatre, and eventually in 1746 Fleetwood retired from the management in favour of James Lacy—who had been stage manager at Covent Garden—and David Garrick. Garrick was nominally stage manager at first, but the real guidance of affairs soon passed into his hands, and now there commenced the most notable period in the history of the theatre.

The thirty years of Garrick's management were as remarkable for the order preserved in front of the curtain as for the quality of the performances upon which it rose. To begin with, a great abuse was removed by the exclusion of spectators from the stage. On one of his earliest bills Garrick printed the following announcement: 'As the admittance of persons behind the scenes has occasioned a general complaint on account of the frequent interruptions in the performances, it is hoped that gentlemen won't be offended that no money will be taken there for the future.' Garrick was surrounded by a very strong company, including, amongst others, Macklin, Spranger Barry, Mrs Pritchard, Kitty Clive, and the inimitable Peg Woffington. Amongst the many histrionic triumphs that Drury Lane saw during this period, there was one failure which has a peculiar interest in the light of subsequent events. This was the first appearance of Mrs Siddons, in December 1775, as Portia. The genius of the great *tragédienne* was not yet sufficiently matured. Nervousness completely incapacitated her, and neither in this nor in the other parts she attempted at the time did she win any praise from the critics. But when, after seven years' hard work in the provinces, she again challenged the verdict of the town, there was no longer any question as to her supremacy in her art.

On Garrick's retirement in 1776, Sheridan

succeeded to the management in partnership with Dr Ford and Thomas Linley, the musician, and under these auspices the second Drury Lane Theatre passed the few remaining years of its life. These fifteen years are full of interest, for it was during this time that the *School for Scandal* was produced, that Mrs Siddons made her triumphant second *debut*, that Kemble made his first bow to a London audience, and that fascinating Dora Jordan stole away the hearts of susceptible playgoers. In 1791 the old and now decaying house was pulled down, and three years later the third Drury Lane Theatre was opened with much pomp and circumstance.

Its career was brief and checkered. In spite of elaborate precautions against fire, it was burnt to the ground fifteen years afterwards, and while it stood, its fortunes were constantly imperilled by the reckless extravagance and barefaced dishonesty of the manager, Sheridan. It was quite the exception for a bill or a salary to be paid, and many were the ludicrous shifts to which Sheridan resorted to escape from his infuriated creditors. Mr Edward Stirling relates that Holland, the architect of the theatre, could never get Sheridan to pay him for his work, and finally, tired of being put off with constant excuses, resolved to call upon the manager during rehearsal time. 'Before he could utter a word, Sheridan rushed to him, and seizing his hand, exclaimed: "Dear Holland—the very man I wished to see! You want a cheque, of course? Beautiful building! Everything one could desire, save a trifle, but important to me. My shilling-gallery customers can't hear a word that's spoken on the stage."

"Impossible!" said Holland.

"Is it? You shall judge. Remain at the foot-lights!"

'Scampering up-stairs to the gallery, he began to gesticulate, widely extending his mouth, but not uttering a word, to the great confusion of the poor architect. Descending to the stage, he asked: "Well, my boy, did you hear me?"

"Not a word."

"Are you convinced?—No? Well, then, go up yourself and listen while I speak from here."

'Holland climbed to the upper gallery, while Sheridan rushed out at the stage door, leaving the unfortunate architect to make the best of circumstances.'

When, on the night of February 24, 1809, the fire broke out at Drury Lane, Sheridan was in the House of Commons. As a mark of sympathy it was proposed that the House should adjourn, but that Sheridan respectfully declined. Rushing to the burning theatre, he was forcing his way through the crowd, when one of the soldiers who were keeping order, not recognising him, endeavoured to keep him back. 'Surely, my friend,' exclaimed Sheridan, 'a man may warm himself by his own fire.'

After considerable delay, a sufficient sum was subscribed towards the work of rebuilding; and on October 10, 1812, the present theatre was opened. A contemporary newspaper, in an account of the opening ceremony, says that the crowds that assembled at the doors as early as two o'clock were exposed to a pitiless storm of rain and wind, and that many, in consequence, were the complaints of the lack of shelter—the

portico not having been added till some years later. 'After the interior of the house had been sufficiently admired, the curtain drew up, and gave the spectators a charming display of scenery, which they rapturously applauded. There were seven exhibited, of which a perspective Landscape with Water, a Piazza, a Seaport, a Prison Scene, and the Market Cross of Glastonbury, were the most striking.' 'God save the Queen' and 'Rule Britannia' were sung by the 'entire strength' of a company which included Mrs Jordan, Mrs Glover, Miss Smith, Bannister, Elliston, Pyne, &c. But strong as it was, the company failed to compete successfully with the superior attractions of the Kembles, Liston, and Sally Booth at Covent Garden; indeed, its luck seemed to have totally deserted the house until the eventful night of January 26, 1814, when Edmund Kean made his phenomenally successful debut as Shylock, and for six years afterwards drew all London to Drury Lane. Unfortunately, the management, which was in the hands of a Committee, was incompetent, and this turn of fortune was but ill utilised; in 1819, eventually, the Committee handed over their office to Elliston, who was by this time an established favourite with the public.

For the next fifty years, though it was the scene of many artistic successes, Drury Lane proved too heavy a burden for each manager in his turn. Besides certain small fry who held the house for a time (at one period there were three lessees in as many weeks, and all three bolted without paying either salaries or rent!) Elliston became bankrupt in seven years; Bunn twice tried to make the theatre pay by turning it into a species of miscellaneous show, but each time retired heavily in debt; Macready was bankrupt at the end of two years; and though Chatterton struggled through eleven seasons, he was soon forced to give up the fight.

The present Drury Lane Theatre has witnessed an extraordinary variety of scenes, some interesting and honourable, some most derogatory. Under Bunn's management drama and opera alternated with tight-rope dancing, lion-taming performances, and promenade concerts. For some time a French circus occupied the house which, in Macready's time, had seen the famous revival of *As you like it*, in which Mrs Nisbett was the Rosalind; Mrs Keeley, Audrey; Mrs Stirling, Celia; Macready, Jaques; Anderson, Orlando; Keeley, Touchstone; Phelps, Adam; and Ryder, the Banished Duke. Macready's reign was also signalled by the appearance of Helen Faucit as Constance in *King John*, and by the production of Marston's *Patrician's Daughter* and Browning's *Blot on the 'Scutcheon*. In a revival of Dryden's *King Arthur*, with Purcell's music, a great success was made in the tenor solos by a young and unknown singer of the name of Sims Reeves.

In 1866, Chatterton, the last unsuccessful manager of Drury Lane, started with a fine company, in which were Phelps, Barry Sullivan, Helen Faucit, and Miss Neilson. He commenced with high artistic aims, and gave his energies to the fitting representation of classical plays. But inasmuch as, according to his own epigram, he found that 'Shakespeare spelt Ruin, and Byron Bankruptcy,' he produced in 1863 a realistic melodrama of modern life, the forerunner of

much similar fare since offered to the public at the national theatre. In this piece, *The Great City*, Mrs Kendal—then Madge Robertson—made her first appearance upon the metropolitan stage.

URGENT PRIVATE AFFAIRS.

CHAPTER II.—THE FORTUNE AND THE WIFE.

AT the first sentence, Nellie had to exert all her strength to prevent herself springing up from her chair. She felt the words like the sting of a lash. She—she, Nellie Morton had been as good as accused of lying! *She!* She who had never in all her life been accused of the most trivial moral offence, was as good as charged with subterfuge. *She*, the integrity of whose honour had never been questioned, was charged, or as good as charged, with the unforgivable baseness of want of candour!

But as the old woman uttered the other sentences, the flush of anger left the girl's heart; and when Mrs Bathurst, in slow and impersonal accents, finished, Nellie felt as though she should sink through the floor with mingled shame and fear. She could not disclose the encounter with young Chaytor, for she could not explain the circumstance of that meeting without mentioning the unflattering nickname; and although it seemed unlikely Mr Bathurst's mother, so old a woman and a recluse, should have heard of the nickname, that young man evidently thought she might.

Fortunately for Nellie, the old woman's words did not require a reply. The girl could not deny she was concealing something, and could not tell what it was.

Mrs Bathurst seemed to know by occult means that her guest would make no response.

As Nellie was about to rise, the old woman leaned her elbow on the table and her chin on her palm, and with eyes staring into vacancy said, as though soliloquising: 'My son is much immersed in business, and is no lady's man. *He* is not likely to help you much towards enjoying your visit to Garwood. I predicted to him that you would find this place distasteful; but he said no. You were, he said, his friend's child, and you would be contented with this house as a home until your father's return from Brazil.'

Were ever such words spoken by hostess to helpless guest? Nellie thought of rising and saying she would put an end to Mrs Bathurst's uneasiness on her account by leaving at once. But there was something so impressive and sibylline in the manner of the old woman, that the girl could not do aught but sit and listen spellbound.

Mrs Bathurst went on after a pause: 'My son is forty-two years of age. He is not a marrying man. He will never marry. He has no small-talk. He is a great business man. He makes thousands where other men starve. His whole soul is in his business. He is not popular in the City. His appearance is not prepossessing. He is called the Crocodile.'

The girl fell back on her chair.

Mrs Bathurst went on: 'He suffers from a strange nervous affection. For a long time, for days and weeks, he can preserve an unbroken

calm while going through intense mental excitement. Then suddenly, and always close to midnight, he is seized with paroxysms of uncontrollable laughter. Never do these paroxysms come on him until he has gone to his room or is about to go there; never until he has dismissed all thought of business and taken off his mind the great strain under which his affairs in the City now and then place him. All who live under this roof must know of these paroxysms. The secret of them must be kept. Hence we have no visitors. Hence no one is allowed to camp on our grounds. Hence the solitude of this house. My son has been going to the City every day for twenty-five years. He has never been ill. He has never taken a holiday. He is never a minute before or after time in anything. He has never set off earlier or later than eight o'clock. He is always in to the minute at six. He has never varied once for years. At five minutes past six this evening you will be introduced to him.

A loud, long knock sounded at the front door and rolled in clattering echoes through the house.

With a start the old woman stopped and stared around in horror, as though the ground were splitting and gaping at her feet. She grasped the table in front of her as if drawn towards some awful abyss.

Nellie stood up, trembling, and looked round.

The old woman raised one hand, as if in appeal for mercy to some unseen power, and pressed a finger of the other hand on her lip for silence.

Nellie heard the front door slammed with a bang that made the doors and windows rattle. Then the whole house shook above their heads with a terrific shout of laughter twice repeated. The dining-room door flew open. The figure of a short, stout man burst into the room, flung the door to behind him, fell with his broad back against the door, opened an enormous mouth in his parchment-coloured face, and uttered a shout of laughter which made the glasses dance and seemed to threaten the very walls of the room.

Nellie's heart stood still, and with a swimming feeling of faintness, she fell back on her chair.

Although, when Nellie Morton fell on her chair, power of motion deserted her, she did not lose all consciousness. She leaned partly against the table, partly against the back of her chair. She was facing the door, against which the ungainly, monstrous figure of the man was propped. She did not hear or see distinctly. All was dull and blurred as in an indistinct dream.

'William! William! what has done this?' cried Mrs Bathurst in a tone of surprise, reproach, alarm. She rose laboriously and half crossed the floor towards her son. Keeping her strange weird eyes fixed on him, she said impressively: 'We are not alone, William; Miss Morton has come.' She supported herself by putting her hand on the table, turned to the girl, saying: 'Miss Morton, this is my son William: Mr William Bathurst, who invests your father's money to such excellent advantage.' The girl's appearance attracted her attention. She cried in a tone of relief: 'William, she has fainted!' Mrs Bathurst would not summon help. She did not wish a servant to witness this scene. She could not render any aid herself, and until

the paroxysm was over, her son would be worse than useless.

Her son took his back from the door, thrust his hands deep into his trousers-pocket, and bending his whole body double, laughed at the top of his terrific voice, until the glasses on the table rang again and trembled, and the windows shook, and the ceiling vibrated, and a long flake of white fell on the table, as though the plaster were coming down.

'What is the matter?' said the old woman more sternly. 'Can you not speak, William? What has done this?'

He ceased to laugh and dance, and flung himself into a large easy-chair standing in the darkest part of the room, facing the light. He threw his head back, and gasped for air. His mouth was of enormous size, and seemed to open at the sides back to the angle of his distended jaws. The skin of his face hung thin and leathery and folded and creased in innumerable small wrinkles.

The perplexity in the face and manner of the mother showed she was wholly unprepared for an attack under existing circumstances. He had never before come home from the City in the middle of the day. He had never before suffered a seizure until close to midnight. Almost invariably the attack came on after retiring to his bedroom. It would have been impossible to drown his shouts or conceal the noise of his tramping. But the servants of that household were all in bed at ten of nights; and when a new servant was in the place and a paroxysm occurred, Mrs Bathurst said next day that the master had had one of the seizures to which he had been liable all his life, that they were noisy, but not dangerous to himself or any one else, and that it was desired no one should speak of the matter either in the house or out of it.

But here now, on the day this girl arrives, was her son back hours before his time, taken with one of his worst fits in daylight and in the presence of the stranger too!

'Can you not speak? Can you say nothing to explain this extraordinary occurrence? Speak! You need not mind her; she cannot hear us.'

The girl would have given all the world to escape from this scene, to show by gesture or tell by word that she was aware of what was going on around her. But she was powerless as the chair upon which she sat, as the painted figures in the pictures on the walls.

With a convulsive motion the man sat up, seized his knees in the long lean hands, which seemed all strenuous fingers, closed his mouth, clenched his teeth, drew back his thin fleshless lips, and rolled his eyes, as if trying to force speech from his labouring chest through his convulsed throat.

'What is it?' cried the old woman in impressive resolute tones. 'No one can hear you but me. Speak to me.'

Suddenly the teeth snapped open, and from the throat came, in a whispered guttural voice, the words: 'Ruin! I am ruined! I have lost all!'

As though the last word released some prodigious spring, the man flew up out of the chair, bent his head, and laughed with such overwhelm-

ing vigour that the old woman started back, raised her hands and uttered a wail. When the lungs of the man were empty, he doubled up, glanced wildly right and left, spread out his arms level with his head, spun round on his heel for a moment, and with a groan, fell to the floor.

'My child! My son! My pride! Is this the end? Is he dead?' moaned the mother, crying out this once from the secret core of her woman's heart. No paroxysm before had begun so or so ended. Through all the years of her life, even to her own ears her own voice had never so sounded. Hitherto, that woman's voice had been the voice of human wisdom: now for the first time it was the voice of a mother's soul. The brain had spoken all along till now; at last the heart had speech.

With amazing swiftness and agility, she reached the prostrate form. He was lying on his face, his arms spread wide. With incredible dexterity and strength she gathered in his outstretched arms and turned him over on his back. Her deft fingers loosed his collar and eased it round his short thick neck. She slipped her hand under his waistcoat and felt over his heart; and then, in a tone of rapturous gratitude that was a prayer, she raised her eyes upwards and whispered: 'Not dead!—not dead! He lives!'

She clasped her hands, and letting them hang down in front of her, sat back on her heels, regarding the dun face of the unconscious man as if it were a beatific vision. Then placing a hand on the floor at each side of the head, she bent slowly forward and kissed the forehead, whispering in the voice of one whose heart is heavy and rich with possession of a secure treasure: 'My child.'

She rose briskly, and pushed the thin strands of hair out of his eyes, and fetched a water-bottle from the table, and emptied it over the face and chest of the man.

With a shudder he opened his eyes. He looked around vaguely and passed a feeble, wavering hand over his face. 'Mother,' he said at length, seeing her standing over him, 'what is it?'

'You have had an attack,' she said as she replaced the water-bottle on the table.

He scrambled to rise. With nimble strength she helped him, as though she were once again the young matron, and he the blundering, ungainly, sole occupant of the nursery. She assisted him to a chair. He sat facing the light, with his back to the drooping form of the girl.

'This was more than a paroxysm. How came I on the floor?'

'You fainted at the end of the attack.'

'Did I blab?'

'You said,' she whispered, 'that there was ruin in the City.'

He groaned. 'Yes. Half-a-dozen great houses are gone, and I am pulled down, down, down, mother. You will spurn me. I did not keep to your advice. I speculated. I did not keep in with solid things. I hoped to win a fortune in a year. South America has been the ruin of me, as you said it would be of fools who trusted it. I trusted it. All is gone. I am a beggar, and you will cast me off.'

'Who cares about the City, since you live? A minute ago I thought you dead.'

He took a napkin from the table and wiped his face. He stared at her in amazement. Did his ears hear aright? or was she bereft of reason?

'Drink this wine,' she said, holding a glass towards him. He did as he was told, still keeping eyes of unspeakable wonder on her face. She went on as she took the empty glass from him: 'When you were in the paroxysm, I told you Miss Morton had come.'

'Oh ay,' said he, passing his hand across his forehead; 'I had forgotten she was to be here to-day. When I found out how things were in the City, I flew home. All the money, mother, all *your* money, and all the money it and your advice helped me to make, are swallowed up. Gone—gone—gone! and I shall be posted as a defaulter!'

'Hush!' said the old woman, laying her finger on her lip and pointing with her other hand at the girl. 'We are not alone. She, too, fainted.'

He started, turned round, and rose. 'She here all the time!' he whispered in dismay.

'Yes. Here unconscious all the time. We must see to her now,' whispered the old woman. 'You and I can talk over affairs later. All is not lost yet; all may still be saved.'

'Nothing can save me!'

'Who knows?'

'What could save me?'

The old woman again placed a warning finger on her lip, and pointed at the figure of the girl.

'She!' cried he in a whisper.

His mother nodded, and whispered: 'She and Christopher Morton's money.'

Mrs Bathurst poured water into a finger-glass and sprinkled some over Nellie's face. The eyelids trembled slightly, closed for a moment, then opened, closed again, and with a sigh the girl slipped from the support of the chair and slid to the table.

Mother and son bore the girl to a couch, dashed more water in her face, and chafed her hands. Once more the eyes opened, and a weak young voice said: 'Such a dream! Horrid dream! Did I faint?—Thank you; I am better now.'

'You fainted, dear,' said the old woman in a tone so gentle and tender, that her son could not believe his ears, and made sure his wits were wandering. Never before had he heard that voice but in cold approval, admonition, or command. 'Mr Bathurst was seized with one of the attacks I told you of, and the sight overcame you. The paroxysm is quite over now; my son is as well as ever; and in a little time you will be all right.'

'Have I been long unconscious?' asked the girl. 'I had a bad horrid dream, and it seemed days and days long.'

The old woman looked at the black marble clock on the mantel-piece. 'It is only ten minutes since my son knocked at the door; but in dreams, a moment of real time may seem a day—a year. What did you dream of, dear?'

'Oh, it is too horrible to think of. Pray, do not ask,' said the girl, to whom it began to seem that what she now took for a dream might be nothing but a distorted and exaggerated memory of what had really occurred. She sat

up and rose feebly. 'I—I think I will go to my room.'

'Let me help you,' said Mrs Bathurst, moving to the side of the couch.

'Oh, thank you—no,' said Nellie in distress; 'you are not strong yourself.'

'Not usually. Not at ordinary times; but to-day. Now I feel young and strong.' She put her arm round the young girl's waist, drew the slender drooping figure towards her own portly bulk, and led the way out of the room.

William Bathurst for a moment glanced round him, as though expecting to find other marvels in keeping with this sight. Then he threw up his hands in despair of understanding what he had seen, and muttering, 'What has wrought this miracle?' dropped into a chair.

Crushed and doubled up, the small man sat in the great chair. Ever since he had begun, as a lad of seventeen, to go to the City office in which the memory of his dead father had got him a clerkship, William Bathurst devoted himself heart and soul to business under the exacting guidance of his mother. He had always looked on her as the embodiment of worldly wisdom. She had been his guide through all these years. She had designed his future and nurtured his career. When he was old enough to start for himself, she had given him her money—he possessed none of his own—had mastered the business of the Stock Exchange more fully even than in her husband's days, as no woman had ever mastered it before, and while he acted upon her advice she had shown him the way to fortune. Of late he had strayed from her counsel, following great leaders in the world of finance, to the result of his present shipwreck.

But though he knew she had no thought of any living soul but himself, a word of tenderness had never passed between them in all these years. To his mind she was a woman whose whole soul was absorbed in gold-seeking; and as she could not engage in the quest herself, she had delegated to him the activities and the profits of the pursuit.

Within one hour, nay, ten minutes, she had made light of money, thrown off the physical ineptitude or lethargy of years, employed affectionate tones towards him, and spoken to this strange young girl, whom she had never seen before, words of endearment!

Only one explanation was possible: the news that disaster had fallen upon him had overthrown her reason.

'William!'

With a start, he looked up. He had not noticed her entrance. He saw standing over him the calm inscrutable mother of old. 'Yes, mother.'

'You say all is gone?'

'Everything—every shilling. Black ruin is in the City to-day.'

'Christopher Morton's money is safe?'

'Every penny.'

'Then Christopher Morton's daughter must save you. Morton's money would be enough?'

'It would be enough to tide me over; but, mother'—

'William, you took my advice most of your lifetime, and you prospered. You took your

own advice, and see what it has brought you. The very fates are playing into our hands. This morning, this girl comes to our door. She has no relative in Europe. This day, ruin faces you in the City. Poison and antidote. When I left you just now I *knew* this should be. I did not know how it was to be accomplished.'

'But, mother, there are he and she.'

The mother held out a paper to her son. 'I told you the fates were on our side. When I left this room I *knew* what must be, though I had no sure perception of how it was to be. You have full power to deal with Christopher Morton's property—have you not?'

'Yes, full power; but he is coming home in autumn.'

'He has gone home already. This has been sent out after you by special messenger from the office. I took it from the messenger in the hall as I passed through just now. Read!'

He took the telegram from her hand. 'Great powers above! Christopher Morton dead! Oh mother, I am sorry. This is worse than the crash to-day. The honestest gentleman that ever breathed! He came nearer to be a friend than any one else I know—than any one else I ever met.'

'Than your mother?' she asked coldly, severely.

'No—no! Why such a question? You were and are my all, mother; you know you are my all.'

'Listen,' she said sternly, undeviatingly. 'Return to the City, and bring Christopher Morton's money into instant use. Go at once, and arrange for your own extrication by that means.'

'But, mother, they would call my using his money by the name of a crime.'

'Who dares to inquire into the business relations between man and wife?'

'Man and wife! Do you mean that girl and me?'

'Go!'

'But mother!—'

'Go!' she hissed. 'Go and do what you can do, and I cannot. Go and realise; anticipate your wife's fortune. I cannot do that part of the work. Go you and do that; and when all is safe in town, come to me for your wife.'

THE POSTAL SYSTEM OF INDIA.

DURING the past year we heard a good deal as to our postal and telegraphic systems; but in all that was said and written no reference was made to systems in vogue in our colonies, certain arrangements in which we might do well to adopt. We propose in the present paper to deal more especially with the Postal Arrangements in India, comparing them with our own.

One of the most important and useful arrangements in India is that known as the 'Value-payable Post.' It is a system under which the post-office undertakes to deliver any parcels, registered letters, registered and fully prepaid, unregistered book-packets, and railway receipt notes, and to recover from the addressee on delivery a specified sum of money fixed by the sender, and to remit to the sender this sum, minus a commission, in the case of articles other than unregistered book-packets. For instance, a

resident in the northern parts of India can write to Calcutta and order a firm to send any articles of wearing apparel, books, or anything he or she may want. They at once send it; but before the parcel is delivered, the post-office is paid the value of the contents, or in other words the bill. When it is paid, the receipt and the money go back to Calcutta, and the firm receive the money from the post-office. In this way tradespeople can get no bad debts, and the recipients have no trouble except to pay at the door. The system has its drawbacks in one way, as tiresome tradespeople occasionally send the wrong article when they have not what is ordered; but the remedy is to return it value payable, and thus the money is sent back to those ordering. Goods and parcels not exceeding a thousand rupees in value, may be booked at any railway station for delivery from any railway station authorised to deliver goods and parcels under the value-payable system. Value-payable parcels cost exactly the same as if one paid the money by money order.

Value-payable articles may be insured up to the value of fifty pounds in branch offices, and up to the value of one hundred pounds in all other offices. The insurance is of two kinds—complete and partial. Complete insurance is intended to cover all risks during transit from the office of posting to the office of delivery. Partial insurance is intended to cover all risks during transit in British territory, and all risks during transit in native territory except those arising out of highway robbery. Partial insurance is only applicable in the case of transit of articles through certain native states. Certain offices in Kathiawar receive insured articles, but are not allowed to despatch them; and certain offices in Cutch are prohibited from despatching insured articles during the prevalence of the south-west monsoon. The value declared for insurance need not correspond with the amount specified by the sender for recovery from the addressee. For instance, in the case of a watch returned after repairs, per value-payable post, to its owner, the amount to be recovered from the owner of the watch would be only the cost of repairs, while the sum insured would represent the value of the watch itself. In our postal system we can only insure to the value of fifty pounds.

In India itself, parcels may be sent paid or unpaid, but not abroad. This is a convenience, and might well be introduced in England.

There are certain 'newspapers' sent by post in India which are known as 'privileged newspapers'—that is, newspapers on which postage has been prepaid under the following rules. The proprietor, manager, or publisher of any newspaper may arrange with the post-office to pay in cash, in advance for a given period, the amount of postage payable on the number of copies of such newspaper to be posted by him, for transmission by the inland post, during that period. These copies are then transmitted through the inland post as fully prepaid without having postage stamps affixed to them. The period for which the postage may thus be paid in advance is three months, or a shorter period.

Certificates of posting are not familiar to us; but in India they are granted to afford the public an assurance that letters and other articles entrusted to servants and messengers for posting

have actually been posted. The dishonesty of natives led to the introduction of these certificates; and doubtless in some cases in this country they would be found convenient. Any one who wishes to obtain a certificate of posting must send with the article for which the certificate is required an exact transcript of the address on the article, written in ink on a slip of paper or in a book, with a half-anna—equal to three farthings of our money—postage stamp affixed to the transcript. The postmaster or clerk to whom it is presented compares the addresses, and if there is no discrepancy, will obliterate the postage stamp and impress the post-office dated stamp on the slip of paper or book, which will then be returned as a certificate that the letter or other article has been posted. Then there are what are known as Postal Acknowledgments, which is to let the public know that the articles sent have reached the addressees. The articles for which acknowledgments can be obtained are registered letters and packets and ordinary parcels.

Money orders may be telegraphed in India to the amount of sixty pounds, whereas we can only telegraph to the amount of ten pounds. The telegraphic money-order system is restricted to inland money orders; but the remitter of a foreign money order can have the particulars telegraphed to the Indian office of exchange concerned; and that office will, on receipt of the telegraphic advice, issue a money order on the foreign country of payment under the foreign money-order rules.

The Savings-bank Department is managed in a somewhat simpler form than in England. One does not have to write to give notice for the withdrawal of money in India. The depositor presents his pass-book personally or by agent—whose name must be mentioned in the application for withdrawal—at the post-office at which his account stands, with a printed form of application for withdrawal, which can be obtained at the post-office, signed by himself, and showing the balance at his credit and the amount he wishes to withdraw. Interest is allowed at the rate of three and three-quarters per cent. per annum, whilst ours is but two and a half per cent.

In England, postmasters are not allowed to return any letter, parcel, or other postal packet to the writer or sender, or to any one else, or to delay forwarding it to its destination according to the address, even though a request to such effect be written thereon; but in India, letters, post-cards, books, and pattern packets and parcels can be recalled by the senders, after having been posted, subject to certain rules. No letters or articles posted may be returned except under the orders of the chief postal authority in a province, or the Director-general of the post-office, or the local government or administration, or the Governor-general in Council. A fee of one rupee is charged for the returning of a posted letter; and the application for the return must be accompanied by a statement of the reasons why return of the letter or article is sought. This power to the sender to recall letters or articles once posted is one which many would frequently like to be able to exercise. It must necessarily of course involve trouble and some

little delay to the sender as well as the postal authorities, but it is an advantageous innovation in the system.

The Indian post-office has in use some excellent embossed envelopes, which are found specially convenient for certain classes of correspondence. English as well as natives use them in great numbers, because they are not only convenient but attractive, for they cost nothing. They are oblong, and are sold at eight annas per packet of sixteen—that is, the envelope costs the purchaser nothing at all. The reason of this is probably due to the fact that natives will not put their letters in a decent covering, so these envelopes were introduced to give them no excuse for not sending their letters properly, instead of in a dirty wrapper made by themselves. The postal authorities have a better kind of embossed envelope which they do their best to tempt people to buy. These are square ones, and cost ten annas six pice per packet of sixteen.

In the foregoing, it has been our object merely to call attention to the main points of difference between the Indian and English systems, since in the majority of details the Indian system corresponds with our own, and it has therefore been unnecessary to dwell upon points with which we are already familiar. India has not only adopted all our improvements in postal matters, but has taken care to go farther and introduce improvements for her own good; and we think that as other countries have seen well to adopt any fresh innovations on our part, we might do well to look around and introduce further improvements now in vogue in other countries. Paris has long taken the lead of London in many matters of detail in their postal service, and the present year is a fitting year for us to make more ventures.

AN UNLOOKED-FOR TURN.

BY HENRY TINSON.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

EVERYBODY in and around Churchborough sympathised heartily with poor old Mr Starbert when his eldest son made that imprudent, disgraceful match which went near breaking the old gentleman's heart, and probably did shorten his life. When we say 'everybody,' we approach literal correctness, for Churchborough, although a respectable and well-to-do sort of town, was small enough to make every incident a little out of the common the welcome subject of general gossip.

Young Edwy Starbert had given his father a great deal of trouble while he was at Oxford, which university he left in a manner anything but creditable; afterwards he gave more trouble still. His conduct was certainly bad enough, but rumour, as a matter of course, darkened and deepened even this. Then came the news that he had married a wife he could never bring home, not in his father's life; but he was the elder of his father's two sons, and some day he would be master. No one seemed to know exactly what his wife was or had been; yet every one agreed that she was somebody very

unfit to become Mrs Starbert. She was a barmaid—an actress—a tight-rope dancer—an assistant at a glove-shop—he had first seen her behind a tobacconist's counter: these were among the most favourable of the reports which reached Churchborough.

As for the young man himself, he, from all that was heard, was going from bad to worse; his father—so it was reported—had twice paid large sums to save him from criminal proceedings. It was a great comfort to think that the second son, Mr Dudley, was so steady, so different in every respect from Mr Edwy.

This second son was what is commonly described as 'something in the City,' which in his case involved also his being something on the Stock Exchange; and probably the business habits thus acquired had kept him from the glaring faults of his brother. Edwy had been prone to satirise 'old Duddy,' as he called him, and openly declared that the younger man was worse than himself at the core, and was only so smug, demure, and correct as a matter of prudence. 'He is playing his cards carefully, and will win the game, I daresay,' he was wont to say; but however this might be, poor Edwy did not live to see the end of the game. He died in London of 'a galloping consumption,' as those who were in attendance upon him described it; and such progress had the disease made, that although his friends hastened to town directly they heard of his illness, they were not in time to see him alive. The behaviour of his wife and her associates was so repellent, that old Starbert could not soften to the young woman, and at last had something like an open quarrel with her. There was therefore no reconciliation; and Mr Dudley—to whom must be given the chief credit of pointing out Mrs Edwy's faults, and indeed of stimulating them by a little judicious irritation—may be said to have won the game, as his brother had foretold.

The widow soon disappeared; it was reported that she had married a sergeant in the artillery, and gone out to India with him. It was from the inquiries of Mr Dudley that so much was learnt, the old gentleman scorning to interest himself about one whom he deemed had been the worst enemy of his house.

Well, Edwy was dead; Dudley had succeeded him, and was heir to the not very extensive property at Churchborough. Then he married. Discreet in this as in all beside, he chose a wife with some money. The lady possessed a bad temper; but she soon found her husband was, or could appear to be, impervious to the sharpest attacks of her tongue, and could control her so far as to prevent anything like an outbreak; but through the servants it was pretty generally known that Mr and Mrs Dudley Starbert did not get on very well together. This state of things could not be very pleasant to either; but the gentleman had soon additional cause for repining. Cautious, discreet, as he had always been, he had married his wife somewhat in haste, lest a delay might lose her—and her money. A delay of only six months would have changed his plans materially, for in that brief period a distant relation—one from whom the Starberts had no expectations—died, and left a considerable estate to the old gentleman upon the very easy

condition that the recipient should adopt his family name of Smithers. The bequest being in land, would of course have gone to Edwy had he lived, so Dudley might again be esteemed fortunate—but in secret he was bitterly chagrined when he reflected what sort of wife he might have chosen had he but waited until he attained such a position. He might have married so that he could have become the member for the county; might then—for he was ambitious, and had a sufficiently good opinion of himself—have even aspired to a seat in the cabinet. His ambition and his opinion of himself being thus tolerably high, he had courage enough to put this ambition to the trial, for a vacancy occurring in the representation of the county, Mr Dudley Starbert-Smithers offered himself as a candidate. As he set forth, when thus coming forward—as being his own—every principle which was likely to charm the constituency, and as he had, during the year or so in which he had held his wealth—for poor old Starbert did not live three months after the estate fell to him—been most lavish in his expenditure, he thought he had a good chance.

But he was not a generous or a genial man, and even this outlay, by fits and starts, was so managed as to offend more than he pleased; while the multitude would certainly never like Mr or Mrs Dudley. In short, he polled about two hundred votes, his antagonist scoring some two thousand; and as the trivial support obtained by Dudley was all from the section most objectionable in the eyes of county Squires, and only given to annoy these latter, why, Mr Starbert-Smithers was even less popular than before, and was decidedly 'snubbed' in many quarters. He, therefore, not unnaturally, resolved to quit Churchborough; and easily obtaining a tenant for his ancestral estate, which his grandfather had bought when retiring from the wholesale oil business, he found a suitable residence at a distance of fully one hundred miles from the ungrateful town. Here he seemed likely to be happier than before; for not only were his neighbours less fastidious than the Churchborough folk, and willing to exchange hospitalities with him, but an heir was born, which not only kept the Starbert-Smithers property in the right line, but naturally caused a more amicable feeling between the parents.

If this were a more detailed history of Mr Dudley's career, much could be said of the importance attached to this event, and how he at once seemed in consequence to feel himself of more weight among his neighbours and to lay himself out to acquire popularity. He was perhaps successful in some degree; but he was not a man to be liked all round; while his disposition to insist upon his rights brought him into collision with some of the less important classes, as he deemed them, in his vicinity.

Having bought a piece of land adjacent to his house, he was annoyed to find that trespasses were common, and that some of the trespassers asserted a right to cross the meadow and to fish in the stream which skirted it. Among these—almost alone, indeed, for most of the offenders were soon scared off, or did not think it worth while to run any risk for so trivial an object—was a man to whom Dudley had taken an immediate

and instinctive dislike—a shabby, elderly fellow, who had, it was said, been a schoolmaster or a lawyer's clerk, and who even now professed to eke out a living by giving lessons in extra school subjects, and by doing a little copying for some of the tolerably numerous attorneys in the neighbouring town.

Dudley had formed an opinion that this man was a poacher, even a thief, evidently a dangerous character. He was the more objectionable because he lived in a wretched hut built upon land which ought to belong to the recent purchase; but there was a long-standing wrangle about this. The useless corner was a sort of No Man's Land, and Dudley's lawyer said it would cost twenty times the worth of the plot to get the occupier out and establish a title. Yet, if this fellow could be got rid of, it might be possible to prevent any one else from coming, and the ground could be included with that to which it properly belonged. So ran Mr Starbert-Smithers' cogitations, and he resolved in some way to expel the man—perhaps to buy him off, although he did not greatly relish this latter idea.

Meanwhile, the schoolmaster lived in his wretched cottage, with only a child for his companion. An old woman, still poorer than himself, who lived in one room at a squalid hovel down the hill, used to attend upon the child, 'tidy up' the place, and do such cooking as was needed.

At last, chance seemed to favour Mr Starbert-Smithers. An extensive poultry robbery took place in the neighbourhood, and suspicion pointed to Silas Bird, the schoolmaster. Dudley was delighted at this, and spared no expense to bring the offence home to the man. He sent for an experienced criminal lawyer, offered a large reward for evidence, and was so sanguine of success that he arranged with his fellow-guardians for the reception of the poor child, who had no better home than Silas Bird's cottage, into the workhouse. But the prosecution failed in the most ignominious manner. The chief witness against Silas—who had had his first hearing before the magistrates, and came up on remand, a mere form before his committal, of course—this sheet-anchor of the prosecution was himself, unfortunately, identified as the thief; while Bird's alibi, which had been discredited and laughed at, was proved good.

The accused had learnt quite enough from his friends, who were sufficiently shrewd, even if disreputable in the eyes of Mr Starbert-Smithers, to teach him how much he was indebted to the latter; while much of that gentleman's antecedents had leaked out, and was now used with the most unfavourable colouring possible. Of this, however, Dudley knew nothing; nor did he know that Bird had gone straight from the court to his cottage, or he might have chosen some other way to his house. As it was, on turning an angle in the byroad which was his short-cut, he passed directly in front of the hut, and saw Bird standing in the doorway. The pair could have shaken hands, had they been so disposed.

Bird held the sickly child, a boy of some five years, by the hand, and as Mr Starbert-Smithers appeared, he lifted the child in his arms and said, pointing to Dudley: 'Look at that fine gentleman! Perhaps he would like to nurse you.' The 'fine gentleman' walked steadily on, taking

no notice of this speech beyond that which was contained in a stern frown; but a direct hail from the man caused him to pause.

'Mr Starbert,' exclaimed the schoolmaster, 'I must apologise for not having called upon you before this. I did not know until during the course of some events interesting to both of us, that Mr Smithers, our respected neighbour, was Mr Starbert of Churchborough. I shall take an early opportunity of calling upon you and asking after all our friends.—Good-afternoon, sir; do not let me detain you.'

With a harsher frown, Dudley went on, thoroughly vexed with himself for having stopped to listen, and mortified by thinking that he recognised in the man one of the Churchborough voters, but whether on his side or against him, he could not remember.

The incident disturbed him a good deal; for, knowing that he had been worsted in his plans, he knew also that there was a sneering triumph in every syllable the man had uttered, all the more insulting from its covert character. Meeting his son and the nurse outside his gates, however, he was restored to calmness. The child indeed was not only his pride but his solace, and those of his household who had been long with him were wont to say that 'master was quite a different man since Master Dudley was born;' for the baby was of course named after his father. If this had no other effect, it suggested a long line of ancestors—illustrious, perhaps noble.

He was able to make a jest of the meeting, in describing it to his wife; for all that, he detested the man, and was more than ever determined to put an end to his illegal squatting. Dinner was over, and Mr Starbert-Smithers was seated in his study, looking through some letters and accounts; these related chiefly to the late legal proceedings, so were not pleasant reading, when the servant brought in a card, and said: 'The—the gentleman was waiting.'

The card was in manuscript, and it bore 'Mr Silas Bird, accountant, &c. It was the cottager.

'Send the fellow away; I will not see him,' replied Dudley.

The servant left, but reappeared, and excused herself by saying that the visitor was most anxious to see Mr Smithers on business of the greatest importance, and he hoped no offence he had given would prevent his saying a few words to that gentleman. This sounded better; so, after a moment's hesitation, Dudley said: 'Show him in;' and accordingly the owner of the card appeared.

'Now, Bird,' began Mr Starbert-Smithers, in a decided tone, 'you say you wish to speak to me upon important business. What is it? Be brief, as I am busy.'

'I see you are, sir,' returned the man; 'and the envelopes being under my eyes, I cannot help recognising Hinger and Barkman's fine legal hand.'

Dudley angrily snatched away the papers as this was said.

'Do not mind it,' continued his visitor; 'the firm may be said to have introduced us to each other.—Now, Mr Dudley-Starbert'—his voice changed here so sharply, that his listener could not avoid looking full at him—'I am here on

business. I mean business; I will have business; and if you will not meet me in the business as I wish, I will crush you; yes, sir, I—will—crush—you.' He leant forward and almost hissed these last words out.

'What do you mean, fellow?' cried Dudley, indignant at the man's manner. 'Do you threaten me? Come here when you are sober, if you come at all. Leave my house, or I will myself turn you out.'

'Will you, Mr Starbert?' retorted the other, with a malignant grin. 'You are a ruined, a hopelessly ruined man, if you do. Now, I want to be your friend, if you will be sensible, and allow me. Did you see the child I held up to admire you to-day?—Do not scowl, but answer a civil question, the only one, I promise you, that I will ask.'

'I did. What then?' asked Dudley; exasperated, yet in some vague way uneasy at the man's strange speech.

'Good. I held him up to admire his uncle, Mr Dudley Starbert-Smithers,' resumed the schoolmaster.—'Oh yes, I am in earnest. He is your nephew—the wronged, neglected child of your wronged brother, Mr Edwy, the heir to the Churchborough property, which was hardly worth fighting for; and the heir to your inherited estate, which is. One moment more! I am not a grasping or unfeeling man. You have tried to ruin me, to send me to Portland; and some men would cherish ill-will for this; but with me it is different; forget and forgive is my motto. If you think you can dispute the parentage of this boy, do so. I shall not blame you; but you will fail; I tell you that candidly; and when you have failed, you will beg for the terms I now offer.'

'If you are not out of this house in two minutes, you shall be pitched out neck and crop,' returned Dudley. 'Those are *my* terms.'

'I will go, sir,' answered Bird. 'An action for assault might have been useful to me a week or two back; I can do without it now. It will not hurt you, sir, to look through these few papers,' he laid a large envelope on the table as he spoke; 'and please note that when we might claim the whole, I am content with half.—Good-night, sir; I will give your love to your nephew.'

THE LAST OF ENGLAND.

THE white cliffs fade into the twilight gray:

A mist now hides them from my tear-dimmed eyes;

For swiftly onward, as a bird that flies,

The good ship sails—and England's far away;

And far behind, my childhood's happy day,

And sweet girl-comrades, whose dream-faces rise

To haunt and cheer me under alien skies.

O friends and country, fare ye well for aye!

But while love leads me o'er the stormy sea,

Though English homesteads I see nevermore,

Long years of blessing fate may hold in store:

For hands can work when hearts from care are free.

Hope's heaven-sent sunshine gilds with memory

The new life waiting on the distant shore.

C. G.

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THE LADIES' GALLERY.

BIG Ben is striking two, and if we intend to secure good seats we must hurry. Breathless with haste, we reach the little door through which it is necessary to pass to gain the Ladies' Gallery. Here a stern policeman stands guard, who demands the name of the member whose order we hold. Having inscribed this on a sheet of blue paper, he ushers us into a little dark waiting-room, where we must sit and possess our souls in patience for more than half an hour. The 'House' meets at three, and the door of the Ladies' Gallery is opened a quarter of an hour before that time; but in order to obtain seats in the front row, it is best to appear on the scene not long after two o'clock, or, on very special nights, even earlier than that. Wearily the time drags along; unless, warned by previous experience, we have provided ourselves with literature of some kind, there is nothing for it but to wait as cheerfully as we may, deriving some information and amusement at least from the behaviour of our fellow-victims. With what envied ease those who possess a personal and domestic interest in some of the members comport themselves. How calmly they converse with each other on their private affairs, in not always modulated tones. Look at those girls, how shy and excited they seem; they have never been here before, it is clear. Some of these ladies have visited the House so often that it is now almost a bore to come, at least they no longer feel any enthusiasm over it. Others are enjoying the pleasant excitement of a new experience; while others, again, are still placidly interested and curious, although the novelty of the thing has worn off. Ladies of all kinds, in short, are to be seen here from time to time—political, fashionable, young and old, and dames that are nondescript.

At length the guardian policeman puts his head in at the door and announces that we can now receive our tickets. In the order, then, of our arrival, numbered white bone or ivory discs

are presented to us, and with these in our hands we commence to climb the stairs. Three long steep flights there are, and each step of the last flight at least is accompanied by sighs for a lift. Passing through the swing-door at the top, we find ourselves in the midst of a long bare corridor with swing-doors at each end. Through that on our right hand men with a business-like air and sheets of white paper in their hands, occasionally pass and repass. These are the reporters of various newspapers on their way to and from the Reporters' Gallery, which lies immediately in front of and below the one set aside for ladies.

The entrance to the Ladies' Gallery itself is on the other side of the corridor from the one at which we entered, and a little lower down to the right. But there are still some minutes to pass before the magic door is opened. Novices in the ways of the place generally plant themselves as close to the door as possible, in the hope of rushing in first. Vain delusion! The numbers on their tickets betray them, and the courteous official in charge gently relegates them to their own place. There are only eighteen seats in the gallery in all, and these are divided into two rows, the back one being raised a step higher than the front. In spite of this, a position in the second row is not much to be coveted, as from it little can be seen of the House, except by standing up and craning over the heads of those seated below. In the front row the case is quite different; there you can draw your chair close up to the oft complained-of, over-abused grating, and look down comfortably upon all that passes. As regards the said grating, it really is not so bad as it has been painted. Its meshes are wide, and, beyond rendering the gallery rather dark, and producing a slight sensation as of a veil continually before the eyes, it interferes not at all with the comfort of those seated behind it, or with the view they obtain.

At present the House is almost entirely empty. A few officials stand idly near the door, an odd member or so wanders aimlessly in, gazes about him vaguely for a few moments, deposits a hat on

a chosen seat, and wanders out again. It is not yet three o'clock.

We look about us for a while. The Ladies' Gallery is set far back, and commands a view of almost the entire hall. On the right, between the end of the Ladies' Gallery and the wall, is the Speaker's Gallery, which of course we cannot see. Just below is the Reporters' Gallery, extending the whole width of the House and a little round on each side. It is divided into a number of small compartments, just large enough to hold one man, who enters from the back, steps down, shuts himself in, and sits like a Jack-in-the-Box. Over the edge of this gallery appears the green canopy of the Speaker's Chair, which will effectually screen him from our view when he is seated beneath. In front of the chair stands a big table, covered with books, pamphlets, &c. This is the Clerks' Table, and along the foot of it, presently, the glittering mace will be laid. The members' benches are on either side, the front Ministerial and Opposition benches facing the table on the right and left hand of the Speaker respectively. A narrow gangway on both sides of the House divides the front benches and those immediately behind them from the rest. Benches, therefore, below this are 'below the gangway.' The principal entrance to the House is through a wide door facing us, on either side of which are the 'cross-benches,' extending as far as the 'bar of the House.' From where we sit, the brass knobs of the latter can only just be faintly discerned sticking out from the ends of the nearest cross-bench on each side. Here, too, is placed the big elbow-chair of the Serjeant-at-Arms. Above the doorway and over the cross-benches are the galleries for Peers and Strangers, the latter generally well filled. Galleries also extend along the sides of the House for the use of members; on the night of a great debate these are full to overflowing, but at other times frequently empty.

At length, on the stroke of three, the cry of 'Speaker!' is raised in the lobbies without, and presently the doors are swung back, and the great man appears in his wig and gown. Preceded by the serjeant-at-arms bearing the mace, and followed by the chaplain, he passes towards the chair, bowing right and left at every step. The doors are then closed, and prayers are read by the chaplain. During this ceremony the few members present fidget somewhat after the manner of schoolboys on a similar occasion.

Then comes 'Question-time.' This lasts a longer or shorter period, according to the number and character of the questions honourable members desire to ask those in authority. It is no doubt a most useful indispensable institution; but 'Question-time' is nevertheless, as a rule, rather dull, though sometimes enlivened by a sharp skirmish between smart speakers on both sides of the House.

A slight pause precedes the commencement of

the serious business of the day. The benches are by this time fairly well filled, and a slight rustle goes through the assembly as the first speaker rises to address the House on the matter in hand. On the night of a big speech by some leading orator and statesman, the House of Commons is indeed a sight worth seeing. The floor and galleries are crammed, not a vacant seat to be found anywhere; the members are disposed in various attitudes, characteristic or peculiar, yet all listening intently. At one moment a stillness deep as death may prevail, broken only by that one voice ringing through the room, sweeping its hearers along in a tide of eloquence, swaying them this way and that with its persuasive eloquence. The next—some chance word of the orator breaks the spell—a storm arises; cheers, counter-cheers, calls and other expression of accord or dissent. 'Order! Order! Order!' 'Hear! Hear! Hear!' roll like waves of sound from one end of the building to the other. The wildest confusion of voices obtains, and it is some time before the tumult is stayed. Such a scene is superb but indescribable.

How great, then, is the contrast when some prosy individual holds the floor, boring the House with his especial fad. Rapidly the seats empty; one by one the members steal away; while those who remain to suffer martyrdom for the sake of 'keeping a house' stretch themselves comfortably to sleep if they can. Occasionally a stray member or two peeps in, listens for a few minutes, then hurries away; sometimes one look at the speaker is a sufficient reason for beating a hasty retreat.

It is while a particularly pronounced specimen of the latter type of orator is holding forth that we retire for afternoon tea. On the fine bright afternoons of summer, gallant members are wont to entertain their lady-friends to tea on the terrace, which runs along by the river. Here we can sit and see the boats glide up and down the Thames, or watch the living stream passing ceaselessly over Westminster Bridge. On such an occasion as this the terrace is a pretty sight; the gay hues of the ladies' dresses brighten the sombre stone walls and add picturesqueness to the scene. Talk and laughter float lightly round, forming a merry accompaniment to the demolition of cake and strawberries. Our staid legislators for the time being have laid aside the cares of the State. But to-day the harmony is not destined to remain undisturbed. The division bell rings imperatively, attendants appear to shout the summons in our deafened ears, members depart hastily, and for a while the ladies are left forlorn.

After tea, before returning to the gallery, a walk through the building is proposed by our entertainer. So away we go through corridors and up staircases, mazy and bewildering to the stranger. Every now and again we catch glimpses of inviting-looking reading and smoking rooms,

whither we may not enter; but at length our pilgrimage ends in the waiting-lobby outside the Hall of the Commons. Between the outer and inner doors of the entrance to the latter is a little seat in the left-hand corner. To this we are conducted, and standing on it in turn, peep through the little glass window into the House. Now at last we see the Speaker seated in state, get a near view of a gesticulating orator, scan the green leather-covered benches and the rows of faces, inspect the 'bar of the House,' glance upwards to the bars of the Ladies' Gallery, and descry dim forms within. This peephole is very enticing; but we must tear ourselves away, and once more mounting the weary stairs, find our way back to our old places.

The House has wakened up over some question, and a lively debate is in process, amid much laughter, cheering, and cries of 'No! No!' Then comes the shout 'Divide! Divide!' It is a great misfortune that from our present position we cannot hear the words of the Speaker very well, but we manage to make out that he puts the question, that there is a shout of Aye! on the one hand, and of No! on the other, and then the Speaker announces that the Ayes! have it. 'No!' is shouted again. So an adjournment to the lobbies is necessary to settle the matter. A pause ensues, during which we can hear the attendants calling 'Division!' from lobby to lobby, till the sound dies away in the distance. Members drawn from various occupations, and from remote parts of the building, come sauntering or hurrying in. There is a moment of expectation before the Speaker puts the question for the second time, and the same performance is repeated as at first. 'Ayes to the right, Noes to the left,' says the Speaker, and the members file out. It is curious and interesting to watch the various methods of progression adopted: some saunter languidly; others move with a quick, brisk, decided step; many join in groups of two or three to hold an earnest conversation as they pass out; a few rush out the instant the word is given; far more hang back till the House is nearly empty before they slowly take their departure. The lobby without is then cleared and the doors locked. Presently, a thin stream of men begins to come back, while the sound of a teller's voice falls faintly on our listening ears. At last all are counted, and the four tellers forming into line, march up to the table, bow to the Speaker, one of the tellers on the winning side announces the numbers, and the episode is over.

Soon after half-past seven we descend for dinner to a dining-room overlooking the terrace. Here members may only dine when they are accompanied by ladies. At this hour numerous ladies in evening dress are to be met with flitting about the corridors and staircases, while cosy parties assemble in the privileged dining-rooms. The House is becoming more and more a dining club for ladies since the fair sex is so ungallantly excluded from other clubs in London. Dinner over, we adjourned to the terrace for coffee. The night was soft and balmy, the lights were gleaming far along the embankment; and the scene was even more picturesque than by day. It is not till eight o'clock that the Speaker adjourns for his dinner; but he had long been back at

his duties again, before we even thought of wending our way once more to our seats in the gallery.

After the cool air of the terrace, the gallery felt hot, stuffy, and dull, particularly as the debate had once more settled down into a semi-somnolent condition. Our eyes and thoughts wandered, and fell on the reporters, still scribbling or occasionally snoozing at their posts. Did they get very cramped, we wondered, sitting in that confined position? We ourselves were nearly asleep, and began to make preparations for departure. One more look at the House first. Let us see how many members are taking a nap. What a lot of bald heads there are among them. Shining crowns are very much in the ascendant here. Is it because they keep their hats on so much?

But, dear me! how few members there are—surely not forty. At this moment a member rises, and with what looks like a slightly malicious smile on his face, remarks, 'Mr Speaker, I beg to call your attention to the fact that there are not forty members in the House.' But the words arouse no stir; there is no crowding of members back to the scene. The thing has either been pre-arranged or there is no interest in prolonging the sitting further that night. Slowly the Speaker begins to count: 'One, two'—There are not indeed forty members present. It is a 'Count out.' All is over for that night. 'Who goes home?'

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER V.—SOMETHING HAPPENS.

So far a truly enjoyable Sunday. To sit in church beside her angry mother, both going through the forms of repentance, charity, and forgiveness: and to dine together, going through the ordinary forms of kindness while one at least was devoured with wrath. Waste of good roast lamb and gooseberry tart!

Elsie spent the afternoon in her studio, where she sat undisturbed. People called, but her mother received them. Now that the last resolution had been taken: now that she had promised her lover to brave everything and to live the simplest possible life for love's sweet sake, she felt that sinking which falls upon the most courageous when the boats are burned. Thus Love makes loving hearts to suffer.

The evening, however, made amends. For then, like the housemaid, who mounted the area stair as Elsie went down the front-door steps, she went forth to meet her lover, and in his company forgot all her fears. They went to church together. There they sat side by side, this church not having adopted the barbarous custom of separating the sexes—a custom which belongs to the time when women were monkishly considered unclean creatures, and the cause, to most men, of everlasting suffering, which they

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themselves would most justly share. This couple sat hand in hand: the service was full of praise and hope and trust: the Psalms were exultant, triumphant, jubilant: the sermon was a ten minutes' ejaculation of joy and thanks: there was a Procession with banners, to cheer up the hearts of the faithful—what is Faith without a Procession? Comfort stole back to Elsie's troubled heart: she felt less like an outcast: she came out of the church with renewed confidence.

It was still daylight. They walked round and round the nearest Square. Jane the housemaid and her young man were doing the same thing. They talked with confidence and joy of the future before them. Presently the rain began to fall, and Elsie's spirits fell too.

'George,' she said, 'are we selfish, each of us? Is it right for me to drag and keep you down?'

'You will not. You will raise me and keep me up. Never doubt that, Elsie. I am the selfish one because I make you sacrifice so much.'

'Oh! no—no. It is no sacrifice for me. You must make me brave, George, because I am told every day by Hilda and my mother the most terrible things. I have been miserable all day long. I suppose it is the battle I had with my mother yesterday.'

'Your mother will be all right again as soon as the thing is done. And Hilda will come round too. She will want to show you her new carriage and her newest dress. Nobody admires and envies the rich relation so much as the poor relation. That is the reason why the poor relation is so much courted and petted in every rich family. We shall be the poor relations, you know, Elsie.'

'I suppose so. We must accept the part and play it properly.' She spoke gaily, but with an effort.

'She will give you some of her old dresses. And she will ask us to some of her crushes; but we won't go. Oh! Hilda will come round. As for your mother'—He repressed what he was about to say. 'As for your mother, Elsie, there is no obstinacy so desperate that it cannot be softened by something or other. The constant dropping, you know. Give her time. If she refuses to change—why—then'—again he changed the words in time—'dear child, we must make our own happiness for ourselves without our own folk to help us.'

'Yes; we will. At the same time, George, though I am so valiant in talk, I confess that I feel as low as a schoolboy who is going to be punished.'

'My dear Elsie,' said George with a little exasperation, 'if they will not come round, let them stay flat or square, or sulky, or anything. I can hardly be expected to feel very anxious for a change of temper in people who have said so many hard things of me. To-morrow, dear, you shall get through your talk with Mr Dering. He's as hard as nails; but he's a just man, and he is sensible. In the evening, I will call for you at nine, and you shall tell me what he said. In six weeks we can be married. I will see about the banns. We will find a lodging somewhere, pack up our things, get married, and

move in. We can't afford a honeymoon, I am afraid. That shall come afterwards when the ship comes home.'

'Yes. When I am with you I fear nothing. It is when you are gone: when I sit by myself in my own room, and know that in the next room my mother is brooding over her wrath and keeping it warm—that I feel so guilty. To-night, it is not that I feel guilty at all: it is quite the contrary; but I feel as if something was going to happen.'

'Something is going to happen, dear. I am going to put a wedding ring round this pretty finger.'

'When one says something, in the language of superstition one means something bad, something dreadful, something that shall stand between us and force us apart. Something unexpected.'

'My child,' said her lover, 'all the powers of all the devils shall not force us apart.' A daring and comprehensive boast.

She laughed a little, lightened by words so brave. 'Here we are, dear,' she said, as they arrived at the house. 'I think the rain means to come down in earnest. You had better make haste home. To-morrow evening at nine, I will expect you.'

She ran lightly up the steps and rang the bell: the door was opened: she turned her head, laughed, waved her hand to her lover, and ran in.

There was standing on the kerb beneath the street lamp a man apparently engaged in lighting a cigar. When the girl turned, the light of the lamp fell full upon her face. The man stared at her, forgetting his cigar light, which fell burning from his hand into the gutter. When the door shut upon her, he stared at George, who, for his part, his mistress having vanished, stared at the door.

All this staring occupied a period of at least half a minute. Then George turned and walked away: the man struck another light, lit his cigar, and strode away too, but in the same direction. Presently he caught up George and laid a hand upon his shoulder.

'Here, you sir,' he said gruffly; 'I want a word with you before we go any further.'

George turned upon him savagely. Nobody likes a heavy hand laid upon the shoulder. In the old days it generally meant a writ and Whitecross Street and other unpleasant things.

'Who the devil are you?' he asked.

'That is the question I was going'—He stopped and laughed.—'No—I see now. I don't want to ask it. You are George Austin, are you not?'

'That is my name. But who are you—and what do you want with me?'

The man was a stranger to him. He was dressed in a velvet coat and a white waistcoat: he wore a soft felt hat; and with the velvet jacket, the felt hat, and a full beard, he looked like an artist of some kind. At the end of June it is still light at half-past nine. George saw that the man was a gentleman: his features, strongly marked and clear cut, reminded him of something—but vaguely; they gave him the common feeling of having been seen or known at some remote period. The man looked about thirty, the time when the physical man is at his

best: he was of good height, well set up, and robust. Something, no doubt, in the Art world: or something that desired to appear as if belonging to the Art world. Because, you see, the artists themselves are not so picturesque as those who would be artists if they could. The unsuccessful artist, certainly, is sometimes a most picturesque creature. So is the Model. The rags and duds and threadbarity too often enter largely into the picturesque. So with the plough-boy's dinner under the hedge, or the cottier's Saturday night. And the village beershop may make a very fine picture; but the artist himself does not partake in those simple joys.

'Well, sir, who are you?' George repeated as the other man made no reply.

'Do you not remember me? I am waiting to give you a chance.'

'No—certainly not.'

'Consider. That house into which you have just taken my—a young lady—does it not connect itself with me?'

'No. Why should it?'

'Then I suppose that I am completely forgotten?'

'It is very strange. I seem to recall your voice.'

'I will tell you who I am by another question. George Austin, what in thunder are you doing with my sister?'

'Your sister?' George jumped up and stared. 'Your sister? Are you—are you Athelstan come home again? Really and truly—Athelstan?'

'I am really and truly Athelstan. I have been back in England about a fortnight.'

'You are Athelstan?' George looked at him curiously. When the reputed black-sheep comes home again, it is generally in rags with a long story of fortune's persecutions. This man was not in the least ragged. On the contrary, he looked prosperous. What had he been doing? For, although Elsie continued passionate in her belief in her brother's innocence, everybody else believed that he had run away to escape consequences, and George among the number had accepted that belief.

'Your beard alters you greatly. I should not have known you. To be sure it is eight years since I saw you last, and I was only just beginning my articles when you—left us.' He was on the point of saying 'when you ran away.'

'There is a good deal to talk about. Will you come with me to my rooms? I am putting up in Half Moon Street.'

Athelstan hailed a passing hansom and they drove off.

'You have been a fortnight in London,' said George, 'and yet you have not been to see your own people.'

'I have been eight years away, and yet I have not written a single letter to my own people.'

George asked no more questions. Arrived at the lodging, they went in and sat down. Athelstan produced soda and whisky and cigars.

'Why have I not called upon my own people?' Athelstan took up the question again. 'Because, when I left home I swore that I would never return until they came to beg forgiveness. That is why. Every evening I have been walking outside the house, in the hope of seeing some of them without their seeing me. For, you see,

I should like to go home again; but I will not go as I went away, under a shameful cloud. That has got to be lifted first. Presently I shall know whether it is lifted. Then I shall know how to act. To-night, I was rewarded by the sight of my sister Elsie, walking home with you. I knew her at once. She is taller than I thought she would become when I went away. Her face hasn't changed much, though. She always had the gift of sweet looks, which isn't quite the same thing as beauty. My sister Hilda, for instance, was always called a handsome girl, but she never had Elsie's sweet looks.'

'She has the sweetest looks in the world.'

'What are you doing with her, George Austin, I ask again?'

'We are engaged to be married.'

'Married? Elsie married? Why—she's—well—I suppose she must be grown up by this time.'

'Elsie is very nearly one-and-twenty. She will be twenty-one to-morrow.'

'Elsie going to be married. It seems absurd. One-and-twenty to-morrow. Ah!' He sat up eagerly. 'Tell me, is she any richer? Has she had any legacies or things?'

'No. How should she? Her *dot* is her sweet self, which is enough for any man.'

'And you, Austin. I remember you were an article clerk of eighteen or nineteen when I went away—are you rich?'

Austin blushed. 'No,' he said; 'I am not. I am a managing clerk at your old office. I get two hundred a year, and we are going to marry on that.'

Athelstan nodded. 'A bold thing to do. However—Twenty-one to-morrow—we shall see.'

'And I am sorry to say there is the greatest opposition—on the part of your mother and your other sister. I am not allowed in the house, and Elsie is treated as a rebel.'

'Oh! well. If you see your way, my boy, get married, and have a happy life, and leave them to come round at their leisure. Elsie has a heart of gold. She can believe in a man. She is the only one of my people who stood up for me when they accused me without a shadow of proof of—The only one—the only one. It is impossible for me to forget that—and difficult,' he added, 'to forgive the other thing.—Is my sister Hilda still at home?'

'No. She is married to Sir Samuel, brother of your Mr Dering. He is a great deal older than his wife; but he is very rich.'

'Oh!—And my mother?'

'I believe she continues in good health. I am not allowed the privilege of calling upon her.'

'And my old chief?'

'He also continues well.'

'And now, since we have cleared the ground so far, let us come to business. How about that robbery?'

'What robbery?' The old business had taken place when George was a lad just entering upon his articles. He had ceased to think of it.

'What robbery? Man alive!'—Athelstan sprang to his feet—'there is only one robbery to me in the whole history of the world since men and robberies began. What robbery? Look here, Master George Austin, when a man is

murdered, there is for that man only one murder in the whole history of the world. All the other murders, even that of Abel himself, are of no concern at all—not one bit. He isn't interested in them. They don't matter to him a red cent. That's my case. The robbery of eight years ago, which took a few hundred pounds from a rich man, changed my whole life: it drove me out into the world: it forced me for a time to live among the prodigals and the swine and the husks. It handed me over to a thousand devils, and you ask me what robbery?

'I am very sorry. It is now a forgotten thing. Nobody remembers it any more. I doubt whether Mr Dering himself ever thinks of it.'

'Well, what was discovered after all? Who did it?'

'Nothing at all has been discovered. No one knows to this day who did it.'

'Nothing at all?—I am disappointed. Hasn't old Checkley done time for it? Nothing found out?'

'Nothing. The notes were stopped in time, and were never presented. After five or six years, the Bank of England gave Mr Dering notes in the place of those stolen. And that is all there is to tell.'

'Nothing discovered! And the notes never presented? What good did the fellow get by it, then?'

'I don't know. But nothing was discovered.'

'Nothing discovered!' Athelstan repeated. 'Why, I took it for granted that the truth had come out long since. I was making up my mind to call upon old Dering. I don't think I shall go now.—And my sister Hilda will not be coming here to express her contrition. I am disappointed.'

'You can see Elsie if you like.'

'Yes—I can see her,' he repeated.—'George'—he returned to the old subject—'do you know the exact particulars of that robbery?'

'There was a forged cheque, and the Bank paid it across the counter.'

'The cheque,' Athelstan explained, 'was made payable to the order of a certain unknown person named Edmund Gray. It was endorsed by that name. To prove that forgery, they should have got the cheque and examined the endorsement. That was the first thing, certainly. I wonder how they began.'

'I do not know. It was while I was in my articles, and all we heard was a vague report. You ought not to have gone away. You should have stayed to fight it out.'

'I was right to give up my berth after what the chief said. How could I remain drawing his pay and doing his work, when he had calmly given me to understand that the forgery lay between two hands, and that he strongly suspected mine?'

'Did Mr Dering really say so? Did he go so far as that?'

'So I walked out of the place. I should have stayed at home and waited for the clearing up of the thing, but for my own people—who—will you know— So I went away in a rage.'

'And have you come back—as you went—in a rage?'

'Well—you see. That is the kind of fire that keeps alight of its own accord.'

'I believe that some sort of a search was made for this Edmund Gray; but I do not know how long it lasted or who was employed.'

'Detectives are no good. Perhaps the chief didn't care to press the business. Perhaps he learned enough to be satisfied that Checkley was the man. Perhaps he was unwilling to lose an old servant. Perhaps the villain confessed the thing. It all comes back to me fresh and clear, though for eight long years I have not talked with a soul about it.'

'Tell me,' said George, a little out of sympathy with this dead and buried forgery—'tell me where you have been—what you have done—and what you are doing now.'

'Presently—presently,' he replied with impatience. 'I am sure now that I was wrong. I should not have left the country. I should have taken a lodging openly, and waited and looked on. Yes; that would have been better. Then I should have seen that old villain, Checkley, in the dock. Perhaps it is not yet too late. Still—eight years. Who can expect a commissionaire to remember a single message after eight years?'

'Well—and now tell me,' George asked again, 'what you have been doing.'

'The black-sheep always turns up, doesn't he? You learn at home that he has got a berth in the Rocky Mountains; but he jacks it up and goes to Melbourne, where he falls on his feet; but gets tired, and moves on to New Zealand, and so home again. It's the regular round.'

'You are apparently the black-sheep whose wool is dyed white. There are threads of gold in it. You look prosperous.'

'A few years ago I was actually in the possession of money. Then I became poor again. After a good many adventures I became a journalist. The profession is in America the refuge of the educated unsuccessful, and the hope of the uneducated unsuccessful. I am doing as well as journalists in America generally do: I am over here as the representative of a Francisco paper. And I expect to stay for some time—so long as I can be of service to my people. That's all.'

'Well—it might be a great deal worse. And won't you come to Pembroke Crescent with me?'

'When the cloud is lifted: not before. And—George—not a word about me. Don't tell—yet—even Elsie.'

ART IRONWORK.

AMID the increased attention which has of recent years been given to all branches of decorative art, that of the artistic treatment of Iron has not escaped notice. The blacksmith occupied an important position among the craftsmen of the middle ages. The insecurity of life and property, which was one of the chief grievances of the times, made strength of material indispensable, whether to guard the shrine of a saint, or to protect after a more homely fashion the family chest or coffer. The strength and durability of iron led to its use for these defensive purposes from early times. But the workman of the middle ages was not content to allow strength

and ugliness of form to go together, but contrived to breathe a spirit of beauty into his designs without sacrificing the use to which the material was destined. Thus wrought-iron formed the object of much artistic work both in England and abroad. Until coal came into general use, malleable iron was produced direct from the ore with charcoal fuel by continuous working. Sussex was from early times a chief seat of the iron industry. The earliest positive record of the trade there is contained in a grant made by King Henry III. to the town of Lewes in 1266, by which the inhabitants were empowered to raise toll for the repair of the town walls after the battle. Every cart-load of iron destined for sale which came from the neighbouring 'weald' was to pay one penny toll, and every horse-load of iron half that sum. In 1290 a sum of money was paid to a certain Master Henry of Lewes for the ironwork to the monument of Henry III. in Westminster Abbey, which reminds us that talented smiths were brought often from long distances for important works.

In this country, perhaps the oldest existing works in iron are hinges to doors, strengthening bars, handles, escutcheons, lock-plates, and the like. Even the nails were things of beauty. Abroad, the massive doors of the cathedral of Notre-Dame de Paris offer a wonderful example of early ironwork. Probably designed in the twelfth century, the doors are nearly concealed with their decoration of trees and birds, dragons, and other grotesque beings. The door in St George's Chapel, Windsor, is of about the same date. The grotesque knocker on the Sanctuary door of Durham Cathedral, which bears a rather distant resemblance to a lion, is said to be of the twelfth century. The hollows for the eyes may have been formerly filled with crystal or enamel; or, as it has been suggested, the open eyes may have been contrived to emit light from within the church, so as to guide the hapless being seeking sanctuary by night to the welcome haven of safety.

The door of the chapter-house of York Cathedral is a good example of the work of the thirteenth century. It consists of a central stem, and several large scrolls with diminutive leaves branching out in all directions. Some chests in the same cathedral are also finely bound with decorative hinges. Occasionally, hinges were gilt, and not laid directly on the wood, but on skin or scarlet felt. These elaborate fastenings, however, fell into disuse in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when the woodwork of doors became richly moulded and carved. The number of iron pieces on a door furnished the French dramatist Sedaine with the subject of an amusing scene in the play of the *Gageure Imprévue*—brought out in 1768—in which a Marquis, one of the chief characters, bets that he will enumerate all the bits of iron big and little which are employed in the construction of a door—such as lock, screws, nuts, knobs, bars, bolts, and so forth. He succeeded in naming them all except the key, and so eventually lost his bet. The old process of repeatedly forging the iron gave it a great tenacity and ductility, which modern iron, except of the finest quality, does not possess.

In early times, the iron was not actually made to melt, but was separated out and formed into

a lump while in a pasty condition, when it was found to be sufficiently free from carbon to be malleable without further processes. It was then accordingly brought under a heavy tilt-hammer, worked by a cog-wheel and driven by water-power. Sheets of water in the Weald of Sussex and in Kent owe their existence to the manufacture of iron; while other pools and ponds have been drained and transformed into hop gardens or osier beds. Corn-mills, too, often occupy the sites where once the din of the hammers resounded. The iron was eventually formed into bars by beating under the hammer, and then worked into the sizes required by the smith. When this had been done, the artistic part of his work, such as welding, stamping, and chiselling, still remained. In the larger specimens of ancient work some parts are additions entirely welded; others are additions fastened at the ends by bands welded across the groundwork. Sheet-iron, which had been introduced into England by the fourteenth century, saved much labour, and could be elaborately decorated.

Italy in the middle ages led the way in metal-working as well as in other arts. In bronze, the work then produced has never been equalled. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, wrought-iron came into general use for screens, for chapels and tombs, and grills for windows. The screen around the tombs of the Scala family at Verona is composed of a kind of network of quatrefoils, each filled up with a small ladder (*scala*), in allusion to the family name. Several churches in Florence and Siena have magnificent screens of wrought-iron. One of the principal workers of iron of this period was Niccolò Grossi, who was taken under the patronage of Lorenzo de' Medici. Candlesticks, lanterns, cressets, and torch-bearers were produced in large numbers—all of the most artistic designs. Grossi executed four lanterns for the Strozzi Palace at Florence, which were set up in the year 1500; and each cost a hundred florins for workmanship alone. Another artist in iron was Cozzarelli, who flourished at the close of the fifteenth century at Siena, and distinguished himself in designing superb lanterns and torch-holders.

Spain also produced about the same period much beautiful ironwork in the shape of moulded rails or balusters and friezes of pierced and repoussé work, the whole being often plated with silver. The use of metal for pulpits is probably confined to Spain. These are sometimes of bronze, but also of wrought-iron, as in a church at Zamora, and in that of San Gil, at Burgos. Screens were also produced in England of considerable excellence, examples of which are those erected to Bishop West's chapel at Ely, and to Edward IV.'s tomb at Windsor, both made towards the close of the fifteenth century. Iron tracery-work, produced by cutting out patterns in plate and placing one plate over the other, gave richness of effect by means of the play of shadow, and was employed in the construction of the screen to Henry V.'s tomb at Westminster.

Some grill-work also exists in the cathedrals of Canterbury, Winchester, and Chichester. Grills were much produced in France, where ironwork attained to a high degree of excellence. When Charles V. ordered his library to be removed from the Cité, the windows of the Tower of the

Fauconnerie were ornamented with grills 'to keep it from birds and other beasts'. They were used for windows over doors, for balconies, and even for chimneys. It was the expense of the elaborate 'grilles' at Versailles which led to the disgrace of Colbert. The grills to the churches of St-Roch and St-Germain l'Auxerrois furnish matter for much commendation to the newspapers of the time. The grills made for the Palais de Justice in Paris cost as much as two hundred thousand livres. Amateurs took as much interest in these products of the forge as in paintings or bronzes; so much so, that a locksmith named Gérard, who had executed an iron canopy in 1769, put it on view for three days, charging those who would inspect it three livres apiece. This canopy was originally intended for the church of Sainte-Geneviève; but the price asked—fifty thousand livres—proving too much, it was never erected there.

The art of the locksmith was also greatly appreciated in France, kings even taking part in its practical details; like Louis XVI. forgetting for a time the cares of state in the construction of a lock. One of the curiosities of Paris mentioned by Gilbert of Metz in 1422 was a certain house in the Rue Bourdonnais which possessed as many locks as there are days in the year. The lock to a coffer of fifteenth-century work has a representation of the Last Judgment. Philibert de Lorme paid in 1559 to the master locksmith, one Mathurin Bon, as much as six thousand and eleven livres for works executed at Fontainebleau. Louis XIII. amused himself with the art, not only giving his locksmith a pension of three hundred livres, but even setting him apart a room in the new château of St-Germain. In the eighteenth century much fine work was produced. Mercier, in his *Picture of Paris*, exclaims: 'A locksmith among us has become an artist—iron has become as supple as wood.'

Germany in the fifteenth century produced much wrought-iron work of a rather special character, such as the grave-crosses and sepulchral monuments to be seen in the cemeteries of Nuremberg. Iron was also employed for well-canopies, such as that at Antwerp attributed to Quentin Matsys. Originally a blacksmith from Louvain, he came to Antwerp to seek his fortune. There, as the story goes, he fell in love with the daughter of a painter, and, to propitiate the daughter as well as her father, exchanged the anvil for the painter's palette; and before his death in 1531 he was successful in helping to raise the school of Antwerp to a celebrity equal to that of the schools of Bruges and Ghent.

Ironwork was extensively produced at Augsburg—under the fostering care of the Fugger family—taking the shape of brackets projecting from the walls, and grills over fan-lights or in a balcony. Grotesque knockers are also common in Nuremberg. Keys were sometimes elaborately decorated, and the part which is now a common ring was once occupied by little figures in full relief with coats of arms and the like. The French Revolution was the cause of much splendid ironwork being destroyed, when, in 1793, certain provinces had to gather together every available piece of iron to transform into pikes and other weapons. Much of the ironwork of

the Abbey of St-Denis perished in this way; and even in England grills have been sold for old iron because they hid the sculptures in Westminster Abbey.

The greater part of the decoration of grills at the present day is produced by means of stamps or moulds, which are impressed on the iron whilst heated and soft. Supposing a leaf or flower is required, one of the proper form is forged in relief in steel, and then is driven into a larger block of pasty steel shaped like a punch or wedge, thus forming the stamp or die necessary for the purposes of decoration. Leaves, again, can be hammered out and welded on separately. Up to the reign of Henry VIII., grills were architectural in design, Queen Elizabeth's tomb in the Abbey forming one of the first instances of the use of a border of natural flowers—roses—in a tomb-rail of iron. The roses were cut out of sheets of metal, shaped on the edge of some instrument like a vice, and then fixed on by brazing. To make inscriptions, holes are first drilled, and then a very small keyhole saw inserted. After the Fire of London, iron came largely into use for building purposes, and very fine work was produced in the reign of William III. A Frenchman named Tijon published a book of designs in 1693 for the use of smiths, in which appeared the gates which were a little later ordered by the king for Hampton Court, and executed by Huntingdon Shaw, the talented smith, under the general superintendence of Sir Christopher Wren. The beautiful gates of chiselled and polished iron now to be seen in the Louvre are of this period, and were executed from the designs of Daniel Marot, who was architect to William III. of England. Wherever the old-fashioned red brick houses with their tiled roofs and quaint dormer windows are to be seen, there iron staircases, railings, and the like will probably be found, as, for instance, in Lincoln's Inn Fields or Bloomsbury Square and in many suburbs.

Cast-iron is not so susceptible of artistic treatment as the same material when hammered, and the old specimens which have come down to us are, generally speaking, more curious than beautiful. Cast-iron was used for cannon—from the fourteenth century—as well as for grave-slabs, fire-dogs or andirons, firebacks, and the like. One fireback preserved at Bruges is dated 1565, and has two figures three feet six inches in height as supporters to the shield with which it is ornamented. A fireback at Wadhurst, in Sussex, was very elaborate, having, beside the royal arms of France and England quarterly with supporters, the Tudor badge of rose and crown, a crowned shield and ten human figures with monkey or dog-like faces, as well as a couple of swords. Many firebacks have scriptural or classical subjects; but one andiron that has been preserved to us is decorated in a more homely fashion, having on its upper portion a figure in the costume of the time of James I., holding a tobacco pipe in the right hand, and in the left a jug or tankard—the first of which decorations would by no means have pleased the royal author of the *Counterblast*.

Such are some of the various ways in which iron has been treated decoratively from early times, which perhaps may prove not uninteresting

at the present day, which largely into the ornament for grills, fanlights, balustrades, and screens, or for the pretty lamp stands and brackets, in which a return has been made to the early Italian workmanship.

en wrought-iron enters so in the decoration of houses, whether in the form of balustrades, and screens, or for the pretty lamp stands and brackets, in which a return has been made to the early Italian workmanship.

URGENT PRIVATE AFFAIRS.

CHAPTER III.—OPENING THE DRAWING-ROOM OF GARWOOD HOUSE.

'DREAM or fact?—dream or fact?—dream or fact?' thought Nellie Morton, as she lay on the bed of her own room after Mrs Bathurst had left her. Had she heard this man say he was hopelessly ruined? Had she dreamed that the old woman indicated that she, Ellen Morton, could save him? If she had not dreamed, what could the words and gestures of Mrs Bathurst mean? Only one thing—only that this monstrous creature should come by whatever money her father had saved. How was that to be done? Only in one way—by this awful, this monstrous man marrying her!

What a horrible, what an intolerable position was hers! Colonel Pickering had bidden her good-bye, and she had no address for him between the leave-taking and Gibraltar. In all the world she did not know a soul on whom she could rely for help or advice. She thought of her old school, but that was in Yorkshire. Most of her acquaintances in Deighton were connected with the regiment, and on the move with the Colonel. She had never gone a journey by herself, and she felt like a lost wanderer in a desert, or the sole human being on an island where beasts of prey lurked in every shelter.

She was alone in Garwood, alone in London, alone in England, alone in Europe! There was no one to whom she could appeal. She was imprisoned within the high walls of these lonely grounds. She was certain it would be worse than useless to ask assistance of any servant in the house. The old woman who had opened the lodge-gate would, she knew, refuse to let her out. Even if she succeeded in gaining the public road, what could she do there? She could not wander about day and night. She had only a little money in her pocket, and even if she had ten times as much, what could she do with it? She never in all her life had bought food or been across the threshold of an hotel. But what was the use of thinking about liberty? From the grounds of Garwood House she could no more escape than flee to her father in remote Brazil.

Mrs Bathurst had chilled her, had sent the blood back into her heart, until she felt suffocating, until she awoke to shadowy terrors threatening her in distances and silences and spaces of that oppressive house. In any other house the nooks and corners had been no more full of fears than on esplanade or terrace or country lane. Here nooks and corners were the hiding-places from which ghosts fled on one's approach. Here the vast spaces over the stairways were the haunts of shrouded mystery and boding echo.

Mrs Bathurst had chilled her: William Bathurst had made her blood freeze with terror. The hideousness of his appearance stunned her,

and at sound of his monstrous voice and sight of his revolting capers, she had swooned. And then to think—if she could trust her numbed senses—this old woman had indicated that this hideous man was to be her suitor! She who had never heard word of love from man was by a vile conspiracy to be forced into the arms of this loathsome creature, in order that his ruined fortunes might be made whole with her father's money! Surely no one in England could to-day contemplate so odious a crime! She would die, ay, die a thousand deaths of agony before yielding to so hateful a fate.

Could it be that she gathered the real import of what had gone on while she sat half-conscious?

There was no room for doubt. Had not the old woman begun with a reception chillier than December? Had she not told her this William Bathurst would never marry? And then, after learning that her son had lost his money, had she not spoken in terms of affection, nay, of endearment, to the girl, whose presence seemed a burden and an injury an hour before? What more confirmation was needed?

She was the centre of a vile plot, encompassed by inviolate walls, alone, helpless, friendless! Oh, would not merciful death come to deliver her!

Inviolable wall? The grounds were not closed in on all sides by walls—at the foot of the grounds flowed the river!

Nellie rose from the bed. She was deadly pale. She caught up the hat worn that day in the grounds, and stole out of the room, out of the house, and, following the dip of the land, took her way towards the Thames.

When William Bathurst had left the house at the bidding of his mother, the old woman rang the bell and ordered the luncheon things to be taken away. She then crossed the great hall into the large gloomy drawing-room. At ordinary times, months went by without a visit from either herself or her son to this great chamber. The blinds were always kept down, and in spite of the blazing unclouded June sun, only a dim twilight filled the place.

She drew up the blinds. That was her first act towards changing the aspect of the house, as an indication that all within had changed. Up to this day she had her mind made up her son would never marry. This day she made up her mind William should take a wife. She raised the blinds as the first act of preparing the house for her son's marriage.

She had been the inspirer of her husband's speculations in the City, and he left all he died worth to her. This was not the house where her husband died. He bought it a short time before his death, but had never lived in it. The widow let it until her son began to be troubled with those alarming hysterical seizures; then, it being quiet, retired, surrounded by high walls and large grounds, out of the way, and well qualified to keep a secret, she went to live in it herself, taking her son with her.

When mother and son moved into Garwood House, the place was furnished for ordinary family use. Mrs Bathurst had not then decided William should never marry. But as years went on, the air of retirement deepened around the

house, the isolation of its inmates became more strict, until from year's end to year's end no stranger entered its gates.

The raising of the drawing-room window blinds to-day was to let in the dawn of a new era. William had lost all his money, and all her money as well, in those villainous South American speculations. But the very same day that news of the disaster reached London, this girl, Ellen Morton, strayed under their roof with a fortune large enough to save William. Nay, more, the finger of fate pointed indubitably to the match; for, out of the South America which had engulfed William's money, the money of this girl had been rendered into their hands, and the very day which brought ruin to the City from the south brought news from the south of the death of the girl's father, and the departure of the girl's only friends from England, thus leaving this Ellen Morton with her fortune completely in their power.

The old woman knew all her son's affairs save those connected with the speculations she had discountenanced. 'Once you go south of the equator I abandon you,' she had said to him long ago when he first broke loose from her counsel. 'You are not to mention to me any of your affairs in that region of thieves and revolutions. All I will ever hear of South America is that Christopher Morton's money comes safely out of it, and does not go back there to be lost.'

She knew that by this time the amount of Christopher Morton's investments must be thirty or forty thousand pounds. This was not a large fortune, but it ought to be enough to give her son time to recover himself; and she was quite sure William would never again disregard her advice, and that, with the aid of this girl's fortune and her advice, her son would once more be able to hold up his head as a member of the Stock Exchange.

She knew that in the will lodged with Christopher Morton's lawyer the dead engineer had left all his money to his daughter, and appointed her son and Colonel Pickering guardians and trustees. The father now was dead; and the other guardian and trustee would be out of England before morning, and would not be back again until this girl was of age—until she was married.

Mrs Bathurst rang the drawing-room bell, which had not sounded for no one knew how long.

'Let this room be thoroughly done out to-morrow,' she said to the servant; 'and for the future, when the sun is off this side of the house, let the blinds be pulled up.'

While Mrs Bathurst was taking a first step in arrangements for her son's future, that son was hastening back to London to stop disaster in the present. Having once made up his mind to use Christopher Morton's money for his extrication, there was no difficulty in the way, though there was possible danger of the direst kind.

Christopher Morton being dead, and Colonel Pickering as good as out of the country, it was necessary only to produce the signature of the dead man on a certain document, so as to enable William Bathurst to raise money that very evening. There was no need to tell any one in the City that Christopher Morton was dead. In fact, it would cause fatal delay if the news in the

telegram from Brazil got abroad. The message had been forwarded from his office unopened, so he was safe from premature disclosure.

Bathurst had no moral scruple about creating the document he required. It was dangerous work: dangerous work this fabricating of signatures, even of a dead man; and dangerous this concealing of the dead man's death, and dealing with his property as though the signature were genuine and the supposed signatory alive. Bathurst did not in his mind use the word fraud or felony, but he was not blind to the gravity of the act he contemplated.

Morton was dead, the girl was under his roof, the other trustee on his way to India; months of undisturbed possession of the money could be counted on—even if the girl did not become his wife—and in months all could be put right. Even the girl did not know of her father's death, and was not to know of it until there had been time for a letter to come from Brazil.

Truly, as his mother said, fate had played into his hands! If he had been allowed to design the situation, nothing could have been better ordered. Luck! Yes; he believed in luck. He had always been lucky until he touched South America, and the very moment South America proved a ravenous quicksand under his feet, from that self-same South America a hand of succour was stretched forth to him!

A hand of succour stretched forth to him?—or was he stretching forth his hand to rifle the tomb of a friend? Bah! Such thoughts were childish, and could not be of use to a keen man in the City this day of hideous disaster!

He had told his clerks in Langley Court, Fenchurch Street, that he was going to Garwood. He had not said anything about coming back. They did not know whether they should see him again that day or not. When he walked in at five o'clock they were not surprised. That day no one was surprised by anything done in the City.

William Bathurst went straight into his private office and locked the door. In a quarter of an hour he emerged, pale and anxious, and hurried out. That day the banks shut their doors at four as usual, but private offices forgot custom and were open long after closing-time.

In less than half an hour, Bathurst was back, had saved his house, had borrowed money on a signature which was not genuine, and on the faith that Christopher Morton was alive.

Once more he turned his face towards home. In the hurry and excitement of his operations in the City the necessity for doing speedily what he was about prevented thinking. In the cab which took him to the train and in the train that carried him away from town he had plenty of time for reflection.

'Saved!' he thought, as he jumped into the cab. 'Saved!' he thought again as he flung himself into the cushioned corner of the railway carriage. Saved from imminent and complete ruin! How easy it had been! What a trifling effort it cost him to place a secure barrier between his house and destruction! To-morrow, the names of all the houses sucked down in the whirlpool would be known in the City, would be known throughout all the commercial world; and but for the thing he had just done, the

house of William Bathurst would be in that black list!

Favoured by circumstances, and aided by his mother's advice and his own bold vigorous action, he had been able to save himself from bankruptcy—from being posted as a defaulter—he, posted! who had for years held his head so high, and been regarded as a rock of good sense, as a slow-going, money-making speculator! He had kept his dealings in South America to himself. No one need now know that he had burnt his fingers, to say nothing of escaping annihilation in the fire.

True, he had been obliged to run risks; but were the risks worth taking into count? Supposing the worst, were the risks very great? No. For, even if Colonel Pickering were not going abroad, he would be friendly and allow his fellow-trustee to do pretty much as he liked; for the Colonel, no doubt, knew that the dead man had placed unlimited faith in William Bathurst.

When his mother suggested his using this money, she did not take into count the risk he would run. No doubt she had no suspicions there was any risk beyond that of using another man's money without his authority or knowledge. In the hurry and confusion, her notion most likely was that he could get Morton's money as readily as the money standing to his own credit in his own bank. There would be no need to undeceive her. Or, indeed, it might be that she knew exactly what he had been obliged to do.

What! She, his mother, *knew* that he was at that moment a felon! Monstrous! His mother know *he* was a felon! His mother approve—nay, suggest that he should commit a crime!—commit two crimes! Intolerably monstrous! Masculine as her mind was, still first of all she was his mother, and no man ever yet could believe that his own mother would urge him to crime! Ugh! he would think no more of this ghastly side of the affair. He would dwell altogether on the fact that he had been threatened with destruction and had saved himself.

He reached the door of Garwood in profound cogitation. He had resolved to take his attention away from unpleasant aspects of the affair, and yet no sooner did he for a moment forget this resolution, than, like a spring at the release, his mind flew back to the question: Did his mother know what following her advice involved, a crime on his part?

'Where is Mrs Bathurst?' he asked of the servant who opened the door.

'In the drawing-room, sir.'

'In the drawing-room!' cried he, awaking out of his reverie. 'Did you say in the drawing-room?' he asked in astonished incredulity. During all their years in this house she had never awaited him in the drawing-room before.

'Yes, sir; the mistress ordered dinner to be put back, and said that when you came you were to be good enough to go to the drawing-room, where she is alone.'

He hastened across the hall, and entered the room which he had not seen for—months—years. His mother was sitting in the arm of an old-fashioned sofa at one of the windows. She motioned him to shut the door and come near her.

'You are surprised to find me here. I have drawn up the blinds in honour of Miss Morton—

in honour of your future wife. Sit down here.' She pointed to the other end of the sofa. 'How did you get on in the City? Did you arrange everything satisfactorily?'

'Yes. There was no hitch.' He sat down at the other end of the sofa.

'I am glad of that. I am greatly pleased you acted so promptly. You have taken all means to ensure safety?'

'Oh yes, all the means.'

'And there is no going back upon what you have done? Even suppose you thought of changing your mind now, you could not go back?'

'No. I have drawn Morton's money, and the proceeds have been paid away against my undischarged liabilities of to-day.' What could she mean by asking could he go back? It seemed clear from this that his most horrible suspicion was true. It was now plain she must know he could not have extricated himself without crime. This was terrible.

'I am glad to hear you cannot go back, that you are now obliged to go on towards prosperity once more. Something has occurred since which made me for a moment fear you might be able to go back upon what we this morning resolved to do.'

'And you think if I could I would? What is it that has happened?' The cold sweat broke out on his forehead. That morning he had been distracted, driven frantic, made half mad by the things that had occurred in the City. Never in his life had he felt fear until now. He felt cold with fear, clammy with fear, sick with fear.

'An unexpected event has occurred here since you left.'

'What is it?' He was not sure that his voice uttered the question.

'Colonel Pickering came back.'

'Why?'

'He found a telegram for him announcing Morton's death, when he got to town. We never thought of that. We never thought Morton would have said that Colonel Pickering, also, must be telegraphed to if he died.'

'No; we never thought of that. Telegrams from Brazil are so dear, I fancied one would be enough.'

'Yes; we never could have been prepared for this. Does it make much difference?'

'Perhaps. I do not know; I cannot say yet. What has taken place here?' He groaned and wiped the cold sweat from his forehead.

'He came, not thinking we had word of Morton's death. I did not tell him we had a telegram.'

'Thank Heaven for that!'

'He said he got the cable, and ran out to break the news to Miss Morton. I sent a servant for her. She was not in her room. The servant supposed she had gone into the grounds, as her hat had disappeared. Colonel Pickering said he would go out to look for her.' She pointed to the window. 'He had only just left me when you knocked. Does it make much difference?'

'I thought this man was leaving London to-day?'

'He says if he can get away by a train near eleven to-night he can catch the ship.—I asked you, does it make much difference, and you have not answered me. I ask you again, Does it make much difference?'

'It may.' Again he groaned and wiped his forehead.

The piercing, dark, inscrutable eyes of the woman were fixed inexorably on his face. 'Much?' she asked. 'Very much?'

'It may.' He loosed his collar at the neck and stared. His face was ghastly, his jaw dropped.

For a minute silence was unbroken; each sat regarding the other. In that brief interval he knew that she must know all. In that brief interval he knew more than associating with her a lifetime had taught him. In that brief interval the heart of each was revealed to the other more plainly than ever words could tell. In that brief interval he knew she valued as dross the wealth he had believed she worshipped for itself; and that for her heart, he, and he alone, the ugly duckling, the Crocodile, was the only gold she saw or worshipped. In that brief interval he knew she had devoted all her life to him, because she had come to the conclusion no other woman would ever love him. In that brief interval he fathomed her plan of concentrating all his mind on getting money in order that he might have a pursuit which would not stale with time—a pursuit that would grow in interest and become more ardent and absorbing with time—a pursuit which successfully followed would make him powerful and respected in spite of his grotesque figure and his odious face. In that brief interval the son saw through the mystic robe of the sibyl deep in the bosom of the woman, the heart of the mother blazing with the intolerable glory of its unselfish love.

Blinded and awed, like Moses by the fiery bush, he was mute.

'If it is too much,' she said, 'you will try to remember I am a mother, and all I did I did for love, and it is hard for a mother to help loving too much.'

He held out his hand to her, but could not speak.

She caught his hand, and sinking upon her knees, raised it to her lips in a transport of gratitude, crying to herself: 'He will forgive me! He forgives me even now!'

At that moment Bathurst saw a man running towards the house with something in his hand. He raised his mother hastily and flung open the door into the grounds.

The man shouted: 'I cannot find Miss Morton. She is not in the grounds. I found this, her hat, on the bank. The hat is torn, and there are signs that some one has fallen into the river.'

MEDALS AND MEDAL-COLLECTING.

MOST persons—even if without any claim to shine in what is known as 'numismatology'—take an interest in commemorative medals, and sometimes envy those who have earned a right to wear such popular tokens of distinction. Collecting war medals as an amusement is of comparatively recent date. Before the reign of Queen Victoria, a soldier or sailor who wore a decoration was an individual who commanded special notice. With the exception of Waterloo veterans, who were always conspicuous when wearing their much coveted medal, the rest of the army was undecorated. The study of the subject, which has of late years sprung into existence, has had

the effect of unearthing many curious old decorations, and bringing to light some that ran a great risk of being lost in oblivion or consigned to the melting-pot. The best known pioneer in this now favourite pursuit is Mr J. Harris Gibson, to whom all collectors are indebted for a useful little book on Medals, published in 1886. A still more important contribution to the literature of the subject is the handsome volume now prepared, on behalf of Messrs Spink, by Captain Tancred, of the Scots Greys, a well-known authority, who has, by special permission, dedicated his work to Her Majesty. The three largest private collections in this country are those of Colonel Murray of Polmaise; Colonel the Hon. H. F. Eaton, Grenadier Guards; and Captain Whitaker, 5th Fusiliers. Captain Tancred confesses, with scarcely concealed regret, that England has not been so zealous in commemorating the memory of great naval and military deeds as some other nations. The Romans were prodigal in conferring honorary distinctions for heroic achievements, and although no pecuniary value was attached to them, yet the recipients of these distinctions were regarded with peculiar favour.

English medals, as decorative rewards for bravery in the field or at sea, are comparatively modern. Tradition points to Edward III. as the founder of the Order of the Garter, intended, as Elias Ashmole tells us, as a restoration of King Arthur's Round Table. Unfortunately, however, the royal statutes defining and regulating the position and conduct of the noble fraternity have perished, and their places have been supplied by fabulous stories. It was in the time of Henry VIII. that the ordinances of this renowned Order assumed their present characteristics, and from that period an authentic history exists regarding it. There is much obscurity in the notices of what apparently are honorary badges struck in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. There is little doubt, however, that some of these were worn as decorations. In many instances they have loops or apertures for attaching them to the coat; but as there is little to show for what special purpose the medals were made, their interest and value are necessarily curtailed.

The magnificent star and jewel given by Queen Elizabeth to Sir Francis Drake, on his return from his memorable voyage round the world, is one of the few decorations of this early date that can be verified. It is preserved amongst other mementoes of the great circumnavigator at the old family residence of the Drakes, Nutwell Court, Devon. The star is in the form of a sun, and has rubies set in the rays, with opals and diamonds interspersed in the border around the inner portion; an orb is engraved in intaglio, emblematical of sovereignty. The badge or jewel is richly enamelled in red, yellow, blue, and green; and in the border are set diamonds and rubies. A splendid cameo, cut in onyx, occupies the centre, believed to have been executed by the celebrated Valerio Vincenteno. The representation of two heads is the subject of this cameo. One is what might be termed a classical head with regular features, typical of Europe; the other has the features of a negro, and is intended to represent the black races of the world. At the back is an exquisite miniature of Elizabeth. The same queen offered a gold medal and chain to the

superior officers after the defeat of the Armada; but if she had laid out her money with more judgment, she might have recompensed all the crews in less precious metal. Charles I. gave decorations for valour by fits and starts. An interesting medal is still in existence said to have been presented by him on the scaffold to Bishop Juxon. The happy innovation of perfect regularity of distribution was introduced by Cromwell after Dunbar, but this example was not followed by his immediate successors. It was not until Waterloo, one hundred and sixty-five years afterwards, that a similar distribution took place. It was not until long after most of the veterans of the Peninsular War had gone to their graves that a tardy national gratitude thought of commemorating their achievements in imperishable bronze.

At times the scandal of official neglect led to attempts to supply the lack of national recognition by private liberality. Private persons were permitted to offer medals at their own expense to the heroes of some of our most famous actions. There was actually a private medal for the Nile and another for Trafalgar itself. In the latter case, Mr Boulton, the partner of James Watt, was authorised, with the king's 'warmest approbation of so laudable a design,' to provide a silver medal for the officers and a pewter one for the men; but the valorous tars did not appreciate it, and most of them almost immediately threw overboard the pewter medals, which they thought insulting as a reward after so severe a battle. In the case of the battle of the Nile, the medal was presented by Mr Davison, a personal friend of Lord Nelson. William III. and Mary recompensed bravery even in defeat. After the engagement off Bantry Bay, in which the French successfully repulsed the English, Admiral Herbert was created a peer, and two captains were knighted, while every seaman received a gratuity of ten shillings. After Russell's victory at La Hogue, the government voted £30,000 to be divided amongst the seamen, and gold medals were presented to the senior officers. It is worthy of record that at this period heroes in humble life also met with due recognition, as in several instances fishermen received gold medals and chains as a reward for gallant deeds. Queen Anne, as a mark of her favour and approbation, granted to the principal officers of Admiral Dilke's squadron large gold medals to commemorate their intrepid conduct in the destruction of a large fleet of merchant vessels, together with a numerous and well-appointed convoy.

George II. conferred medals and chains on officers who greatly distinguished themselves. In his reign, medals were struck and presented to commanders who were present at the battle of Culloden. Some of these are still preserved in families and treasured as heirlooms. During the long wars between England and France in the reign of George III., not only did private individuals, as already noted, give medals at their own expense, but commanding officers on certain occasions also conferred them. This was the case at the close of the ever-memorable defence of Gibraltar, when General Eliott, afterwards Lord Heathfield, who commanded the garrison during that eventful siege, caused medals to be struck at his own expense in gold and silver, which were presented to every officer and soldier of the Hano-

verian brigade who formed part of the garrison. This medal bears on the reverse the word 'Furnace,' with an engraving of a sort of kitchen range, and below this the words, 'Spaniards defeated by red-hot shot at Gibraltar, September y^e 13th, 1782.' To George IV. we owe the Waterloo medal and its liberal distribution. The peaceful reign of William IV. afforded no occasion for the giving of war medals, but the well-behaved soldier in quarters was not forgotten. The long-service and good-conduct medal for both army and navy was instituted by this monarch; and thenceforth private orders of merit and good conduct were practically done away with, the old maxim being restored and enforced that the throne is the fountain of honour. During the reign of our present Queen acts of gallantry have been rewarded with numerous decorations; nor was Her Majesty unmindful of those veterans who had served their country for years long previous to her accession. In 1847 a general order was issued that the survivors of the wars from 1793 to 1814 should be distinguished by the grant of a medal, with clasps representative of the different actions in which they had been engaged.

English medals have always had more interest from their bearing on events than as works of art; but in recent years their style has improved as their purposes have extended. No longer confined to commemorate great naval and military deeds, they are used to signalise the most varied occasions, from a royal jubilee to victories in the spheres of sport, science, or scholastic achievement. But as in our own time these rewards are given, for instance, by the Royal Humane Society to celebrate individual heroism in the saving of life, so in former days they were sometimes, though rarely, given as an incentive to peace as well as by way of reward in war. Thus, during the French war, provoked by encroachments on our North American colonies, the Society of Friends in Philadelphia formed themselves into an Association for the purpose of encouraging peace with the Indian tribes. Silver medals were struck in 1757, and presented to Indians by the Association. These showed on the obverse side a laureated bust of George II.; on the reverse, a white man and an Indian seated beneath a tree at opposite sides of a fire; the calumet of peace is passing between them, and the sun is shining above. Although not artistic, for the representation of the sun is like a full-blown chrysanthemum, this medal is of much value, being exceedingly rare. During the American War of Independence it was considered politic for England to be on terms of friendship with the North American Indians. Large and handsome medals were therefore struck for presentation to the chiefs or great men of the tribes who had rendered good service to George III. On the obverse side this medal shows a bust of the king in armour and with laurel wreath; the reverse side represents an American Indian and a white man sitting together under a tree; the Indian in the act of presenting his pipe to his companion in token of peace and friendship. In the background are Indian wigwams, and above is the legend, 'Happy while United.' The loop for suspension is significant, being an eagle's wing and the calumet of peace placed crosswise. Many years afterwards

Mr Catlin found an Indian chief who was still wearing this medal, and who was particularly proud of the fact that he had kept the king's face bright by wearing it next his skin.

AN UNLOOKED-FOR TURN.

CHAPTER II.—CONCLUSION.

BIRD went straight out, as he said this, leaving the master of the house terribly angry, yet with a strange startled feeling which he would hardly permit himself to acknowledge—a foreboding that he had not seen or heard the last of this man or his claim.

'He has left his papers, has he?' he exclaimed. 'I will throw them into the fire, to begin with.' But although he spoke thus, he knew in his secret heart, even as he stretched out his hand for the papers, that he should not deal with them in any such fashion; nor did he. He read them through, and as he laid each one down, uttered some ejaculation of contempt; but he was unusually abstracted and nervous when he sat down to supper with his wife, to whose questions he merely replied that he had a bad headache.

His solicitors, Messrs Hinger and Barkman, were surprised by a call from Mr Dudley Starbert-Smithers on the next morning as soon as their office was open. He entered on his business with a laugh half contemptuous, half apologetic, for troubling them in such a matter. Throwing down the papers left with him by Mr Silas Bird, he said: 'Give this fellow such a rap on the knuckles as will teach him better manners,' closing his speech with another laugh, intended to be scornful, but which perhaps had in it an unsound ring, for old Mr Hinger looked curiously at his client over the rim of his gold spectacles.

The lawyer glanced through the papers, and promised to attend to them at once. 'They would be very serious, if genuine originals could be furnished,' he said; 'but the man is probably doing this to avenge himself by a malicious hoax for the part he must know you took in the prosecution.'

After further conversation, in which Mr Dudley may have shown more anxiety than he intended, he rode off; and Mr Hinger, the papers still in his hand, sought his partner, Mr Barkman, with a face expressive of anything but cheerfulness.

What steps these gentlemen would have taken, it is difficult to say; but fresh events decided for them. Their client rode over again in the afternoon, bringing with him a letter he had just received—a formidable legal affair, from an attorney of low standing, but of great repute for his sharpness; and this was actually the preliminary to a lawsuit. Stated plainly, Silas Bird declared that he was a near relative of Mrs Edwy Starbert—he claimed, indeed, that she was his daughter—and had stood as godfather when her son was christened. That this child being puny and sickly, Mrs Edwy had never cared for it, and so had given Silas Bird twenty pounds to take charge of it for good and all. That he, Bird, had done so, and went away from London before the death of Edwy, of which event he had heard; but he had not known of the death of the senior Mr Starbert, nor of his accession to an

estate, nor of his change of name, so had not known the position the child was entitled to assume. During the late prosecution, he had learnt all these things, and on behalf of the child, he, as the guardian, the mother having since died, claimed its rights. To avoid litigation, he would accept half the Starbert and Smithers property, if an agreement were arrived at without going into court. He furnished a number of references, certificates and the like, into which Messrs Hinger and Barkman were to inquire. In connection with these documents the firm engaged two first-rate detectives; and in connection with them, it may also be said, the firm had the most serious misgivings.

Every step taken, every additional scrap of information obtained, made Mr Dudley's case look less hopeful. It was shown beyond all doubt that a son had been born to Edwy of his marriage, and what was of almost more importance, it was proved that the child had been given to a man who was conclusively identified as this very Silas Bird. The woman married by poor Edwy was certainly Caroline Bird; so this part of the story also was confirmed. All this was absolutely beyond dispute; and it was therefore no wonder that Hinger and Barkman, while putting the best face on the matter possible, counselled the buying off of Mr Bird, if only, as they phrased it, for the sake of peace and quietness.

This counsel was naturally unpalatable to Mr Dudley, and he tried to carry matters with a high hand; but this bravado was only on the surface. The legal proceedings had been fairly commenced, and the 'Remarkable Discovery of a Lost Heir' had already furnished paragraphs to the local papers. Dudley strove to meet all inquiries with a laugh, professing to see only absurdity and swindling in the whole transaction; but when at home, he was dreadfully dispirited, and showed that he feared the worst. He felt that he could have challenged the result with more courage, but for the birth of his son, the heir to his estates, who was to have such a distinguished career, a career his father had pictured a thousand times over. How bitterly Dudley regretted that he had not decided upon a plan which had been much in his mind when he left Churchborough—to sell the whole of his property and go to America. Had he done this, he could have laughed at the claim which now looked so dangerous.

The hostile solicitor had made one or two overtures for a compromise; but Hinger and Barkman had no authority to negotiate, and so these fell through. The firm still advised their client to effect some arrangement; but he obstinately preserved his swaggering defiance, or attempted to do so, until all at once he collapsed. By this time the suit had progressed so far that the action was entered for trial at the county court. The final reports of the detectives had been received, and these were hopelessly against Mr Dudley's interest, every shred of doubt as to Bird's having been entrusted with Edwy's child being removed; and then, as intimated, Dudley collapsed. As all such men would do, he went into the other extreme, and gave his solicitors carte blanche to settle the suit upon any terms, even though he had to divide the estate, as

Mr Bird had suggested in his friendly call at Dudley's house; but the day was now gone by. Mr Bird's lawyer was now too confident to abate the smallest portion of the claim, and took, no doubt, a keen professional pleasure in loftily repelling the advances of Hinger and Barkman, who had always held aloof from and assumed to look down upon their present antagonist.

War to the knife, then, was all that was left to him, and Dudley became at once a depressed and broken-spirited man. He rarely stirred out of his own house, where he would sit for hours alone with his infant son, who was just beginning to prattle, and the father's brow grew gloomier day by day. It was dreadful to think that this bright child, who had done so much to relieve and redeem his father's life, who had been regarded as the heir to such fair estates, and whose future was scarcely ever out of Dudley Starbert's mind—no, not for a single hour since his birth—that he should be disinherited, should be a comparative outcast, should be ousted to make room for such a successor.

Rumours of great festivities in the house to which Mr Silas Bird had removed were now afloat, and much was said of the strange company he entertained. His chief friend and adviser appeared to be the head-clerk of the lawyer who supported his claim, and this clerk was a man of anything but a good character. His employer was by no means of high standing, and had probably never been engaged in so important or respectable a matter before; but the clerk was reported to have been more than once an inmate of a jail. However, this signified little to Dudley, who saw his ruin impending, the catastrophe drawing closer day by day. Even his own lawyer hardly pretended to have much hope now, and so it was immaterial who or what was the agent of his downfall. It became a very serious question as to whether he should go to trial at all; his decision was pressed for, as the time had come when counsel must be engaged; and as Sir Homer Vickers, the Solicitor-general, and Mr Julius Lance, the eminent Q.C., were the barristers proposed, the outlay, especially if for a certain loss, would be alarming. The brooding, morose Dudley was scarcely ever seen out of his own house, while each day the hopelessness of his position became more evident.

He was seated in his study one evening, listening to the wind and rain against the windows, drooping forward as he sat at his table, and trying to think rather than thinking. He had something to think of, for he had just concluded an interview with Mr Barkman, who had candidly told him that if Mr Silas Bird could only establish in court the exact facts which his, Barkman's, own agents had advised him were indisputable, no talent on Dudley's side could avail him a tittle; and indeed, the briefer and less stubbornly the battle was fought, the better for him. In any case, the next day must settle the engagement of the eminent counsel, and Mr Smithers—Dudley never meant to call himself Smithers after the trial—must give a cheque for six hundred guineas, this being the lowest amount for which their services could be secured. His mood was despondent, and he felt an almost irresistible inclination to abandon the struggle, gather together all that was left of his own—of

his boy's property, he thought—and go clear away. He had heard of great successes in Australia by those who could raise as much capital as he could still command, and surely that would be better—

A ring at the door-bell was heard. What other visitors could be coming on such a night? It was the morbid irritation of his nerves of course which produced the feeling; but he seemed to know, as of a certainty, that this peal was connected with the business which was haunting and almost maddening him. The servant appeared, and asked if he would see a lady who declined to give her name, but said she had called upon urgent business. Any affair should be urgent, indeed, which would bring a woman on foot, as it seemed she was, through the falling torrents; so she was shown in. She was of course wrapped up; but she laid aside her hood and shawl, and as she seated herself, Dudley saw that she was a young woman; but her face was haggard, harshly lined, and darker than is often seen in England. The gentleman fancied he had some dim remembrance of this face, but could by no means recall where he had seen it. He began a question, asking as to what his visitor wished to see him upon; but she interrupted him.

'I can see you do not recollect me,' she began.

He started, for he knew the voice at once—knew the speaker, and a wild, half-desperate hope sprang up in his mind instantly.

'You knew me as Caroline Starbert,' she resumed, 'the wife and widow of your brother Edwy. I am now the widow of Thomas Meadows of the royal artillery. I have been reported as dead myself, and have indeed gone through trouble enough to kill most women; but as you see, I am here alive and strong, although a good deal scorched by the Bengal sun. I am here to tell you something of interest. You were unkind to me in my distress, when I had not been a week a widow. It was by your influence I was left almost penniless, to do the best I could in the world.'

'I assure you that—that I did not—could not,' began Dudley. He was unable to frame his excuse without faltering, for the woman spoke the truth.

She saved him some embarrassment by interrupting him. 'So you see,' she said, 'it is not from gratitude I come to you. However, you did not afterwards know that I had a feeble, crippled boy to support.'

'I swear I did not!' exclaimed Dudley; 'I sincerely wish I had known it.'

'Well, in this boy's name—mark what I say,' continued the woman—'in his name, Silas Bird, a relative of my family, but a disgrace to it, claims your estates. My coming home is annoying to him of course; he had given out that I was dead, and perhaps he really believed it. In any case, I was to know nothing about his plans till after his success, when he would not have cared for all I could do. I am—or would be—the rightful guardian of my child, and could at once have taken him from Silas, who would then have no shadow of interest in the matter. However, I proposed perfectly fair terms. I offered to take a fourth—himself and the boy to have the same each, and the parties behind the scenes to take the rest. But he laughed at me—the fool! It

would have been more like him, more like a man who delights in falsehood and deceit, to have promised, and then have tried to cheat me afterwards. But no! As if he was already lord and master, he carries it with a high hand, and says I may have ten shillings a week, or a fifty-pound note down—and this if I behave myself! Do you know why he thinks this good enough for me?

'No,' replied her hearer; his mouth had grown so dry and parched that he could scarce gasp out the syllable.

'Because, he says, I have nothing to do with the scheme,' pursued the woman. 'And he is right. I have not. When you prosecuted him, or caused him to be prosecuted, it is all the same, he got hold of a lawyer's clerk, a worse man than himself, if possible. He told this man how I had entrusted my boy to him, to bring up in the country, as he was so delicate, with his own little son, about the same age. This clerk, hearing all his story, showed him how to make his fortune; and, through him, his employers agreed to find the money for all expenses. Perjury, of course, had to be freely dealt in; but I fancy Silas Bird was used to that.'

'Why perjury?' asked Dudley, to whom the woman's story was growing to be of intense interest.

'Because the same fever which killed his wife carried off my poor boy!' was the startling reply. 'He lies in a cemetery near Liverpool; and the child now brought forward is Silas Bird's own—neglected and treated as an encumbrance for years, but of importance now. Silas Bird's claim was easily worked. There were plenty of persons who could swear that he had taken charge of my child, and were also ready to swear to this being the same—honestly enough, on their parts. They thought they were right, and had never heard of his son or of the death of mine. In fact, everything turned out easier than he and his friends had expected; and if he had not sent me an account of my boy's death and funeral, I should have known no better than others; or if my husband had not died, and so caused my return to England, all would have gone well with Silas. But above all, if he had not arranged to cheat me—if he had not sneered at me and laughed at my pleas, I tell you candidly he might have done his worst, as I owed you no gratitude. I have done you a good turn, however; what will you do for me?'

Dudley opened his lips to reply; but ere he uttered a syllable, to the astonishment and not a little to the alarm of his visitor, he burst into an hysterical fit of tears and sobbing, the first time any one had seen an approach to such emotion in the hard selfish Dudley; but the reaction was too great. The woman rose to approach him; but he waved her off, controlled himself by a great effort, and then spoke as collectedly as before.

His promises were ample, and fully secured the partisanship of the woman. But the rest of their conversation need not be detailed here.

Ere she left, a plan had been decided upon; and as Dudley was not the man to linger over his vengeance, he was in the private room of the stipendiary magistrate at the police court as soon as it was open on the next morning, as was also Mrs Meadows, his visitor of the overnight. The

magistrate was not a little startled on hearing the latter's story, and at once issued warrants for the apprehension of Silas Bird and his confederate, the lawyer's clerk. It would clearly be impossible to prove that the latter's employer had a guilty knowledge of the conspiracy, although there could be no great doubt on the matter.

But the clerk's plans had been better arranged than they had suspected. He must have had an ally at the police court, and provided by a convenient act of treachery for even such a contingency as this, for the warrants were not executed, inasmuch as Silas Bird and the clerk each disappeared from the town that morning, and were never again seen therein, nor was any trace of them discovered.

The poor little boy who was to have been used as the chief instrument in the fraud was left to the mercy of the parish or of any one who chose to befriend him. To the credit of Dudley, be it said, the poor child did not lack a friend. He provided for the little fellow, and was not without a reward in the gratitude and good conduct of his protégé; nor without a greater reward in his own increased comfort. Perhaps his recent trial had softened him; it is certain that he lived more happily with his wife, and indeed he was heard to declare more than once that Silas Bird had done him a good rather than an ill turn.

The unlucky widow, Mrs Meadows, was offered a comfortable allowance by Dudley; but she preferred a sum down, and with this potent attraction, found no difficulty in captivating a third husband, with whom, for the second time, she tried her fortune in a foreign clime, this time in Australia. So much Mr Starbert-Smithers heard of her; but no further tidings ever reached him, and he could hardly be expected to repine at this result.

A SPRING CHANSON.

The glad Spring-tide is here again;
The thrushes sing all day;
We've violets in the sheltered glen,
And gorse-bloom on the brae;
Along a green and daisied world,
The lights and shadows flit;
The cherry-trees with buds are pearled,
The crocus lamps are lit.

From gnarled apple-boughs the buds
Of perfumed white and red
Are peeping forth; in scented woods,
The wind-flower lifts its head;
In lonely swamp and hollow springs
The wild marsh marigold;
Beneath the flow'ring currant, sings
A blackbird gay and bold.

The shimmering sunbeams sport and play
Upon the beeches tall,
And rest on the laburnums gay
Beside the garden wall.
Oh, glad Spring-time; from shore to shore
Your gifts are scattered free,
And best of all, you bring once more
My true love back to me!

M. ROCK.

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THE HIGHEST RAILWAY IN THE WORLD.

WHEN the locomotive steam-engine was first thought of, it was considered that smooth wheels on smooth rails would not give the requisite amount of friction or adhesion so as to secure a due power of haulage. Rack rails and toothed wheels were therefore at first provided; and it was due to the ingenious William Bedley, who in 1813 patented his 'Puffing Billy,' that experiments were made to prove the opposite. In some mountain railways, however, such as those of the Mont Cenis and Righi, the rack and pinion system has been used by preference to the smooth rail. Another mistaken notion which experience has since disproved was, that it would be necessary to have the lines laid as nearly level as possible; while now it is well known that an engine and carriages with smooth wheels will ascend a very considerable acclivity. The more level a line is, the more economical of course is the working of it; at the same time, it is long since it was ascertained that this quality was not an indispensable element in the making of railways. Some railway lines, indeed, mount very great heights; but that one which outstrips them all is the Central Railway of Peru, which crosses the Andes at the height of 15,635 feet above sea-level—or, in other words, a height equal to the summit of Mont Blanc.

The Peruvian railways are mostly short, generally running from the coast inland to the foot of the Andes. The line, however, from Callao and Lima to Oroya—now known as the Central Railway—is, with the exception of the Southern, longer than all the others, though the distance between its two extremities is after all only one hundred and thirty-six miles. But before the railway could be made to cross the mountain ridge at the great elevation above given, immense difficulties had to be overcome. It has been described as threading the intricate gorges of the Andes by a winding path along the edges of precipices, through tunnels, and over bridges that

seem suspended in the air. The portion between Chicla and Oroya, a distance of but fifty miles, contains no fewer than sixteen tunnels; the highest tunnel—that which crosses the Andes at the height of Mont Blanc, and known as the Galera Tunnel—being over 1500 yards in length.

The Central Railway of Peru has been constructed under other than engineering difficulties. It was begun in 1870, and for a time the work went forward well; but in consequence of the disastrous war with Chili, the Government of the country was unable to carry out the great public works then in hand. Many millions of money had been raised by loan in England; but interest not having been paid upon this for some years, an arrangement was made by which the bondholders were to carry on certain portions of these public works. That arrangement, known as the Grace-Donoughmore Contract, was finally ratified in the beginning of 1890, under which arrangement the Foreign Bondholders released Peru of all the responsibility for the 1870 and 1872 debts, on condition that all the railways of the State should be ceded to them for a period of sixty-six years, the bondholders further undertaking to complete and extend the existing railways. It is therefore under their auspices, associated as they now are under the title of the Peruvian Corporation, Limited, that the railways of the country are being brought to completion. A sum of nearly five millions sterling had up to last year been spent upon the construction of the Central; and as it is expected to be completed by the middle of this year, a wide tract of country, rich in various kinds of minerals and other articles of commerce, will thus be made accessible to European and indeed world-wide enterprise.

The principal engineering structure in connection with this railway was the Verrugas Bridge. This bridge, which was built in 1872, was at the time of its erection the highest in existence; but unfortunately, it was destroyed by a cloud-burst in the spring of 1889, and a second has since been erected on the same site.

The first Verrugas Bridge was 575 feet long,

and consisted of three iron piers or towers connected by what are called Fink trusses; the western pier being 179 feet high, the centre one 252 feet high, and the eastern pier 146 feet. The bridge spans an abrupt and rocky ravine which dips deeply to the centre, through which a small stream flows; hence the great irregularity in the height of the piers or towers. The bridge, considering its altitude and the nature of the structure, was built in a very short time—only ninety-five days, it is said, having elapsed between the arrival of the ironwork at Callao and the completion of the structure. According to 'The Engineering and Mining Journal,' the engineer in charge of the construction, Mr L. L. Buck, of New York, succeeded in erecting the towers entirely without scaffolding, this being accomplished by passing four cables over the chasm, and putting 'travellers' on them, from which the ironwork for the piers was lowered member by member. It is added that Mr Buck was the originator of the system.

He also devised an ingenious method of accurately locating the piers, necessary on account of the great roughness of the situation. For this purpose, after the position of each pier had been located by triangulation, a steel tape long enough to reach from abutment to abutment (575 feet) was suspended from temporary trestles over a level stretch of ground, the ends of the tape being brought to a definite tension by suspended weights, and the position of the piers as laid out on the level ground carefully marked upon it. It was then suspended over the chasm under exactly similar conditions, and sights were taken from the points below, located for the piers by triangulation, to the marked points on the tape, and the accuracy of the instrumental work thus proved.

For a period of seventeen years the bridge admirably served the purpose for which it had been constructed; but there was one defective element in the plan of its erection. The central pier rested in the bottom of the ravine; consequently, when on the 23d of March 1889 a cloud-burst took place in the vicinity, and an immense volume of water, mingled with earth and stones, was precipitated down the ravine, the central tower could not resist the pressure. It was swept away, and carried with it almost the whole of the structure. It is not related that any accident to life or limb was involved in the destruction of the bridge. Its fall greatly impeded the traffic on the railroad; but a temporary wire cable was thrown across the chasm, by which, in a swinging carriage, passengers and light freight could be transferred from one side of the gap to the other.

Before taking leave of the old bridge altogether, it must be noted that the Verrugas stream which it crossed, and from which the bridge derived its name, has given name also to a new disease. Few, says one writer on the subject, who have read the old accounts of the construction of the bridge, can hear the word 'Verrugas' without associating it with the dread disease which bears its name and which carried off so many men. It is generally believed that it came from drinking the water from the Verrugas stream, as the disease is only local, not being known beyond two miles up or down the Rimac Valley. It was marked by fever, rheumatic pains, lack of appe-

tite, and breaking out of terrible warts, especially on the chest, which bled on the slightest provocation, and often resulted in death. Another writer says that the disease appears in the form of immense warts on the face and body, occasioning much internal pain, and is attributed by some authorities to the turning over of fresh soil, and by others to injurious properties in the water in the neighbourhood. 'It may frequently be seen disfiguring the faces of the workmen here; and during the erection of the bridge, as many as eighteen daily are said to have succumbed to it. Most passers through are careful in the matter of drinking water, and take only that which has been boiled.'

Soon after the collapse of the old bridge, the Peruvian Government took steps to replace it by a better and more durable structure. The work was again entrusted to Mr Buck, who this time avoided the weakness of the former bridge, by doing away with the central pier resting in the bottom of the gully, and by having only two piers instead of three. These two piers spring from the rocky sides of the chasm, leaving the channel of the stream quite clear, the centre span of the bridge being therefore 285 feet in length. The bridge is for a single line of rails, and is designed to carry as a safe load two locomotives of 97,000 pounds each, with freight cars weighing 3000 pounds per running foot, and to resist a wind pressure of fifty pounds per square foot, thus ensuring a large factor of safety. The weight of iron in the new bridge is 700 tons, and the cost was something like £100,000. The new bridge was completed in the beginning of last year.

A lady, Miss E. B. Clark, who has recently travelled in this region, has, in her *Twelve Months in Peru* (London: T. Fisher Unwin), given some striking pictures of the hills and valleys through which the Central Railway runs—the Sierra or Central region of Peru, 'where fertile valleys occur, where precious metals are found, and where the gentle llama finds its home.'

At fifty miles inward, or eastward, from Lima, the railway reaches 4949 feet above the ocean level; and after crossing the Verrugas bridge and reaching Matucana, the traveller finds himself at 7788 feet above the level of the sea. At Chila the height attained is 12,220 feet; and here, what is called *sorroche*, or the difficulty of breathing at high altitudes, assails the traveller. 'A headache, with a weighty feeling on the brow, vomiting, and breathlessness, are the usual symptoms of *sorroche*; although, in its severer forms, it causes fainting-fits, bleeding at the nose and ears. Stout people, as a rule, succumb most readily to its attacks; and garlic and patience are the best remedies for all.' After the lapse of a few days, however, the health is generally better in the mountains than on the coast; although it is never possible to undertake much physical exertion there, unless, adds the lady, 'one chances to be Sierra born and bred.' Any one who remembers M. Saussure's experiences on his, the first, ascent of Mont Blanc, and the experiences of other Alpine climbers since, will quite understand how this may be. In crossing the Andes by the highest tunnel of all—that nearly 16,000 feet above sea-level—this feeling of oppression must be still more painful.

To ascend by this line is one thing; to descend is another. 'A low hand-car, drawn by gravity,' says the lady we quote from, 'is despatched from Chila about fifteen minutes in advance of the train, to clear the line of fallen pieces of rock that threaten to impede its downward course. These hand-cars travel at the rate of about forty-five miles an hour down steep inclines, and round such frequent curves, as to cause the uninitiated many tightenings of the heart-strings as they dwell upon the fact that a tiny piece of rock, a skirt entangled in the wheels, a dog, a cow, or any other animal, may at a moment's notice upset the toy vehicle, and usher all its inmates down a precipice and into eternity at one stroke; or at anyrate involve the loss of a cherished limb; for it is a difficult matter to effect an instantaneous stoppage where the gradient is so steep. Those who are accustomed to this mode of travelling describe it as delightful in spite of constant breathlessness; and when descending from Chosica to Lima, I confess that I found the journey extremely pleasant; but here the gradient is not so steep, and the speed proportionately less. The great essentials to safety and comfort are a cautious and skilful driver, plenty of warm clothing tightly tucked in, a hat almost glued to the head, and a thick veil, if one prefers not being skinned by the wind whilst moving with such rapidity through it.'

The completion of the Central and other railways in Peru is sure to have a very beneficial effect upon the future prospects of that country. It is, besides, intended to carry a branch of the Central to the river Ucayali, one of the principal tributaries of the upper Amazon, and in this way to provide a through route across the widest portion of the South American continent. Peru is a country rich in silver, copper, and other minerals; and if it be once made accessible by the development of its railway system, a new era of prosperity may be expected to set in.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER VI.—SOMETHING MORE HAPPENS.

CHECKLEY held the door of the office wide open and invited Elsie to enter. The aspect of the room, solid of furniture, severe in its fittings, with its vast table covered with papers, struck her with a kind of terror. At the table sat her guardian, austere of countenance.

All the way along she had been imagining a dialogue. He would begin with certain words. She would reply, firmly but respectfully, with certain other words. He would go on. She would again reply. And so on. Everybody knows the consolations of imagination in framing dialogues at times of trouble. They never come off. The beginning is never what is expected, and the sequel, therefore, has to be changed on the spot. The conditions of the interview had not been realised by Elsie. Also the beginning

was not what she expected. For her guardian, instead of frowning with a brow of corrugated iron and holding up a finger of warning, received her more pleasantly than she had imagined it possible for him, bade her sit down, and leaned back, looking at her kindly.

'And so,' he said, 'you are twenty-one—twenty-one—to-day. I am no longer your guardian. You are twenty-one. Everything that is past seems to have happened yesterday. So that it is needless to say that you were a baby only yesterday.'

'Yes; I am really twenty-one.'

'I congratulate you. To be twenty-one is, I believe, for a young lady at least, a pleasant time of life. For my own part I have almost forgotten the memory of youth. Perhaps I never had the time to be young. Certainly I have never understood why some men regret their youth so passionately. As for your sex, Elsie, I know very little of it except in the way of business. In that way, which does not admit of romance, I must say that I have sometimes found ladies importunate, tenacious, exacting, persistent, and even revengeful.'

'Oh!' said Elsie, with a little winning smile of conciliation. This was only a beginning—a prelude—before the unpleasantness.

'That, Elsie, is my unfortunate experience of women—always in the way of business, which of course may bring out the worst qualities. In society, of which I have little experience, they are doubtless—charming—charming.' He repeated the word, as if he had found an adjective of whose meaning he was not quite clear. 'An old bachelor is not expected, at the age of seventy-five, to know much about such a subject. The point before us is that you have this day arrived at the mature age of twenty-one. That is the first thing, and I congratulate you. The first thing.'

'I wonder,' thought Elsie timidly, 'when he will begin upon the next thing—the real thing.'

There lay upon the table before him a paper with notes upon it. He took it up, looked at it, and laid it down again. Then he turned to Elsie and smiled—he actually smiled—he unmistakably smiled. 'At twenty-one,' he said, 'some young ladies who are heiresses come into their property'—

'Those who are heiresses. Unhappily, I am not.'

'Come into their property—their property. It must be a beautiful thing for a girl to come into property, unexpectedly, at twenty-one. For a man, a temptation to do nothing and to make no more money. Bad! Bad! But for a girl already engaged, a girl who wants money, a girl who is engaged—eh?—to a penniless young solicitor'—

Elsie turned crimson. This was the thing she expected.

'Under such circumstances, I say, such a stroke of fortune would be providential and wonderful, would it not?'

She blushed and turned pale, and blushed again. She also felt a strong disposition to cry—but repressed that disposition.

'In your case, for instance, such a windfall would be most welcome. Your case is rather a singular case. You do not belong to a family

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which has generally disregarded money—quite the reverse—you should inherit the love of money—yet you propose to throw away what I believe are very good prospects, and’—

‘My only prospect is to marry George Austin.’

‘So you think. I have heard from your mother, and I have seen your sister Hilda. They object very strongly to the engagement.’

‘I know, of course, what they would say.’

‘Therefore, I need not repeat it,’ replied Mr Dering dryly. ‘I learn, then, that you are not only engaged to this young gentleman, but that you are also proposing to marry upon the small income which he now possesses.’

‘Yes—we are prepared to begin the world upon that income.’

‘Your mother asked me what chance he has in his profession. In this office he can never rise to a considerable salary as managing clerk. If he had money, he might buy a partnership. But he has none, and his friends have none. And the profession is congested. He may remain all his life in a position not much better than he now occupies. The prospect, Elsie, is not brilliant.’

‘No—we are fully aware of that. And yet’—

‘Allow me, my dear child. You are yourself—we will say for the moment—without any means of your own.’

‘I have nothing.’

‘Or any expectations, except from your mother, who is not yet sixty.’

‘I could not count upon my mother’s death. Besides, she says that, if I persist, she will not leave me anything at all.’

‘So much I understand from herself. Her present intention is to remove your name from her will, in case you go on with this proposed marriage.’

‘My mother will do what she pleases with her property,’ said Elsie. ‘If she thinks that I will give way to a threat of this kind, she does not know me.’

‘Do not let us speak of threats. I am laying before you facts. Here they are plainly. Young Austin has a very small income: he has very little prospect of getting a substantial income: you, so far as you know, have nothing; and, also so far as you know, you have no prospect of anything. These are the facts, are they not?’

‘Yes—I suppose these are the facts. We shall be quite poor—very likely, quite poor always.’ The tears rose to her eyes. But this was not a place for crying.

‘I want you to understand these facts very clearly,’ Mr Dering insisted. ‘Believe me, I do not wish to give you pain.’

‘All this,’ said Elsie, with the beginnings of the family obstinacy in her eyes, ‘I clearly understand. I have had them put before me too often.’

‘I also learn from your sister, Lady Dering, that if you abandon this marriage she is ready to do anything for you that she can. Her house, her carriage, her servants—you can command them all, if you please. This you know. Have you considered the meaning of what you propose? Can you consider it calmly?’

‘I believe we have.’

‘On the one side poverty—not what is called a small income. Many people live very well on what is called a small income—but grinding, hard poverty, which exacts real privations and burdens you with unexpected loads. My dear young lady, you have been brought up to a certain amount of plenty and ease, if not to luxury. Do you think you can get along without plenty and ease?’

‘If George can, I can.’

‘Can you become a servant—cook, housemaid, lady’s-maid—as well as a wife—a nurse as well as a mother?’

‘If George is made happier by my becoming anything—anything, it will only make me happier. Mr Dering, I am sure you wish me well—you are my father’s old friend—you have always advised my mother in her troubles—my brother was articled to you—but’—She paused, remembering that he had not been her brother’s best friend.

‘I mean the best possible for you. Meantime, you are quite fixed in your own mind: you are set upon this thing. That is clear. There is one other way of looking at it. You yourself seem chiefly desirous, I think, to make the man you love happy. So much the better for him.—Are you quite satisfied that the other party to the agreement, your lover, will remain happy while he sees you slaving for him, while he feels his own helplessness, and while he gets no relief from the grinding poverty of his household—while—lastly—he sees his sons taking their place on a lower level, and his daughters taking a place below the rank of gentlewoman?’

‘I reply by another question.—You have had George in your office as articled clerk and managing clerk for eight years. Is he, or is he not, steadfast, clear-headed, one who knows his own mind, and one who can be trusted in all things?’

‘Perhaps,’ said Mr Dering, inclining his head. ‘How does that advance him?’

‘Then, if you trust him, why should not I trust him? I trust George altogether—together. If he does not get on, it will be through no fault of his. We shall bear our burden bravely, believe me, Mr Dering. You will not hear him—or me—complain. Besides, I am full of hope. Oh! it can never be in this country that a man who is a good workman should not be able to get on. Then I can paint a little—not very well, perhaps. But I have thought—you will not laugh at me—that I might paint portraits and get a little money that way.’

‘It is quite possible that he may succeed, and that you may increase the family income. Everything is possible. But, remember, you are building on possibilities, and I on facts. Plans very beautiful and easy at the outset often prove most difficult in the carrying out. My experience of marriages is learned by fifty years of work, not imaginative, but practical. I have learned that without adequate means no marriage can be happy. That is to say I have never come across any case of wedded poverty where the husband or the wife, or both, did not regret the day when they faced poverty together instead of separately. That, I say, is my experience of such marriages. It is so easy to say that hand in hand evils may be met and endured which would be intoler-

able if one was alone. It isn't only hand in hand, Elsie. The hands are wanted for the baby, and the evils will fall on the children yet unborn.'

Elsie hung her head. Then she replied timidly: 'I have thought even of that. It only means that we go lower down in the social scale.'

'Only? Yet that is everything. People who are well up the ladder too often deride those who are fighting and struggling to get up higher. It is great folly or great ignorance to laugh. Social position, in such a country as ours, means independence, self-respect, dignity, all kinds of valuable things. You will throw these all away—yet your grandfathers won them for you by hard work. You are yourself a gentlewoman—why? Because they made their way up in the world, and placed their sons also in the way to climb. That is how families are made—by three generations at least of steady work uphill.'

Elsie shook her head sadly. 'We can only hope,' she murmured.

'One more word, and I will say no more. Remember, that love or no love, resignation or not, patience or not, physical comfort is the beginning and the foundation of all happiness. If you and your husband can satisfy the demands of physical comfort, you may be happy—or at least resigned. If not—Well, Elsie, that is all. I should not have said so much had I not promised your mother and your sister. I am touched, I confess, by your courage and your resolution.'

'We mean never to regret, never to look back, and always to work and hope,' said Elsie. 'You will remain our friend, Mr Dering?'

'Surely, surely.—And now?—'

'Now'—Elsie rose—'I will not keep you any longer. You have said what you wished to say very kindly, and I thank you.'

'No.—Sit down again; I haven't done with you yet, child. Sit down again. No more about that young villain—George Austin.' He spoke so good-humouredly, that Elsie complied wondering, but no longer afraid. 'Nothing more about your engagement. Now, listen carefully, because this is most important. Three or four years ago a person wrote to me. That person informed me that he—for convenience we will call the person a man—wished to place a certain sum of money in my hands in trust—for you.'

'For me? Do you mean—in trust? What is Trust?'

'He gave me this sum of money to be given to you on your twenty-first birthday.'

'Oh!' Elsie sat up with open eyes. 'A sum of money?—and to me?'

'With a condition or two. The first condition was, that the interest should be invested as it came in: the next, that I was on no account—mind, on no account at all—to tell you or any one of the existence of the gift or the name of the donor. You are now twenty-one. I have been careful not to afford you the least suspicion of this happy windfall until the time should arrive. Neither your mother, nor your sister, nor your lover, knows or suspects anything about it.'

'Oh!' Elsie said once more. An interjection may be defined as a prolonged monosyllable, generally a vowel, uttered when no words can do justice to the subject.

'And here, my dear young lady'—Elsie cried 'Oh!' once more because—the most curious thing in the world—Mr Dering's grave face suddenly relaxed and the lines assumed the very benevolence which she had, the day before, imparted to his portrait, and wished to see upon his face!—'Here, my dear young lady'—he laid his hand upon a paper—'is the list of the investments which I have made of that money. You have, in fact, money in Corporation bonds—Newcastle, Nottingham, Wolverhampton. You have water shares—you have gas shares—all good investments, yielding at the price of purchase an average of nearly three and two-thirds per cent.'

'Investments? Why—how much money was it, then? I was thinking when you spoke of a sum of money, of ten pounds, perhaps.'

'No, Elsie, not ten pounds. The money placed in my hands for your use was over twelve thousand pounds. With accumulations, there is now a little under thirteen thousand.'

'Oh!' cried Elsie for the third time and for the same reason. No words could express her astonishment.

'Yes; it will produce about four hundred and eighty pounds a year. Perhaps, as some of the stock has gone up, it might be sold out and placed to better advantage. We may get it up to five hundred pounds.'

'Do you mean, Mr Dering, that I have actually got five hundred pounds a year—all my own?'

'That is certainly my meaning. You have nearly five hundred pounds a year all your own—entirely for your use, without any conditions whatever—your own.'

'Oh!' She sat in silence, her hands locked. Then the tears came into her eyes. 'Oh George!' she murmured, 'you will not be so very poor after all.'

'That is all I have to say to you at present, Elsie,' said Mr Dering. 'Now you may run away and leave me. Come to dinner this evening. Your mother and your sister are coming. I shall ask Austin as well. We may perhaps remove some of those objections. Dinner at seven sharp, Elsie.—And now you can leave me.'

'I said last night,' said Elsie, clasping her hands with feminine superstition, 'that something was going to happen. But I thought it was something horrid. Oh, Mr Dering, if you only knew how happy you have made me! I don't know what to say. I feel stunned. Five hundred pounds a year! Oh, it is wonderful! What shall I say? What shall I say?'

'You will say nothing. Go away now. Come to dinner this evening.—Go away, my young heiress. Go and make plans how to live on your enlarged income. It will not prove too much.'

Elsie rose. Then she turned again. 'Oh, I had actually forgotten. Won't you tell the man—or the woman—who gave you that money for me, that I thank him from my very heart? It isn't that I think so much about money; but oh! the dreadful trouble that there has been at home because George has none—and this will do something to reconcile my mother. Don't you think it will make all the difference?'

'I hope that before the evening you will find that all opposition has been removed,' said her guardian cautiously.

She walked away in a dream. She found herself in Lincoln's Inn Fields: she walked all round that great square, also in a dream. The spectre of poverty had vanished. She was rich: she was rich: she had five hundred pounds a year. Between them they would have seven hundred pounds a year. It seemed enormous. Seven hundred pounds a year! Seven—seven—seven hundred pounds a year!

She got out into the street called Holborn, and she took the modest omnibus, this heiress of untold wealth. How much was it? Thirteen millions? or thirteen thousand? One seemed as much as the other. Twelve thousand: with accumulations: with accumulations—ations—ations. The wheels of the vehicle groaned out these musical words all the way. It was in the morning when the Bayswater omnibus is full of girls going home to lunch after shopping or looking at the shops. Elsie looked at these girls as they sat along the narrow benches. 'My dears,' she longed to say, but did not, 'I hope you have every one got a brave lover, and that you have all got twelve thousand pounds apiece—with accumulations—twelve thousand pounds—with accumulations—ations—ations—realising four hundred and eighty pounds a year, and perhaps a little more. With accumulations—ations—ations—accumulations.'

She ran into the house and up the stairs singing. At the sound of her voice her mother, engaged in calculations of the greatest difficulty, paused wondering. When she understood that it was the voice of her child and not an organ-grinder, she became angry. What right had the girl to run about singing? Was it insolent bravado?

Elsie opened the door of the drawing-room and ran in. Her mother's cold face repelled her. She was going to tell the joyful news—but she stopped.

'You have seen Mr Dering?' asked her mother.

'Yes; I have seen him.'

'If he has brought you to reason'—

'Oh! He has—he has. I am entirely reasonable.'

Mrs Arundel was astonished. The girl was flushed of face and bright of eye; her breath was quick; her lips were parted. She looked entirely happy.

'My dear mother,' she went on, 'I am to dine with him to-night. Hilda is to dine with him to-night. You are to dine with him to-night. It is to be a family party. He will bring us all to reason—to a bag full of reasons.'

'Elsie, this seems to me to be mirth misplaced.'

'No—no—in its right place—reasons all in a row and on three shelves, labelled and arranged and classified.'

'You talk in enigmas.'

'My dear mother'—yet that morning the dear mother would not speak to the dear daughter—'I talk in enigmas and I sing in conundrums. I feel like an oracle or a Delphic old woman for dark sayings.'

She ran away, slamming the door after her. Her mother heard her singing in her studio all to herself. 'Can she be in her right mind?' she asked anxiously. 'To marry a Pauper—to

receive the admonition of her guardian—and such a guardian—and to come home singing. 'Twould be better to lock her up than let her marry.'

(To be continued.)

MISSING SHIPS.

SHIPPING casualties are rightly regarded as more or less intimately connected with the state of the weather, as a cursory glance at the shipping papers readily reveals. A summer's sun illumines the well-favoured face of old Ocean and gilds the delicate outlines of some speeding ship. Every omen seems propitious, and her crew would agree without hesitation that life is well worth living under such conditions. Soon her ponderous anchor is weighed and hove up to the bow in unison with the soul-stirring strains of an old-fashioned sea-song rolled forth in somewhat melodious measure by stalwart seamen, who thus bid a long farewell to the land they love and the girls they leave behind them. Then her scanty crew move briskly about both on deck and aloft, exhorted thereto by clearly defined commands, which to a landsman appear but to make confusion worse confounded. Nevertheless, there is a method in this apparently midsummer madness displayed in getting under way, for, with amazing rapidity, each snow-white sail is spread to the best advantage in order to woo the freshening breeze.

As the graceful ship cleaves her way through the resisting medium in which she floats, a white feathery foam lovingly laves her straining hull, passes aft, and leaves a whirling wake as far as the eye can see in the direction of the receding horizon. Before nightfall, however, a churlish sky affords every indication of an approaching storm; the mercurial column surely sinks in that unfailing monitor the barometer, and sail is reduced without delay. Perchance a rugged, inhospitable coast lies not far distant down the wanton wind, which sweeps across the devoted vessel's rigging, taut as harpstrings at their highest tension. Down comes the careering storm as if the very heavens had burst with its fury, and lashes the sea-surface into hurtling crests with yawning gulfs between. The ship heels over before the bitter blast, fails to right herself, and in the twinkling of an eye the triumphant sea rages over her upturned keel, eager to rive her stricken hull asunder while her brazen bell tolls a requiem; or she disappears into the seething abyss of waters as utterly as though she had never been; and the brave hearts which throbbed so exultingly at early morn in the plenitude of their power are stilled for ever.

Even well-found ships occasionally meet their fate in this way, and not infrequently without leaving the most insignificant remnant whereby they might be traced. It may be supposed that their lighter fittings would eventually drift ashore somewhere; but actual experience has demonstrated conclusively that any inference of this nature is erroneous in a large majority of instances, for, if fragments do reach the land, it is to lie unnoticed on some lonely beach until long after possible recognition. When far from the land, a vessel may be overwhelmed by an

exceptionally heavy sea; capsized by a sudden squall; sunk by collision with an iceberg, a drifting abandoned vessel, or another ship under control, but negligently navigated; or burnt by spontaneous combustion of cargo, by lightning, or by accident. Frequently, the result is equally fatal to the crews, even if for a time they linger through untold agonies in open boats.

Early in the morning of the 9th of March 1891, a terrible storm was travelling in from the North Atlantic swiftly, yet surely, towards the south-west coast of England. March had come in like a lion, in agreement with the old adage; nevertheless, this particular dawn gave every promise of a fine day. Not only were local weather prophets caught napping, but also the London Weather Department. About eleven o'clock in the morning snow was falling at Plymouth, with a gradually increasing breeze, which, when the sun sank sullenly below the horizon, had attained to almost hurricane violence, and was sweeping all before it. Wrecks strewed the coast between Start Point and Falmouth, where many a seafarer lost his life, and cruel suffering entailed upon those who survived the storm.

Two Liverpool vessels, the *Marana*, a steamship of 1632 tons register, bound to Colombo; and the *Dryad*, a full-rigged sailing-ship of 1035 tons, bound for Valparaiso, went ashore within a short span of each other, when over fifty lives were sacrificed. Two small schooners, the *Lunesdale* and the *Lizzie Ellen*, also came to grief. A steamship, the *Dundela*, from St Michael with fruit, was lost during the night near Falmouth; and next morning the splendid four-masted ship, *Bay of Panama*, of 2282 tons register, from Calcutta, with 17,000 bales of jute for Dundee, was driven on shore. Captain Wright, his wife, five officers, four apprentices, and six of her seamen, were either washed away or frozen to death while lashed to the rigging awaiting succour. Wires were all down, and some time necessarily elapsed before news reached the gallant little band of coastguardmen, although every effort was made, even in the height of the storm, by dwellers on shore to make known the disaster and render assistance.

More than thirty small sailing-craft making passages between ports situated around our south-west coasts have been posted as missing in consequence of that storm. These vessels ranged from thirty to three hundred tons register, carried from three to nine men each, and were as a rule laden with heavy cargoes, such as coal, slate, and ore. A recently published table sets forth the names, ports of registry, tonnage, and other particulars of British ships posted or reported as missing during the year ended 30th June 1891. No fewer than eighty-five vessels disappeared beneath the waves during that period. Eighty of these unfortunates were carrying-craft, four were fishing-boats, and there was also one pleasure yacht. Thirteen were staunch sailing-vessels, twelve iron and one wood, of over one thousand tons register, nearly all of which at various times have come under the writer's personal observation. The Clyde and the Mersey each owned five; Dundee, London, and Nova Scotia, one each. Three were bound from New Zealand to London with cargoes of frozen meat, having previously made several successful voyages in the same trade

over a similar track. A Liverpool ship, the *Lord Raglan*, of 2078 tons register, was the largest missing ship during the twelve months. She was almost a new vessel, and coming home from San Francisco with a costly cargo of grain.

Some seven hundred miles from the Cape of Good Hope, on the track to Australia over the southern sea, lies a group of islands known as the Crozets, which are uninhabited, but where, during the past seventy years, men from missing ships have spent many months in misery and the gnawing despair of hope long deferred. A vessel named *Princess of Wales* struck on one of these rocky pinnacles and sank. Her crew escaped in two boats, that both reached the inhospitable shore, but in different parts, effectually inaccessible one from the other by reason of intervening natural obstacles. From March to December the two parties were cut off from each other; but in the latter month, the southern midsummer, they were reunited by accident. Their food consisted of seals and seabirds; their clothes were fashioned from sealskins sewn together with sea-elephant sinews by means of an old nail which had been converted into a needle. Friends at home had long given up all hope, when, after twenty-two months of leaden-footed hours had elapsed, a whaling schooner, the *Philo* of Boston, U.S.A., rescued them from a living death, and they were sent home.

An old sailor had taken upon himself the responsible duty of watching for passing ships; and when gladdened by the sight of this solitary sail, a mere speck upon the wide waste of waters, the attention of the crew was attracted by the red glare of a beacon fire. Upon a boat coming ashore for the long-lost ones, they scampered into the sea, casting off their sealskin garments by the way, in a natural eagerness to return once more to the haunts of civilisation. The rescuers were alarmed at first, fearing lest they might unwittingly have fallen in with an unknown race of wild men.

In 1876, an iron ship, the *Strathmore*, with her crew of thirty-eight men and fifty passengers, went on shore at Apostle Island. Only forty-nine out of the eighty-eight people on board were saved, including a woman and a child. Little wreckage of any value to the shipwrecked crew came on shore except a chest containing a few coverlets, knives and forks, spoons, preserved meats, and two parasols. Strange to say, these parasols were especially useful, inasmuch as the ironwork about them was made into needles, with which skins were sewn together to make necessary garments by means of thread drawn out from canvas, or, failing this, the longest grass available. Preserved meat-cans served for saucepans, which when worn out were replaced by hollow stones. From July to January only four vessels passed their island above the horizon; but signals made by the people of the *Strathmore* were probably unperceived. The captain of an American whaler passing by this out-of-the-way island, went aloft to view more distinctly the dangerous rocks, and noticing something strange, stood in to discover its meaning. Shore-signals were reported from the whaler's elevated 'crow's nest'; and boats sent on shore brought back the survivors of the ill-fated *Strathmore*. Five had succumbed to privations experienced on this isolated island;

but the American captain gave up his cruise in order to land the others at the nearest port.

Still later, the *Knowsley Hall* utterly disappeared, and it was thought that some of her crew, together with men from several other missing ships, might have reached the Crozets. Her Majesty's ship *Comus*, Captain East, was despatched; but after careful search, not a trace of any castaway crew was observed. A cairn erected by the *Strathmore* party was still erect, and easily distinguishable from afar. An old hut was found on Apostle Island, which was at once stocked with provisions suitable for shipwrecked people. Huts were built by the men of the *Comus* on Hog Island and Possession Island, and well filled with tinned meats. A board affixed to each dwelling-place bore the following notice: 'These provisions are only for shipwrecked people. H.M.S. *Comus*, March 6, 1880.'

Quite recently, a request was made to the Admiralty to send a warship on a similar errand; but none could be spared. Nevertheless, Captain Simpson, of the Aberdeen liner *Australasian*, took that steamship close to these islands; and after having made several gun-cotton signals, steamed away, well convinced that no castaways were there. Many vessels have disappeared in the vicinity of the Cape of Good Hope since first it was doubled. Another *Princess of Wales* is supposed to have foundered there with the whole of her crew and passengers, numbering some seven hundred souls. She was but one of a fleet that suffered severely, for there were lost that winter season off the Cape of Storms the *Ganges*, the *Skelton Castle*, the *William Pitt*, the *United Kingdom*, and four other old-time East Indiamen. In 1889 the large iron ship *Bolan* of Liverpool, and the *Glanpadarn*, both homeward-bound, are believed to have disappeared off this Cape. They probably had their cargoes shifted in a severe squall, and capsized.

Cape Horn, again, has an unenviable notoriety; and in 1889 Her Majesty's ship *Champion* searched every nook around Tierra del Fuego, but without avail, although some thought that men from the missing ships *Melanesia*, *Cumeria*, and *Bio-Bio* might have reached the land about there in open boats. Until quite recently, ships wrecked off Cape Horn left their crews as utterly desolate as though in mid-ocean; but now settlements have been made in several places, to which shipwrecked mariners may steer, and thus avoid the unfriendly natives of that forbidding coast.

Cruel coral reefs of the Pacific could doubtless account for many a missing ship. The French discoverer, La Pérouse, in the *Astrolabe*, sailed away from home for a voyage among the islands of the Pacific, and never returned. Long after, Captain Dillon, an officer of the British mercantile marine, was fortunate enough to obtain precise information as to the position of the sunken ships of La Pérouse. He brought back the relics to Paris, and obtained a substantial reward.

Collisions are not so frequent as might be assumed from the magnitude of the world's ocean traffic. Iron ships fare badly in collision unless divided into water-tight compartments. A sailing-ship, the *Loch Earn*, collided with the steamer *Ville du Havre*, a few years ago, when more than two hundred and twenty-five people were

drowned. Fortunately, the water-tight divisions of the sailing-ship held for some time, otherwise, crew and passengers of both vessels must inevitably have perished, as the steamer foundered in a few minutes, and the *Loch Earn* immediately her partitions were penetrated by the sea. Similarly, in the collision between the *Kapunda* and the *Ada Melmore*; the former sank with many female passengers locked in their berths below; but the water-tight compartments of the latter kept her afloat for a few hours, else not a soul would have escaped to tell the sad story, and both ships added to the long list of missing. Some years ago the barque *Exmouth*, with her crew of eleven men and two hundred and forty passengers, had a narrow escape from being classed as missing. She struck on the west coast of Islay, and went to pieces in a minute. Three men who had rushed aloft for safety were hurled with her topmast into a rocky chasm, and rescued next morning.

Ships making long passages are often given up as lost, and as much as ninety per cent. paid for re-insurance. The barque *Duppel* left Liverpool for Philadelphia in July 1889, and was one hundred and eleven days on the passage, or about the same length of time in which California is reached by sailing-ship. In August of the same year the Russian barque *Tahti* was spoken in the Baltic, one hundred and fifteen days out, with a cargo of salt from a Spanish port. The *Christabel* left London in September 1889 with Christmas stores for Newfoundland. She did not arrive, and ninety per cent. was paid for her re-insurance; but after being at sea for seventy-four days, she put back to Plymouth. About the same time the *Kate*, bound from Figueira to Newfoundland, put back to Salcombe, after buffeting seventy days against adverse winds. The brig *Dato* left Ayr for Demerara in December 1889, and was compelled by violent storms to put into a Norwegian port after sixty-five days. A German barque, the *Matador*, sailed from Shields for Valparaiso in July 1889, but did not arrive until one hundred and sixty-five days had elapsed, and ninety-three per cent. was paid for her re-insurance. The Norwegian barque *Evea* passed the Old Head of Kinsale on New-year's Day 1890; and nothing more having been heard of her, was reckoned among the missing; but fifty days later she arrived at Portland, having been all that time knocking about between the Irish and the English coasts.

Quite recently the barque *Ellen* foundered while making a passage between Australia and Noumea. Her crew of ten men took to the boat. Some died of thirst, others went mad and leaped overboard; but one survived to account for the missing men. A British sailing-vessel, the *Vailele*, bound from New Guinea to the Solomon Islands, was for forty days practically drifting about at the mercy of wind and current, with her crew worn out with fever. Had a storm arisen, she would certainly have been a missing ship. One of the largest sailing-ships ever launched, the French four-master *Dunkerque*, has just been posted as missing. She sailed from a Welsh coal-port on the 23d June 1891 with five thousand tons of coal for Rio Janeiro, and has not yet arrived. Her Majesty's ship *Volage* picked up a large boat belonging to her on the 25th July about twenty miles north of

Ushant; and still more recently, another of her boats has drifted ashore on the French coast. Such large sailing-ships, unless well manned, must be especially liable to disappearance in a sudden squall. A paragraph in the daily papers, a payment of insurance, a new ship built, and the missing ones in the whirl of business are forgotten, except by near relatives, who hope for their return even after many days. September and October storms of 1891 left many derelicts and not a few missing ships.

URGENT PRIVATE AFFAIRS.

CHAPTER IV.—RESCUED.

WHEN Nellie Morton left her room and wandered into the grounds for the second time that day, she was in a state of high and extremely unpleasant excitement. The thought of the river cooled and soothed her. Except on that side, the grounds of Garwood House were closed in, shut off from the free air of heaven by tall, stifling brick walls. On the Thames' side the grounds were open to the sweet broad flowing air of summer.

A girl could not escape over those high brick walls, old and sodden, and smelling dank in the sun. But one could escape by the river. Yes, one might be taken off by a passing boat. One might wander for months close to those greasy walls without seeing a living soul—such a thing as a meeting with young Chaytor that day might not occur again in a lifetime—but on the river, people would often be in view, passing by now and then.

Even supposing no boat came to take one away, *still* there was a Doorway of Escape on the river-side. It was the Doorway through which only the desperate went; but one did not know when one might become desperate.

Here was the river, and how much cooler to walk up and down by the stream than to breathe the choking atmosphere indoors. No boats were in sight just now, but no need for any existed at present. If desperate need of escape arose while no boats were at hand, there lay the Door for the desperate—the Water. That doorway could never be closed up. As long as Garwood House stood, it would remain free and open.

While she paced up and down, the violence of her perturbation subsided. She was able to survey more calmly the events of the last few hours. She no longer doubted that the scene after luncheon had occurred as it appeared to her. The dwarf, William Bathurst, had bounded into the room shouting with frenzied laughter, had told his mother he was bankrupt, had been seized by a fit; and on recovering, Mrs Bathurst had indicated to him that his only means of deliverance from ruin was by a marriage with herself, and so getting the money her father had laid by. If it ever came about that she was forced to select between the fate foredoomed for her by the old woman and the river, she would not hesitate a moment.

What should she do? Could she do anything? Of course, she could not be forced into a marriage with that fearful man. Those who thought she, Ellen Morton, could be bullied or cajoled into doing anything against her will, did not know anything at all of her, Ellen Morton. But her

uncle and aunt were gone out of England; her father was not coming home until the autumn; and between this time and autumn, matters would be very disagreeable for her if she continued a guest at Garwood House. And if she did not continue a guest there, whither should she go?

Here, against the wall, under this tree, stood a dilapidated rustic seat. She would sit and look deliberately at the case—the very hard and trying case in which she found herself.

At her back rose the end of the wall over which young Chaytor had climbed; on her left, just at the end of the seat, ran the river, silent and deep and dark in the shadow of beeches and willows; on her right lay a tangled wilderness of neglected undergrowth; in front of her stretched the dusty dry pathway, from which all verdure had been burned by a hot and droughty month.

Here, in the shade, the air was cooler and fresher than even on the unsheltered pathway by the river. She took off her hat, to let the breeze touch more freely her forehead and neck and hair. Her mind, instead of taking up the consideration of the future, ran back upon the past. She thought of the happy time spent with the bluff, kind-hearted, simple-minded Colonel and his affectionate, soft-mannered wife. She reviewed the peaceful days with them, and the frank modest gaieties of Deighton, where she had emerged from school into life and the world.

What an overwhelming contrast between that stirring garrison town and the lethargic stagnation of this Garwood House! And to think that only a week ago—nay, but yesterday—she had been there with her sweet-minded aunt and bluff uncle; and here she was to-day newed inside these repellent walls, with this chilling mysterious woman, and this man, more fearful and odious than any human being she had seen, than any nightmare which had ever made the silent chambers of darkness hideous!

She shuddered at the thought of the man. Then she started and looked round uneasily. Had that shudder shaken the leaves of the tree overhead? Impossible. Yet the leaves of the tree, or some other leaves near, had rustled more than the faint breeze would warrant. It was more than a rustle—it was a sound of rustling to which was added a sound of pushing among twigs. She looked round again. With a start, she sprang to her feet, pale, gasping, trembling. Some living thing was moving in the bracken on the right. It could not be a large animal, for nothing appeared above the ferns. It was pushing towards the river—towards her!—towards where she stood, shaking in every limb! Then all of a sudden a hideous lizard, huge, flat-backed, long-tailed, stole furtively into view and looking cunningly round out of one small evil eye, wagged his prodigious head and waddled slowly towards the girl.

On the wild impulse of escape from the loathsome reptile, she sprang backward, stumbled over the bank, and, with a scream, fell into the deep slow-flowing water of the river.

The lizard waddled forward, snapped up the fallen hat of the girl, dropped it, and tumbled himself into the stream.

At the same instant the form of a young man clad in flannels plunged into the river from the

opposite side of the division wall against which the girl had been sitting. He rose and struck back through the sluggish water to the bank with the head of the girl resting on his shoulder. This time she was in no half-conscious state; this time every trace of consciousness had left her. The young man gained the slip in his own grounds, and slowly and carefully carried her up the bank. Here he shifted his burden, to make it more convenient. He did not call out for help. He never felt less need of help in all his life. He never before felt so proud of his broad shoulders as when he rested her head on one of them. He never felt so proud of his strength as when he shook his head, and stepped forward towards the house, disdaining to own to himself that he bore any burden at all. He could walk thus to the end of the world, the burden helping, not hindering.

When he arrived at the door, his part was done, and he called for assistance. Mary and Kate and Lilian were instantly in attendance on the inanimate girl; and presently his widowed mother appeared, a stately and gracious lady of middle age. To them George briefly explained what had occurred. The girl was carried upstairs; and when she was safe in a room, with all four women busy around her, George stole out into the grounds for a walk and a smoke, to quiet him, and for solitude, in which to build a romance all to himself around his beautiful neighbour and his two adventures with her that day—the very first day of her sojourn at Garwood House. It was plain to George that these two adventures could not be mere accident. Fate must mean something by them. What did fate mean? Well, let time tell, and for the present let him dwell in memory on the girl's enchanting beauty.

He had been close to the wall on their side when he heard her scream and saw her fall into the river. He had caught a glimpse of her face as she fell, and he was certain she had fainted before she touched the water. What a lucky fellow he was to have been on the spot! What a lucky fellow he was to have her head lying on his shoulder as he carried her up to the house! He must go back to the house now, to see how she was getting on, and he must then run round to Garwood to tell them she was safe.

Miss Morton had recovered consciousness and was doing well. Mary, his eldest sister, gave him the news; and he said he should call at Garwood to tell them of the accident, and that the girl was safe.

'It was the sight of your wretched Jacko that made the poor girl stumble into the river,' said Mary indignantly. 'I always knew that creature would do some dreadful mischief.'

'Ah,' said George, 'I thought I heard a second splash. He didn't hurt her?'

'No; but we cannot thank you for that. I am delighted the abominable reptile is drowned.'

'Some kinds of crocodiles take a lot of drowning. I'm off to see the one next door. All the water in the ocean wouldn't drown him, if the hangman is to have his due.'

Young Chaytor reached Garwood House just as the Colonel, impetuous with apprehension, entered the drawing-room holding Nellie's hat in his hand.

Young Chaytor said to the servant, whom he met at the back door, a few yards from the

window-door through which Colonel Pickering had just passed into the drawing-room: 'I want to see Mrs Bathurst at once, please, about Miss Morton.'

They had no callers at Garwood House; and the servant was quite unprepared for the apparition of a young man in dripping flannels boldly demanding to see the lady of the house. She was a little thrown off her balance by the unexpected demand of this young man. As, however, he was a next-door neighbour—seemed to have something important to say—and mentioned Miss Morton's name, she thought she might safely take in his message, in spite of general orders against communications being brought into that house from the outside world. She had no notion there was any reason to be uneasy about Nellie, for she had not heard the Colonel's words at the drawing-room door. Upon reaching the drawing-room, she spoke her message so that Mrs Bathurst, William Bathurst, and the Colonel could hear.

'A gentleman about Miss Morton!' cried the Colonel. 'Show him in at once.' In his excitement, he forgot he was not the person to whom the message was addressed or the one to give orders in that house. The servant retired.

Mrs Bathurst was seated on the couch. She had not recovered from the emotions which had just stormed through her nature and broken out into a wild, abject revelation of her blind love for her unhandsome son. She could not trust herself to speak. She had not strength enough to move. She leant against the back of the sofa. Her eyes were half closed and lack-lustre, as if she dozed. She had a terrible feeling that she was losing correct appreciation of her surroundings.

William Bathurst had taken a chair close to the sofa, and sat with head dropped on breast and mouth open, breathing heavily, like one who has climbed a steep quickly.

The Colonel, who had taken a few quick paces up and down the room, turned round and faced the door, holding the girl's hat still in his hand as young Chaytor entered.

'I am Miss Morton's uncle,' said the Colonel, without giving time for any one else to speak. 'Where is she, and what has happened to her?' He held out the torn hat, to give emphasis and point to the question.

'Miss Morton fell into the river accidentally. She was got out, and is now in our place next door quite safe. I assure you she is perfectly unhurt. Of course she got wet.'

'And you, sir, are wet too. Perhaps I ought to have begun by thanking you for her safety?' said the Colonel, advancing to the young man and holding out his hand.

Chaytor took the outstretched hand and bowed in admission and acknowledgment. 'I happened to be near the bank on our side of the wall when the accident happened.'

'And you jumped in and saved her? I wish her aunt were here to thank you.'

'Miss Morton is at our place, the Osiers, next door. Perhaps *you*, sir, would like to see her?' he said, laying a light but significant emphasis on the *you*.

'Pray, lead on, sir; and take my word for it, that you never did a better day's work in your life than when you pulled our Nellie out of the river, and you may count on my gratitude

in great or small things while I live.—I beg your pardon,' said he, suddenly turning, becoming mindful of the presence of the mother and son. 'I am afraid you must fancy me very rude. But I could only think of our dear girl. I will come back to you when I have seen her.' And following young Chaytor, he went out of the room, the two leaving the house by the front door.

As Chaytor and the Colonel went round to the Osiers, the elder man said: 'Nothing could be much more unfortunate than the business on which I came out here. I have been quartered in Deighton. My regiment is on its way to India. I am due at Portsmouth to-night at the very latest, or rather first thing to-morrow morning. I bade good-bye to my niece at Bathurst's to-day, went to my club, and found a telegram from Brazil, forwarded from Deighton, saying the girl's father is dead. They didn't know anything about it, the death, at Garwood until I told them—that is, until I told Mrs Bathurst—her son was not at home when I arrived. I am one of the executors and trustees. Her father intended coming back for good in the autumn. It is very sad, awfully sad, for the poor child. I do wish I wasn't going away just now, and such a distance too! It really is most unfortunate that I should be. I suppose I could obtain permission to join at Suez; or, under the distressing circumstances, I might get leave if I applied for it. But of course I shouldn't like to apply just now, with the regiment on the way, and after being so long at home too. But surely these are urgent private affairs, if ever there were urgent private affairs. I never saw Mrs Bathurst until to-day, and never saw Mr Bathurst until just now. What an extraordinary-looking pair they are! Do you know them very well?

'I do not know them at all. I never was in Garwood House till to-day, or spoke to either of them until this afternoon. Indeed, I never spoke to them at all. You saw our only meeting.'

'And your family are not friendly with them?'

'No one in our house ever spoke to either mother or son.'

'I wasn't favourably impressed with Mrs Bathurst; and the son is positively revolting. I do not care much about leaving our girl in that woman's charge. Had I seen them, I would never have consented to the arrangement. You see, my niece was to stay with them only a short time, only until her father came home, and now the poor fellow is gone. I don't like leaving our girl in that house.'

'I'd rather leave her in her grave.'

'Would you? By George, that's strong. But I think you're right. No; I will not leave her with them. They would be the death of her.'

'Or they would drive her mad,' said young Chaytor; and then he told Colonel Pickering all about the son's nickname, his strange paroxysms of midnight laughter, and the chill mystery and seclusion in which that house lay.

'I am very glad to hear all this from you,' said the Colonel as they entered the door of the Osiers; 'and you are quite right in saying it would be better to leave the girl in her grave than in Garwood.'

George introduced the Colonel to his mother,

who led him to the room where Nellie lay. On the way up-stairs he resolved to say nothing about the death of Christopher Morton just now.

When Nellie saw him she uttered a cry of relief and joy, and stretched out her hands to him, crying, as they were left alone. 'Oh uncle, uncle, this is too good to be true! Now I feel safe once more. You will not leave me! You will not ask me to go back to that awful house—to those awful people! I do not care what becomes of me, so that you do not ask me to go back there. I would rather go into the river. I did think of doing that, but I fell in by accident. You will not, dear, dear uncle, let me go back again!'

'Never! Not for the crown jewels of England, my dearest child, would I let you enter that place again. I'll telegraph for your aunt to come back to town from Portsmouth, and I'll apply for leave on urgent private affairs.'

'But you don't know all. It would be unreasonable of me to object so much for mere whim or disliking; but that monster is a villain, a thief, I think. Oh, my dear uncle, you do not know what dreadful people they are.'

The girl sat up in the bed, pale and trembling, and recounted the scene in the dining-room.

As Colonel Pickering listened to the girl's story of that afternoon, he first grew crimson with rage, then pale with resentment, and when she finished, he walked dumbly up and down the room. At last he spoke in collected and firm tones: 'This is the most atrocious conspiracy that ever came close to me in all my life; and if there is justice to be got in England I'll have it against that infamous pair.'

'Oh uncle, don't do anything against them, but keep me away from them! Do not let them come near me. I never was afraid in all my life before; but now I am terrified.'

'I must leave you in Mrs Chaytor's charge, while I run back to town to see what can be done and how I am to manage all. Do not be in the least uneasy, my dear child. You will be as safe here as you would be in the Tower.'

This was not the time to tell the poor girl of her father's death. She was at once too excited and too prostrated for more news of a distressing character. She had been looking forward to her father's return with great happiness. Of late years she had seen so little of him that his person could be to her little more than a vague memory. But the desolation of her present state of mind would be injuriously increased if she heard just now that she must relinquish all hope of ever seeing that shadowy, far-away father again. Nellie in her distress had not asked him why he had come back after leave-taking. No doubt she thought accident or some trivial matter had brought him. When he was gone to town there would be talk at the Osiers of his visit. That would be the time to tell her of her loss.

Before setting out for town he confided to Mrs Chaytor the object of his second visit that day, and asked the widow to bide her opportunity for telling the sad news to Nellie.

'Just think,' said the Colonel to himself as he found himself in the train for London, 'of the villainy of those people in Garwood planning the robbery and marriage of the dearest girl in the world over her father's open grave! Hanging

would be too good for the hideous monster and the old witch.'

When he reached London, it was too late that day to make sure of the leave; but from what he was told, he felt there would be no doubt about his getting it to-morrow before the ship sailed, as the case was a most peculiar and important one, the circumstances admitting of no delay. So off he went to Portsmouth that night, having telegraphed Nellie that he hoped to be back at the Osiers next day.

And next day he was back with two months' leave. One of the first things he did was to go to his own solicitor and tell him all he knew; whereupon that solicitor wrote a brief note to William Bathurst, Esq., of Garwood House. From that day to this Colonel Pickering's solicitor has never got a reply to the note; and he says, when talking of the affair, that no doubt, in the hurry of Mr Bathurst's sudden journey from England to Mexico with his mother, he quite forgot to reply. But as Bathurst had borrowed the money that fatal Monday on forged signatures, Nellie did not lose the fortune laid by for her.

As the time approached for the Colonel's departure for India, the question once more presented itself as to how he was to provide for the charge of his niece during his absence. But this was settled one day promptly by George telling the Colonel that, there being no objection from him as her guardian, Nellie had promised to be his wife.

The Colonel told the young man that, having saved the girl's life directly and her fortune indirectly, no one else could have so good a claim on her; and as he, George, was a decent fellow, and there appeared to be nothing unsuitable in the match, he didn't know why Nellie's aunt should not see her niece married before leaving home.

So the young people were married the day the Colonel and his wife sailed, that there might be only one parting. And the two women wept as only women can when there is at once a wedding and a long separation at hand; and the two men shook hands distressingly often to keep themselves from—well, to keep themselves employed.

'I never thought,' said the Colonel, by way of good-bye and benison, 'that there could be such a happy ending to my leave when I applied for it that Monday on urgent private affairs.'

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

ONE of the most important Exhibitions which have yet been held was opened at the Crystal Palace, Sydenham, last month. Electricity has now become such a useful help in every branch of science and art, to say nothing of its aid as a means of communication between persons and nations, that it is more or less familiar to all. But this familiarity is coupled with much ignorance concerning the magic power which does so much in ministering to our daily needs. The Electrical Exhibition at Sydenham will therefore do good work in bringing before the public not

only the various parts which the strange power can fill in supplying us with light, heat, &c., but also in showing them how the power is generated and controlled. The Exhibition comes at an opportune time, for the large cities are at last waking up from their lethargy, and are springing into light, the said light being due to the electric current.

A walk at night through the streets of London now reveals the fact that gas is giving way to electricity as an illuminant. In many of the larger thoroughfares the gas lamps are unlighted, and have been replaced by electric globes placed on standards about thirty feet high. Truth to tell, the lighting is disappointing; and when the brilliantly illuminated shops close their shutters there is an air of darkness and desolation about the streets, more particularly at those points which are midway between two of the new lamps. We ascribe this fault to two causes. The one is the murky atmosphere of London, which is well known to be less pervious to electric rays than it is to gas; and the other is the employment of semi-opaque glass for the electric light globes, which shuts off about half the light at its very source. The first cause is unhappily without a remedy; but the use of globes which stop so much of the light could be and should be at once discontinued.

Mr C. E. Stretton, a well-known authority upon all that pertains to railways, has recently published some interesting notes as to the standard gauge or measurement between the metals adopted by most iron roads. An excuse for reference to this matter is afforded by the action of the Great Western Railway in relinquishing the last section of their broad-gauge system, which they have lately done in favour of the narrow gauge long ago adopted by the other companies. This standard gauge was suggested by George Stephenson, and has a measurement of four feet eight and a half inches between the metals. 'Why an odd number of inches, why not make it four and a half or five feet at once?' many will naturally exclaim. It came about in this way. Two and a half centuries ago there existed at Newcastle-on-Tyne a wooden way for the accommodation of coal-carts, and this consisted of two planks laid on a wooden bed, the distance from the outside edge of which was five feet. George Stephenson adopted the same gauge as being a convenient one; but the flange of the modern wheel touches the inside, not the outside of the rail. We therefore take as the gauge the distance between the inner edges of the two rails. Each rail is one and three-quarters of an inch in breadth, and the three and a half inches thus added to the gauge measurement already quoted makes five feet.

An interesting paper on Photographing Lightning Flashes, with the apt title 'Jove's Autograph,' was read before the Franklin Institute, in November last, by Mr W. N. Jennings, and

the photographs used as illustrations have since been published in the Journal of the Institute. The first picture is a conventional zigzag of light which was adopted by many generations of artists as a true representation of the lightning flash. That the conventional form is very different from the real thing is easily seen by comparing it with the photographs. These show various types of lightning flash, some being very curious indeed. Here we have the tree-form with ramified branches discharged over half the sky. In another picture a single sinuous line of light stretches from side to side, a veritable horizontal discharge; in another, the lightning seems to have tangled itself into a number of loops and knots, and looks like a skein of white silk fresh from the caresses of a playful kitten. Artists do not paint lightning so often as they did in past times, when the portrayal of historical and classical subjects used to tempt their pencils; but should the old fashion return, painters may have to take a lesson in lightning portraiture from photography. They will not of course be confined to the imitation of it; for the artist must paint things as they appear to the human eye, not necessarily as they appear to an instantaneous photographic lens.

A curious action upon brickwork in chimneys, due to the employment of wood as fuel, has recently been reported upon, the effects being noticeable more especially in American lumber districts, where wood is naturally the staple fuel. The combustion of the wood gives rise to a soot which is impregnated with pyroligneous acid (impure vinegar), and this acid, which in cases of slow combustion is produced in large quantities, dissolves the lime in the mortar which binds the bricks together. In many cases, it is ascertained, the top courses in brick chimneys have in the course of a couple of years been completely denuded of lime, so that the original mortar is represented only by its other constituent, sand.

An example is afforded of the injustice worked by the McKinlay tariff upon men of science, even though they belong to the States, by a story recently published in a New York paper. A Professor attached to one of the academies brought with him from Europe a microscope to aid him in his studies. On arrival at Boston, a heavy duty upon his instrument was demanded, and that demand was only relaxed on the Professor undertaking to make a free gift of the microscope to the school with which he was connected. Further, the Principal of the establishment was subsequently required to take an oath that the instrument had been delivered as a free gift for the sole use of the school, and that it was to be neither sold nor given away.

An American inventor named Beals is said to have produced a type-setting machine which is practical, and which will do the work of twenty compositors. The invention covers two separate machines. The first has the aspect of an ordinary typewriter worked with keys, but the depression of a key instead of printing a letter makes a perforation in a travelling paper tape, the distance of that perforation from a base line being different for every letter. The strip of paper is now transferred to the other machine, which works automatically. The perforated strip passes across a number of projections, each one capable of

making electrical contact through a perforation, this contact causing an electro-magnet to attract the particular type with which the perforation is associated. The types arrange themselves into lines, and are then moulded ready for stereotyping.

Mr Thomas Fletcher of Warrington has called our attention to the frequent bringing forward by ignorant inventors of schemes for getting rid of snow in our streets by melting it by the heat of gas. He points out that such a project is bound to end in failure, for the heating capacity of a cubic foot of gas has long ago been determined, and to show the futility of such a scheme is merely a matter of arithmetic. Supposing that appliances could be designed by which the work could be done effectually—a most improbable assumption—it can be demonstrated that the cost of melting a six-inch fall of snow on one mile of roadway twenty feet wide would be, with gas at three shillings per thousand feet, close upon forty pounds sterling. Unless, too, some means were adopted to warm the surface of the ground somewhat above freezing-point, the melted snow would leave a shining coat of ice, which would be far more dangerous to traffic than the soft covering which it had cost so much to remove.

We are glad to see that the important question of electric communication between our light-houses and the adjacent coasts is once more coming to the front. This question has in the past been much neglected, partly because it is one which does not come directly under the control of any particular government department, and partly because those vitally interested in the matter, our brave sailors and fishermen, are not very well represented in parliament. Other nations have long ago seen the necessity of establishing such communications, and ever since the lamentable wreck of the *Schiller* at the Scilly Isles in 1875 the system has been strongly advocated by influential men. It is to be hoped that something will be done before another such terrible wreck and loss of life urges the matter upon the attention of parliament.

The latest application of the penny-in-the-slot principle is represented in Paris by the automatic distributor of beverages. The apparatus, which dispenses all things drinkable from Malaga wine to hot coffee, may now be seen in many public places in the French metropolis, and is well patronised by the public. It is certain that such a system would meet with extensive patronage in this country upon certain conditions. The first of these would be, that the coffee should be fit to drink, which it very frequently is not in many places where it is sold to the public.

Among the exhibits at the coming 'world's fair' at Chicago will be one illustrating, by means of specimens, the mineral resources of Britain. A collection is now being formed with this view; and at the close of the Exhibition it will not be returned to this country, but will be presented to one of the American Museums.

According to good old custom, Mr Henry Ffennell has recently contributed to the *Times* a detailed account of the salmon-fisheries of Great Britain during the past year. It would seem from this lucid history that the great care which has recently been bestowed upon the breeding

and rearing of fish is now having its effect, for, with few exceptions, all the salmon rivers have been unusually full of fish. As might be expected, poaching has been prevalent, and fly-fishers are complaining of others who are not poachers using baits which are too seductive to the salmon. The past year seems to have been remarkable for the enormous quantity of fish captured, rather than for the phenomenal size of any particular specimens. But we note that among those which found their way to a well-known London fishmonger's, and which were scaled by Mr Ffennell, were three from the Tay, weighing sixty-two pounds, fifty-four pounds, and forty-five pounds respectively.

The occasional poisonous properties of shell-fish, notably mussels, has often been commented upon, and sad instances of illness or even death from eating fish in this condition are not unfrequently reported in the newspapers. Disease from this cause appears in a chronic form in Tierra del Fuego, where mussels are common; and as other kinds of food are rare, the natives often fall victims to poisoning caused by mussel-eating. A doctor attached to the Argentine fleet has studied this question, and has discovered that the mussels are not injurious when at their maximum time of growth, but at other times they become poor and poisonous in quality. He attributes this change to the fact that numbers die off, and the putrefaction of their bodies yields poisonous elements, which are absorbed by the survivors. It will be remembered that some time back a family near Liverpool were poisoned by eating mussels, and the disaster was attributed to the presence of sewage on the shore where the molluscs were gathered. The theory now advanced seems to be a more reasonable one to account for the unfortunate occurrence.

In a recent number of the *Zoologist* a writer complains of the havoc wrought among birds by the action of collectors and so-called naturalists, who with walking-stick guns stalk the country and shoot down every feathered thing which they come across, both in and out of season. In this way the Kentish plover, like the stone curlew, is being rapidly exterminated. It is not only that they kill the birds, but they wound a number of others, which go away to die. Many nests are also trampled down by these marauders, and it is asked why the Wild Birds' Protection Act cannot be put in force against such practices.

An interesting paper was read by Mr F. J. Brodie at a recent meeting of the Meteorological Society, the subject being 'the Prevalence of Fog in London during the past Twenty Years.' From this paper we learn that November is not the most foggy month, as is popularly supposed. December comes first among the months with an average of ten dark days; October averages nine; and November and January have each an average of little more than eight. The fog question, which has such a painful interest for Londoners, is rapidly becoming an important factor in our other large cities.

St Paul's Cathedral is to have a new clock, designed by Lord Grimthorpe, and executed by Messrs John Smith & Sons of Derby. The hours will be struck upon 'Great Paul,' a bell weighing nearly seventeen tons, with a hammer weighing seven hundred pounds. There will be no visible

alteration in the clock dials, except that provision will be made for illuminating them at night. There will be special precision apparatus associated with the clock movement, so that the first stroke of every hour and quarter will be within one second of Greenwich time.

A recent number of the *Agricultural Gazette of New South Wales* contains a very concise and interesting paper on Tea Cultivation, which is intended for the instruction of farmers of that country. The writer, Mr W. T. Robertson, does not advocate tea cultivation in Australia with any hope that an industry can be established to rival that of China, India, and Ceylon; but he believes that it would pay any farmer to grow tea on a more modest scale for his own consumption, and perhaps to supply his neighbours. The labour of children could well be utilised in the lighter portion of the work, and if the owner were under these conditions to place an acre of ground under tea cultivation, it ought to yield him about three hundred pounds of tea per annum.

A correspondent of the *Times* called attention to the fact that the obituary column in that paper on January 19th had no fewer than 159 entries. In only 128 of these was the age of the deceased given, including one infant nineteen days old. If this last little human atom be eliminated, it is found that the average age at which the remaining 127 persons died reaches the extraordinary figure of 70 years 4 months and 21 days. The writer very reasonably questions whether such a longevity has ever before been recorded in any daily paper in the world.

Some experiments have recently been carried out in the United States by Professor Leeds and Dr Davis with a view to test the value of sterilised milk. As a result of these experiments, it is stated that milk so treated, although useful in certain affections of the stomach, is insufficient to sustain life. By raising the temperature of the milk to the boiling-point, matter which was before soluble becomes insoluble, and therefore the liquid is less perfectly digestible than raw milk. But milk can be sterilised without altering its digestive properties by very simple means. It is first made slightly alkaline by the addition of lime-water, and is then heated to one hundred and fifty-five degrees Fahrenheit for six minutes.

Laboratory workers are complaining that the government, by the recent addition of mineral naphtha to methylated spirits, in order to make it too nauseous to be used by inebriates, have rendered it useless for many purposes for which it was formerly employed. Sad to say, the addition will not prevent it being consumed by confirmed toppers, who have been known to drink both naphtha and paraffin when other fiery liquids were unattainable. In Germany the end is gained by adding to the spirit a few drops of Dippel's animal oil, a product from bones, which gives the liquid such an utterly loathsome smell and taste that the most depraved will shrink from it.

'Electricity in Relation to Mining' formed the subject of an important paper recently read before the Institution of Engineers and Shipbuilders in Scotland by Mr Ernest Scott. There are at present about fifty mines in the United Kingdom which are supplied with appliances by which

power can be conveyed below ground by means of wires. Thus many mines which before have been commercially unworkable by reason of their great depth, can now be profitably worked. The reader of the paper claimed the following advantages for electric power over steam, water, or compressed air: Greater efficiency; reduced first cost; greater ease in keeping copper conductors in order, as compared with piping, especially when falling roofs or shifting floors are in question; and the facility with which machines can be moved from place to place, when only wires have to be attached to them. This refers to pumps and coal-cutters principally, which can be advanced along the roadways, or taken on wheels from one part of the workings to another.

That plague of Egypt by which the waters were turned into blood has lately been repeated in a remarkable manner in Sydney Harbour, where the waters suddenly assumed a crimson hue. This was due to the rapid development of a microscopic organism, which not only destroyed all the bivalves within its reach, but also affected the shore animals. The oysters especially suffered, and it is believed that some such rapid development of an injurious microbe may in other cases have caused a sudden dearth of these valued bivalves in districts where once they were numerous.

An ingenious method of teaching the names and relative values of the notes and other characters used in music has lately been patented. It is called the 'Kinderfreund,' and is an application of the principle which has been recognised in the system of object lessons. It consists of a model musical staff of large size upon a stiff varnished board, with a supply of differently-coloured models of each musical character—semi-breves, minims, crotchets, quavers, as well as sharps, flats, rests, &c. These can be arranged in every possible combination upon the model staff; and what may be very appropriately called a musical game may be played, while the pupil is at the same time acquiring familiarity with the names and values of the symbols employed. The various objects which make up the apparatus being treated in bright colours, are attractive to children, who will no doubt find it a useful guide through a somewhat intricate study. The inventor, whose rights are protected by patent, is Miss B. E. MacDonald, Burntisland.

UNDER THE SOUTH WALL.

THE Christmas roses had shed their last snowy petals, and the graceful glossy leaves lost their dark-green richness of colour, hanging limp and brown under the influence of the keen easterly winds that have prevailed since New-year's Day. All the month of November, and far on in December of that year, the pure loveliness of these blossoms had lighted up the warm border under the south wall of the old granary; a deep-buttressed stone wall, covered with gray and brown and saffron-hued lichens, and a small-leaved, white-veined ivy. Ten days before Christmas, from this long, warm, sheltered border were gathered yellow dahlias, brown and golden marigolds, dark red and white chrysanthemums, blue corncockles,

yellow jessamine, white and yellow marguerites, pale pink monthly roses, and several lovely half-blown *Maréchal Niels*, besides a big sheaf of *mignonette* and late purple violets, whose perfume was deliciously sweet.

The autumn had been fine and sunny, and the early winter days free from sharp frosts and rough winds, and the south border is so sheltered from wild weather, that from the necessary clearance of garden rubbish, six weeks barely pass before the hardy spring bulbs begin to show their tender spikes of green from under the dark porous earth, that has been rendered soft by the melted snow. The brown line of earth along the thick old wall has grown broader each day, as the faint misty sunlight glints across the leafless hedge.

A quickening life from the earth's heart has burst,
As it has ever done, with change and motion,
From the great morning of the world! when first
God dawned on chaos.

Turn up the moist mould gently, and all the roots will be found instinct with life. As the sleeping flowers begin to feel the life-giving south wind, the fine thread-like rootlets spread out, and seek the rich nourishment found in the soil; the bulbs swell, and shoot out the shining white points, that in a few days will develop into leaves and flowers; even now, the cone-shaped points that will become blossoms are distinguished from the sharper ones that will bring forth leaves.

There is a faint undefinable whisper of spring in the air, though the hollow murmur of stormy winds is still heard in the leafless trees; and the sound of rushing waters in the flooded brooks reveals the hidden secrets of the rain and melted snow. What a restful fascination there is in the ever-varying Book of Nature! Weary we may be with the work of the world, heart-sick with sight of trouble; yet we see even the black and bitter days of hard frost and whirling snow are but a needful preparation for the future beauty and peace.

The brown and withered clumps of bracken on the hill-side cover the tender fronds for the next season; the crisp, gray lichens on the wall protect the green softness underneath; the brown bulbs sleep in the ground; and the strong ramifying roots of the forest trees strike deeper into the earth, growing silently underground, and only waiting to feel the mysterious influence of the Gulf-stream, when the sap will rise, full of luscious nourishment, causing the bark to expand, and the tiny leaf-cones swell and glisten with renewed life and vigour. Just a bare two months of the mystery of winter, and we find, imperceptibly the gray dawn has crept in an hour earlier; the blinds are not drawn so soon in the evening; the robin's plaintive notes are heard later in the short twilight and in fuller music; and some morning, the first broken song of the Norman thrush greets the pale watery sunshine from the top of the big leafless elms, that gleams

dimly for ten minutes or so once or twice during the morning hours, from the clinging mists that drift about slowly, and once a patch of azure shines through a rift in the low-hanging clouds. It lightens the heart, and the day never seems quite so long or dull afterwards; for it tells that far off—but still there—hidden in spreading vapours, abides the glorious life-giving sun.

Nature is never altogether at rest, or idle; for while the broad fields of the world are still brown and bare of herbage, and the trees lifeless, there are south borders where can be found goodly rows of snowdrops in bud and blossom, and bright gleams of amber and white and purple in the bunches of crocuses. 'Under the brown of last year's leaves' are pink and blue hepaticas, fast showing bloom; the gay little tom-tits come to the old lichen wall, clinging to the ivy, and pecking out daintily every insect that ventures into the sunshine. From the crevices creep the bright-coloured beetles and bask on the warm dry earth; or a big spotted spider crawls warily about and investigates the premises, and should the weather appear favourable, will have stretched his web by the morning. The sweet white violets will soon scent the sunny air along the south wall, and the pink clusters of mezereon show their almond-scented blossoms. Then for a few days will come an interregnum, when the snow will cover up the south border warmly for a short space of time, while the howling March winds sweep the drifting storm-clouds fiercely over the vault of heaven, intent on their merciful message of purifying the earth of dank unwholesome vapours, and clearing the atmosphere of smoke and fog, and making sharp and distinct in the distance the blue line of the 'everlasting hills,' that stretch away for miles in wooded slopes and swelling uplands.

In a short time the woods will have a faint purple brown tinge, and the hills, now so gray and bare, will show long undulating lines of young wheat and barley, as the earth opens her pores for the outspring of vegetation. Under the hardy shrubs and laurels the golden aconite will blow, and that 'sunflower of Spring,' the dandelion, will open its cheerful face to the sun, and the bright-rayed coltsfoot expand its yellow petals above ground long before the light downy leaves show themselves to the light of day.

Round the warm comfortable hives the bees are getting restless, creeping in and out of the openings and making short gyrations, to stretch their wings after the long hibernation.

How delicious, after a tedious illness, to walk under the south wall and draw long breaths of the sweet fresh air, so eagerly longed for during days of prostrating pain—to feel the warm sunshine, and see the exuberant health and life of the young children, and hear the cheerful bustle of business life stirring in the streets, that are not a stone's-throw away from us. The very puff and whistle of the engine, and shunting of trains in the distant station, have a cheering influence upon the mind, and the invalid returns refreshed and invigorated with brighter eyes and quieter mind.

SPRING.

A DITTY FOR ST VALENTINE'S DAY.

ALL Hail! For the sun, like a giant, is rending
The clouds that seemed hung like a dark pall on
high;
Bright beams chase each other, in radiance descending,
Now kiss the cold earth, whisp'ring, 'Summer is
nigh.'

The young leaves are longing to burst from their
swathing,
And shine in the pride of their fresh tender green;
The meadows rejoice that now they are bathing
In sunshine that not for long months have they seen.

The valley's pure lilies their joy-bells are ringing
The tune that the flowerets of old have known well;
It tells of the glories the sunshine is bringing
O'er garden and hedgerow, o'er hillock and dell.

Pearl pendants the snowdrops are freely displaying,
While crocuses hold up their vases of gold,
And clust'ring violets their presence betraying,
Have hastened to peep now above the dark mould.

The rose-roots are busy their odours distilling,
To hive in soft cups, or to freely bestow;
The song-birds are tuning, and piping, and trilling
To tell of the music that summer shall know.

And the seeds, that for weeks have been silently
swelling,
Thank that ploughman, the earthworm, who delves
in the dark,
For loosening the soil, its own proper dwelling,
In cornfields and garden, in meadow and park.

The rooks in a fluster hold parliament meetings
To settle the weighty affairs of their race,
Or caw out their wrath, or perchance friendly greetings,
Their wrath if wrongdoers away they must chase.

Oh, let us rejoice in the sweet olden story
That earth is the Hebe eternally young,
For winter was only a mask for her glory,
That theme of which poets have constantly sung.

Ah, the longer we live the more are we learning
The Hand of the Ruler to trace everywhere;
And the rapture we feel at spring-tide returning
In renewal of youth shows that we have a share!

CAMILLA CROSLAND.

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OUR COAST LIFE-SAVING SERVICES : ARE THEY SUFFICIENT?

THE year 1891 will long be remembered for the severity of the weather experienced on the British coasts. Gale succeeded gale with relentless persistency, and the maritime disasters caused by them taxed all our available life-saving machinery to the utmost. The three opening and the three closing months of the year were especially fertile in casualties. How terrible the March storms were, the simple statement that no fewer than fifty-three lives were lost within the space of two hours in close proximity to the Start, bears eloquent witness; and the fate of the *Ben Venue* and *Enterkin* affords ample testimony to the awful weather of the last three months of the year that is gone.

A shipwreck is always a lamentable catastrophe; but when it occurs on the very threshold of home, after a vessel has successfully combated the storms and perils of a lengthy voyage, it is doubly distressing. Future chroniclers of maritime disasters will ever assign a prominent place to the loss of the *Bay of Panama*. The story of this wreck is too well known to need any but the briefest allusion. Homeward bound from a long voyage, the fine four-master was beating up the English Channel, when the terrible 'March' blizzard came on, and she was unable, by reason of the fierce south-east gale, to avoid the outlying rock-reefs that fringe the Cornish coast. The frantic efforts of the brave natives to bring the aid of the coastguard into requisition—the gallant rescue of a portion of the crew by the rocket apparatus—the awful sight of a noble ship, dimly visible through the blinding snow and spray, lying helpless within a stone's-throw from the beach—the irresistible wind, driving before it the cruel seas that swept the spent and frozen mariners one by one from the vessel's deck, will long live in the memory of the inhabitants of the hamlets that lie adjacent to the cove where the disaster occurred.

There is no need to multiply instances. The cases we have mentioned are quite sufficient for the purpose. Their lamentable life-loss affords ample reason for bringing into review the whole of the Life-saving Services available for the succour of the shipwrecked. Altogether about six or seven hundred lives are lost off the British coasts each year, and this loss of life is greatly in excess of what it should be. Great Britain's maritime supremacy is undoubted; but her life-saving machinery is vastly inferior to the requirements of the case, and very much behind that of other countries whose commercial importance is insignificant when compared with ours. During the year ended June 30, 1890, the number of vessels lost or damaged on the coasts of the British Islands, or in the seas immediately adjacent to them, was 4334, and the loss of life so far as can be ascertained was 406. This takes no cognisance of other life-loss than that resulting from shipwreck. The total number of lives lost during the past thirty years reaches no fewer a total than 25,265, an enormous number to be sacrificed at our very doors. The number of lives saved from wrecked vessels during the same period was 25,541—so that the number saved exceeds the number lost by 276.

Now, what are the means at hand to provide for the safety of the 4000 vessels that yearly meet with disaster off our coasts? First, there are the boats of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, an organisation which reflects the highest credit upon the British public, the officials of the Society, and the brave crews who risk their lives in the noble work. This is the chief life-saving means. There are other lifeboats; but the Lifeboat Institution is responsible for the equipment and maintenance of the vast majority of the lifeboats around our coasts. There are 303 rocket stations whose equipment is furnished by the Board of Trade. In assessing the available life-saving means, it must not be lost sight of that the fishermen and boatmen attracted to the scene of a disaster can always be relied upon to give valuable assistance to the cause of life-saving. These

are the principal means of succour for the shipwrecked; but they are deplorably short of the needs of Great Britain's mercantile marine.

A short consideration of the facts of the case will readily show wherein this deficiency originates, and the best means for its removal. It must be confessed, however, that it is somewhat of an invidious task to hint at shortcomings in such a glorious and time-honoured institution as the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. No blame, however, attaches to it. The term voluntary has no higher signification than when applied to a life-saving service. But, unfortunately, poverty is too often a chronic complaint of 'voluntary' institutions. Certainly, the Royal Lifeboat Institution is not exempt from the disease, and is, in consequence, compelled to draw upon her capital for support. Depreciation fund there is none, and past experience shows that it is practically impossible to raise one. The purses that are opened wide when a thrilling shipwreck or awful lifeboat disaster makes a heart-stirring appeal, are closed to the more prosaic request for funds to carry out repairs rendered necessary by commonplace wear and tear. The Government are quite content to relegate the life-saving business to other hands than their own, and to look on while the members of the Lifeboat Institution strive to the utmost to attract a supply of funds adequate to the needs of the shipwrecked.

The lifeboat charities have other and powerful competitors in the field of public sympathy. Statistics show that colliery disasters or foreign famines have frequently caused a diminution in the life-saving subscriptions. This will ever be so. The public liberality always was and always will be an inconstant quantity. Its vagaries are well known, and are beyond control. Appeals have lately been made throughout the length and breadth of the land in aid of the funds of the Royal Lifeboat Society. The hearty response that the appeal has met with is shown by the fact that the editor of the *Yorkshire Post* collected £3500 within the short space of three weeks; and at Manchester, where over £5000 was raised, £600 was collected in coppers from the streets! This is very gratifying; but the question will of necessity suggest itself: What happens when the public bounty is withheld? Who suffers? The answer is, the shipwrecked.

As we have pointed out, the Royal Lifeboat Institution is the *main* life-saving force. Contract its sphere of usefulness by a diminution of financial support, and the area of suffering and misery consequent upon loss of life among our seamen is increased in the same proportion. British seamen surely deserve better of the nation than that their safety should be left to the vagaries of public charity. Yet the State, because there is no available fund which may be devoted to the purposes of life-saving, are content to let matters go on as in the past, rather than take upon themselves the responsibility of creating such a fund.

We have already mentioned the deplorable life-loss that marked the path of the blizzard of March 1891. The southern shore of England was then literally strewn with wreckage. Each projecting headland on the coast of Devon and Cornwall was the scene of a maritime disaster

whose awfulness varied in proportion to the loss of life involved. Besides, the lack of complete organisation between the different life-saving machinery was made painfully manifest. Lighthouse and lightship keepers gazed on vessels drifting helplessly to destruction, and were powerless to aid—unable even to communicate the news to the nearest coastguard or lifeboat station.

This storm materially strengthened the case which the Associated Chambers of Commerce had to lay before the President of the Board of Trade in June. The annual meeting of the Chambers was held early in March, and then it was resolved to leave no stone unturned to secure telegraphic communication between lighthouse or lightship and the shore. The resolution impressed upon Sir Michael Hicks-Beach was to the effect that 'it was most important that, in addition to the coastguard and lifeboat stations, the lightships and lighthouses both on the mainland and on adjacent islands, such as Lundy Island, be placed in telegraphic communication with the general telegraphic system.' The cost of such an undertaking is estimated at £100,000, a small amount when the possibilities of life-saving are considered, and an amount which British shipowners have expressed their willingness to subscribe to. How much more effective would British life-saving services become were the officials apprised from lighthouse or lightship of the exact whereabouts of a distressed vessel. Unfortunately, however, red-tape interferes very materially with this vital reform. The coastguard, whose labours it was proposed to utilise for the purposes of life-saving, are controlled by another department of the Government, and, to quote what the President of the Board of Trade himself said: 'I must ask you to understand that I can really have nothing to do departmentally with the matter so far as it affects the coastguard service. The coastguard are of course under the Admiralty; and any fresh duties to be imposed upon them must be imposed with the consent of the Admiralty and under rules to be made by the Admiralty.'

The deputation and its treatment puts in little compass the main features of the question. The shipowning class agitate for life-saving reforms, the major portion of the expense connected with which would fall upon them; while that department of the Government to which is deputed the task of providing for the safety of the travelling community by land or sea shelve their responsibility, and plead first that they have no funds available for the purpose; and secondly, that the proposed reforms would involve the co-operation of another official department of the State. And so the matter drags on, while storms come, and ships are wrecked, and much valuable life and property are sacrificed by the delay. But why should not the State be held solely and wholly responsible for the administration of an efficient life-saving service and one that shall supply the needs of the mercantile marine? France, Denmark, Scandinavia, Holland, Canada, and the Cape have their lighthouses connected by telegraph or telephone with their general telegraph systems, and their life-saving systems are rendered much more effective in consequence.

In the United States there is a Government life-saving service, and the men engaged in it

are servants of the State, drilled and trained in the art of saving life. Some are lifeboat men; others have for their special work the manipulation of the rocket apparatus; while another section are surfmen practised in rescuing drowning men from the broken water close in shore. In all there are some 225 of these life-saving stations; and the number of disasters that came within their field of operation during the last year for which returns were available was 378; and out of 3016 persons on board the vessels in distress, only 38 lives were lost.

Some such service as this might with advantage be instituted in this country. The direct benefits conferred by it would be very great. The crews that man our lifeboats would be paid by the State, and if they lost their lives in the work of rescue, dependent relatives could with justice expect compensation from the State. The Royal Lifeboat Institution has always afforded handsome assistance in the case of a lifeboat disaster, and the British public has ever responded heartily to an appeal of this class. But the claims of those who lose their lives in the cause of the shipwrecked should not be dependent upon public sympathy alone; the State should, so far as monetary compensation can, repair the loss, and the generosity of the public could afford supplementary testimony of the value of the services rendered, as it chose.

A great defect in the present condition of things is that the different lifeboat stations round the coast are not placed in direct communication with each other. In many cases these stations are very close together, and it frequently happens that more than one lifeboat puts off to the same distressed vessel. Much unnecessary risk is thus run. It will be remembered that on the occasion of the memorable disaster to the Southport lifeboat, when almost the whole crew perished, the wrecked vessel was succoured from an adjacent lifeboat station. At Liverpool this lack of intercommunication is still more marked. The lightships moored in Liverpool Bay signal by means of rockets when they observe any vessel in distress. In the darkness of the night, it is a difficult matter to find a wrecked vessel among the wild masses of broken water that mark the dangerous sandbanks, navigation among which is fraught with so much danger. Yet three lifeboats will sometimes put out in response to the same signals, where, by better management, one lifeboat would suffice. The very presence of a lightship shows the existence of a danger-spot, a locality where vessels are likely to come to grief, and the benefits conferred by connecting them telegraphically with the nearest life-saving stations would be incalculable. Lifeboat crews could then be apprised of the exact locality of a wreck, and less would be heard of crews spending the whole night upon the waters vainly seeking for some reported wreck.

The location of lightships on dangerous coasts suggests the possibility of a reform that was advocated as far back as the year 1875. The ship *Deutschland* was stranded within the view of four lightvessels, the *Kentish Knock*, *Cork*, *Shipwash*, and the *Sunk*—a well-known spot dreaded by mariners making London and caught in bad weather. She lay there for thirty hours before assistance arrived. It was then suggested that

if a life-saving vessel equipped with a lifeboat were moored right in the midst of a dangerous seaway, as lightvessels are, she might often be able to render efficient and prompt assistance. The loss of the *Deutschland* was soon forgotten, and with it the suggestion it had called into being.

Even with a life-saving service as perfect as ample means and scientific foresight can make it, it must not be forgotten that 'self-help' is a principle as efficacious in saving life as in other matters. It frequently happens that the rocket apparatus fails to throw a line over a stranded vessel. A ship, however big, is a difficult mark to hit, for the gale that blows her ashore drives the friendly rocket-stick back to the would-be rescuers. The shore is an easier target, and one readily reached with the aid of the wind blowing from the ship to the shore. It is rarely that a vessel is so broken up on striking that there is not the stump of a mast remaining, to which the life-line can be attached. Many lives might be saved if vessels themselves carried the requisite means of conveying a line to the shore. Insular position has done much to establish the maritime supremacy of Great Britain; but it must not be forgotten that the mere fact of its being an island and possessed of the greatest carrying trade of the world, constitutes a standing source of danger to British seamen.

The labours of these toilers of the sea lay the nation under a deep debt of gratitude. Gratitude alone, to say nothing of humanity, demands that everything possible shall be done to stay the frightful life-waste occurrent on our shores. At present there is much to be done, and it devolves upon the State to supply that which is lacking, and to see that the coasts of Great Britain are equipped with life-saving machinery as complete as human foresight can devise, and worthy of the great mercantile marine which is our boast.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER VII.—SOMETHING ELSE HAPPENS.

MR DERING lay back in his chair, gazing at the door—the unromantic office door—through which Elsie had just passed. I suppose that even the driest of old bachelors and lawyers may be touched by the sight of a young girl made suddenly and unexpectedly happy. Perhaps the mere apparition of a lovely girl, dainty and delicate and sweet, daintily and delicately appressed, so as to look like a goddess or a wood-nymph rather than a creature of clay, may have awakened old and long-forgotten thoughts before the instincts of youth were stifled by piles of parchment. It is the peculiar and undisputed privilege of the historian to read thoughts, but it is not always necessary to write them down.

He sat up and sighed. 'I have not told her all,' he murmured. 'She shall be happier still.' He touched his hand-bell. 'Checkley,' he said, 'ask Mr Austin kindly to step this way.—A day of surprise—of joyful surprise—for both.'

It was indeed to be a day of good fortune, as you shall see.

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He opened a drawer and took out a document rolled and tied, which he laid upon the table before him.

George obeyed the summons, not without misgiving, for Elsie, he knew, must by this time have had the dreaded interview, and the call might have some reference to his own share in the great contumacy. To incur the displeasure of his employer in connection with that event might lead to serious consequences.

Astonishing thing! Mr Dering received him with a countenance that seemed transformed. He smiled benevolently upon him. He even laughed. He smiled when George opened the door: he laughed when, in obedience to a gesture of invitation, George took a chair. He actually laughed: not weakly or foolishly, but as a strong man laughs.

'I want ten minutes with you, George Austin'—he actually used the Christian name—'ten minutes or a quarter of an hour, or perhaps half an hour.' He laughed again. 'Now, then'—his face assumed its usual judicial expression, but his lips broke into unaccustomed smiles—'Now then, sir, I have just seen my ward—my former ward, for she is now of age—and have heard—well—everything there was to hear.'

'I have no doubt, sir, that what you heard from Elsie was the exact truth.'

'I believe so. The questions which I put to her I also put to you. How do you propose to live? On your salary? You have been engaged to my late ward without asking the permission of her guardians—that is, her mother and myself.'

'That is not quite the case. We found that her mother opposed the engagement, and therefore it was not necessary to ask your permission. We agreed to let the matter rest until she should be of age. Meanwhile, we openly corresponded and saw each other.'

'It is a distinction without a difference. Perhaps what you would call a legal distinction. You now propose to marry. Elsie Arundel is no longer my ward; but, as a friend, I venture to ask you how you propose to live? A wife and a house cost money. Shall you keep house and wife on your salary alone? Have you any other resources?'

There are several ways of putting these awkward questions. There is especially the way of accusation, by which you charge the guilty young man of being by his own fault one of a very large family—of having no money and no expectations—nothing at all, unless he can make it for himself. It is the manner generally adopted by parents and guardians. Mr Dering, however, when he put the question smiled genially and rubbed his hands—a thing so unusual as to be terrifying in itself—as if he was uttering a joke—a thing he never had done in his life. The question, however, even when put in this, the kindest way, is one most awkward for any young man, and especially to a young man in either branch of the law, and most especially to a young man beginning the ascent of the lower branch.

Consider, of all the professions, crowded as they are, there is none so crowded as this branch of the law. 'What,' asks anxious Quiverful Père, 'shall I do with this boy of mine? I will spend a thousand pounds upon him and make him a solicitor. Once he has passed, the way is clear

for him.' 'How,' asks the ambitious man of trade, 'shall I advance my son? I will make him a lawyer; once passed, he will open an office and get a practice and become rich. He will be a gentleman. And his children will be born gentlemen.' Very good; a most laudable custom it is in this realm of Great Britain for the young men still to be pressing upwards, though those who are already high up would fain forget the days of climbing and sneer at those who are making their way. But, applied to this profession, climbing seems no longer practicable. This way of advance will have to be abandoned.

Consider, again. Every profession gets rich out of its own mine. There is the mine Ecclesiastic, the mine Medical, the mine Artistic, the mine Legal. The last-named contains leases, covenants, agreements, wills, bonds, mortgages, actions, partnerships, transfers, conveyances, county courts, and other treasures, all to be had for the digging. But—and this is too often forgotten—there is only a limited quantity to be taken out of the mine every year, and there is not enough to go round, except in very minute portions. And since, until we become socialists at heart, we shall all of us continue to desire for our share, that which is called the mess of Benjamin, and since all cannot get that mess—which Mr Dering had enjoyed for the whole of his life—or anything like that desirable portion, most young solicitors go in great heaviness of spirit—hang their heads, corrugate their foreheads, write despairing letters to the girls they left behind them, and with grumbling gratitude take the hundred or two hundred a year which is offered for their services as managing clerks. Again, the Legal mine seems of late years not to yield anything like so much as formerly. There has been a cruel shrinkage all over the country, and especially in country towns: the boom of building seems to have come to an end: the agricultural depression has dragged down with it an immense number of people who formerly flourished with the lawyers, and, by means of their savings, investments, leases, and partnerships and quarrels, made many a solicitor fat and happy. That is all gone. It used to be easy, if one had a little money, to buy a partnership. Now it is no longer possible, or, at least, no longer easy. Nobody has a business greater than he himself can manage: everybody has got a son coming in.

These considerations show why the question was difficult to answer.

Said George in reply, but with some confusion: 'We are prepared to live on little. We are not in the least extravagant: Elsie will rough it. Besides, she has her Art'—

'Out of which she makes at present nothing a year.'

'But she will get on—and I may hope, may reasonably hope, some time to make an income larger than my present one.'

'You may hope—you may hope. But the position is not hopeful. In fact, George Austin, you must marry on ten times your present income, or not at all.'

'But I assure you, sir, our ideas are truly modest, and we have made up our minds how we can live and pay our way.'

'You think you have. That is to say you have prepared a table of expenses showing how, with

twopence to spare, you can live very well on two hundred pounds a year. Of course you put down nothing for the thousand-and-one little unexpected things which everybody of your education and habits pays for every day.'

'We have provided as far as we can see.'

'Well, it won't do. Of course, I can't forbid the girl to marry you. She is of age. I can't forbid you—but I can make it impossible—impossible for you, Master Austin—impossible.'

He rapped the table. The words were stern, but the voice was kindly, and he smiled again as he spoke. 'You thought you would do without me, did you? Well—you shall see—you shall see.'

George received this threat without words, but with a red face and with rising indignation. Still, when one is a servant, one must endure the reproofs of the master. He said nothing therefore, but waited.

'I have considered for some time,' Mr Dering continued, 'how to meet this case in a satisfactory manner. At last I made up my mind. And if you will read this document, young gentleman, you will find that I have made your foolish proposal to marry on love and nothing else quite impossible—quite impossible, sir.' He slapped the table with the paper and tossed it over to George.

George took the paper and began to read it. Suddenly he jumped out of his chair. He sprang to his feet. 'What?' he cried.

'Go on—go on,' said Mr Dering benevolently.

'Partnership? Partnership?' George gasped. 'What does it mean?'

'It is, as you say, a Deed of Partnership between myself and yourself. The conditions of the Partnership are duly set forth—I hope you will see your way to accepting them.—A Deed of Partnership. I do not know within a few hundreds what your share may be, but I believe you may reckon on at least two thousand for the first year, and more—much more—before long.'

'More than a thousand?'

'You have not read the deed through. Call yourself a lawyer? Sit down and read it word for word.'

George obeyed, reading it as if it was a paper submitted to him for consideration, a paper belonging to some one else.

'Well? You have read it?'

'Yes; I have read it through.'

'Observe that the Partnership may be dissolved by Death, Bankruptcy, or Mutual Consent. I receive two-thirds of the proceeds for life. That—alas!—will not be for long.—Well, young man, do you accept this offer?'

'Accept? Oh! Accept? What can I do? What can I say—but accept?' He walked to the window and looked out; I suppose he was admiring the trees in the Square, which were certainly very beautiful in early July. Then he returned, his eyes humid.

'Aha!' Mr Dering chuckled. 'I told you that I would make it impossible for you to marry on two hundred pounds a year. I waited till Elsie's birthday. Well? You will now be able to revise that little estimate of living on two hundred a year. Eh?'

'Mr Dering,' said George, with breaking voice,

'I cannot believe it; I cannot understand it. I have not deserved it.'

'Shake hands, my Partner.'

The two men shook hands.

'Now sit down and let us talk a bit,' said Mr Dering. 'I am old. I am past seventy. I have tried to persuade myself that I am still as fit for work as ever. But I have had warnings. I now perceive that they must be taken as warnings. Sometimes it is a little confusion of memory—I am not able to account for little things—I forget what I did yesterday afternoon. I suppose all old men get these reminders of coming decay. It means that I must reduce work and responsibility. I might give up business altogether and retire: I have money enough and to spare: but this is the third generation of a successful House, and I could not bear to close the doors, and to think that the Firm would altogether vanish. So I thought I would take a partner, and I began to look about me. Well—in brief, I came to the conclusion that I should find no young man better qualified than yourself for ability and for power of work and for all the qualities necessary for the successful conduct of such a House as this. Especially I considered the essential of good manners. I was early taught by my father that the greatest aid to success is good breeding. I trust that in this respect I have done justice to the teaching of one who was the most courtly of his time. You belong to an age of less ceremony and less respect to rank. But we are not always in a barrack or in a club. We are not all comrades or equals. There are those below to consider as well as those above. There are women: there are old men: you, my partner, have shown me that you can give to each the consideration, the deference, the recognition that he deserves. True breeding is the recognition of the individual. You are careful of the small things which smooth the asperities of business. In no profession, not even that of medicine, is a good manner more useful than in ours. And this you possess.—It also pleases me,' he added after a pause, 'to think that in making you my partner, I am also promoting the happiness of a young lady I have known all her life.'

George murmured something. He looked more like a guilty schoolboy than a man just raised to a position most enviable. His cheeks were flushed and his hands trembled. Mr Dering touched his bell.

'Checkley,' he said, when that faithful retainer appeared, 'I have already told you of my intention to take a partner. This is my new partner.'

Checkley changed colour. His old eyes—or was George wrong?—flashed with a light of malignity as he raised them. It made him feel uncomfortable—but only for a moment.

'My partner, Checkley,' repeated Mr Dering.

'Oh!' His voice was dry and grating. 'Since we couldn't go on as before— Well, I hope you won't repent it.'

'You shall witness the signing of the Deed, Checkley. Call in a clerk. So—there we have it, drawn, signed, and witnessed. Once more, my partner, shake hands.'

Elsie retired to her own room after the snub administered to her rising spirits. She soon

began to sing again, being much too happy to be affected by anything so small. She went on with her portrait, preserving some, but not all, of the softness and benevolence which she had put into it, and thereby producing what is allowed to be an excellent portrait, but somewhat flattering. She herself knows very well that it is not flattering at all, but even lower than the truth, only the other people have never seen the lawyer in an expansive moment.

Now, while she was thus engaged, her mind going back every other minute to her newly-acquired inheritance, a cab drove up to the house—the door flew open, and her lover—her George—flew into her arms.

'You here—George? Actually in the house? Oh! but you know'—

'I know—I know. But I could not possibly wait till this evening. My dear child, the most wonderful—the most wonderful thing—the most extraordinary thing—in the whole world has happened—a thing we could never hope and never ask'—

'Mr Dering has told you, then?'

'What? Do you know?'

'Mr Dering told me this morning.—Oh George! isn't it wonderful?'

'Wonderful? It is like the last chapter of a novel!' This he said speaking as a Fool, because the only last chapter in life is that in which Azrael crosses the threshold.

'Oh George!—I have been walking in the air—I have been flying—I have been singing and dancing. I feel as if I had never before known what it was to be happy. Mr Dering said something about having it settled—mind—it's all yours, George—yours as well as mine.'

'Yes,' said George, a little puzzled. 'I suppose in the eyes of the law it is mine, but then it is yours as well. All that is mine is yours.'

'Oh! Mr Dering said it was mine in the eyes of the law. What does it matter, George, what the stupid old law says?'

'Nothing, my dear—nothing at all.'

'It will be worth five hundred pounds a year very nearly. That, with your two hundred pounds a year, will make us actually comfortable after all our anxieties.'

'Five hundred a year? It will be worth four times that, I hope.'

'Four times? Oh no!—that is impossible. But Mr Dering told me that he could hardly get so much as four per cent., and I have made a sum and worked it out. Rule for simple interest: multiply the principal by the rate per cent., and again by the time, and divide by a hundred. It is quite simple. And what makes the sum simpler, you need only take one year.'

'What principal, Elsie, by what interest? You are running your little head against rules of arithmetic. Here there is no principal and no interest. It is a case of proceeds, and then division.'

'We will call it proceeds, if you like, George, but he called it interest. Anyhow, it comes to five hundred a year, very nearly; and with your two hundred'—

'I don't know what you mean by your five hundred a year. As for my two hundred, unless I am very much mistaken, that will very soon be two thousand.'

'Your two hundred will become?—George, we are talking across each other.'

'Yes. What money of yours do you mean?'

'I mean the twelve thousand pounds that Mr Dering holds for me—with accumulations—accumulations'—she began to sing the Rhyme of the omnibus wheels—'accumulations—atons—atons.'

'Twelve thousand pounds? Is this fairyland? Twelve thousand?—I reel—I faint—I sink—I melt away. Take my hands—both my hands, Elsie—kiss me kindly—it's better than brandy—kindly kiss me. Twelve thousand pounds! with accumulations'—

'—atons—atons—atons,' she sung. 'Never before, George, have I understood the loveliness and the power of money. They were given to Mr Dering by an anonymous person to be held for me—secretly. No one knows—not even, yet, my mother.'

'Oh! It is altogether too much—too much: once there was a poor but loving couple, and Fortune turned her wheel, and— You don't know—you most unsuspecting ignorant Thing—you can't guess—Oh, Elsie, I am a partner—Mr Dering's partner!'

They caught hands again—then they let go—then they sat down and gazed upon each other.

'Elsie,' said George.

'George,' said Elsie.

'We can now marry like everybody else—but much better. We shall have furniture now.'

'All the furniture we shall want, and a house where we please. No contriving now—no pinching.'

'No self-denying for each other, my dear.'

'That's a pity, isn't it?—But, George, don't repine. The advantages may counterbalance the drawbacks. I think I see the cottage where we were going to live. It is in Islington: or near it—Barnsbury, perhaps: there is a little garden in front, and one at the back. There is always washing hung out to dry. I don't like the smell of suds. For dinner, one has cold Australian tinned meat for economy, not for choice. The rooms are very small, and the furniture is shabby, because it was cheap and bad to begin with. And when you come home—oh George!—she stuck her forefinger in her chalk and drew two or three lines on his face—you look like that, so discontented, so grumpy, so gloomy. Oh, my dear, the advantages—they do so greatly outbalance the drawbacks; and George—you will love your wife all the more—I am sure you will—because she can always dress properly and look nice, and give you a dinner that will help to rest you from the work of the day.'

Once more this foolish couple fell into each other's arms and kissed again with tears and smiles and laughter.

'Who,' asked Mrs Arundel, ringing the bell up-stairs, 'who is with Miss Elsie below?'

On hearing that it was Mr George Austin, whose presence in the house was forbidden, Mrs Arundel rose solemnly and awfully and walked down the stairs. She had a clear duty before her. When she threw open the door, the lovers were hand in hand dancing round the room laughing—but the tears were running down Elsie's cheeks.

'Elsie,' said her mother, standing at the open door, 'perhaps you can explain this.'

'Permit me to explain,' said George.

'This gentleman, Elsie, has been forbidden the house.'

'One moment,' he began.

'Go, sir.' She pointed majestically to the window.

'Oh!' cried Elsie. 'Tell her, George—tell her; I cannot.' She fell to laughing and crying together, but still held her lover by the hand.

'I will have no communication whatever with one who robs me of a daughter,' said this Roman matron. 'Will you once more leave the house, sir?'

'Mother—you *must* hear him.'

'Nothing,' said Mrs Arundel, 'will ever induce me to speak to him—nothing.'

'Mother, don't be silly,' Elsie cried; 'you don't know what has happened. You *must* not say such things. You will only be sorry for them afterwards.'

'Never—never. One may forgive such a man, but one can never speak to him, never—what ever happens—never.' The lady looked almost heroic as she waved her right hand in the direction of the man.

'I will go,' said George, 'but not till you have heard me. I am rich—Elsie is rich—we shall not marry into poverty. The whole situation is entirely changed.'

'Changed,' Elsie repeated, taking George's arm.

'My dear George,' said Mrs Arundel, when she had heard the whole story—and by cross-examination persuaded herself that it was true—'you know on what a just basis my objections were founded. Otherwise, I should have been delighted at the outset.—Kiss me, Elsie.—You have my full consent, children. These remarkable events are Providential.—On Mr Dering's death or retirement, you will step into an enormous practice. Follow his example. Take no partner till old age compels you. Keep all the profits for yourself—all.—My dear George, you should be a very happy man. Not so rich, perhaps, as my son-in-law, Sir Samuel, but above the ordinary run of common happiness. As for the past—We will now go down to lunch.—There is the bell. These emotions are fatiguing.'

SOME COMMON MISTAKES ABOUT WORDS.

FEW subjects possess greater charms, or have had more attention bestowed on them of late years, than the study of language. For the philologist it must always be a source of the highest interest to trace the laws by which whole languages have diverged or disappeared, and the principles which have guided the formation of particular words and expressions. Among the general laws, however, which govern the formation of words, many curious perversions are to be found. Indeed, a whole chapter of the history of every language might well be devoted to an account of the odd freaks and whimsicalities to be traced in the history of certain words. It may be of interest to give a few instances of the curious shifts to which people have been put to account

for the connection between words, and especially of the many cases which occur where, from a similarity of sound or sense, or both, between two words which are really quite distinct, an unconscious association has been formed.

The examples to be given may be divided into three kinds. Our first list of words is taken from that large class which, whether by accident or error, have become so like other already familiar words as to be unconsciously associated with them in derivation and meaning. Nine persons out of ten would probably give the derivation of 'blind-fold' as coming directly from 'blind' and 'fold,' from the practice of 'folding' a cloth round the eyes, as in the game of Blindman's Buff. The word has, however, nothing to do with 'fold,' but means 'felled,' or struck blind, and might be written 'blind-felled.' In the same way the word 'buttery' is easily confused with the common term 'butter,' with which, however, it has no connection, save in the minds of those who do not know it to be a contraction for 'bottlery,' a place where 'bottles' are kept, and over which the 'bottler' or 'butler' presides.

To speak of a person acting in a 'gingerly' fashion would certainly convey a clear enough idea, and we easily connect the word in some vague manner with the word 'ginger,' perhaps from the association in our minds of the sparing use made of that condiment. The word, however, is innocent of any such roundabout derivation, and comes directly from the old word 'gang,' to go—still preserved in the Scotch phrase, 'gang that gate'—and thus originally means with cautious, faltering, or 'gingerly' steps. Again, in using the word 'blunderbuss' we unconsciously imply a sense of disparagement for the shooting powers of our forefathers contrasted with the precision of the modern rifle. The word itself has, however, a terrible enough meaning, and disdains all connection with 'blunder.' 'Blunderbuss,' in fact, as we have it, is a strange corruption—perhaps not altogether untinged with the sense and sound of 'blunder'—of the old Dutch word 'donderbus,' which can be literally translated into the English 'thunder-box' or 'thunder-barrel.'

Two such simple words as 'greyhound' and 'humble-bee' seem the last to cause difficulty as to their meaning in ordinary use; yet few people would guess that the first part of the former is unconnected with our name for a common colour, and is in reality an Icelandic word signifying a 'dog,' the whole word thus becoming 'dog-hound.' In the case of 'humble-bee,' guesses would probably preponderate in favour of deriving the word from 'humble,' meaning 'lowly,' as opposed to the correct derivation from the 'humming' sound which is the distinguishing point about this insect. Perhaps, however, the popular derivation may be partly attributable to the well-known fable where a contrast is drawn between the plodding and contented bee and her gay and thriftless cousin the wasp. This word 'humble,' curiously enough, gives rise to another popular fallacy. In the phrase 'to eat humble-pie' there seems little ingenuity required to connect the word 'humble' with the ordinary use of the word. But with this in reality it has nothing to do, the 'humble-pie' being, properly speaking, the dish made

from the 'numbles' or inferior parts of a deer's carcase, which would naturally be the portion of menials or 'humble' folk.

In the case of the word 'steelyard,' a popular etymology which derived the word from 'steel' and 'yard' would have a seeming confirmation in the fact that the instrument designated is actually made of steel and is about three feet long. The real derivation of the word, however, takes us back to the 'yard,' or court, in London where the traders of the Continent sold their steel, and which was regulated by the 'Merchants of the Steelyard.' In this yard, or court, there would stand some kind of balance for weighing the metal, and this meaning soon supplanted the original word. 'Steelyard' has thus, as we see, so far as etymology goes, nothing to do with a yard measure, though such an idea is inseparably associated with our use of the word.

The help of an historical dictionary of the language would surely be necessary to bring us to believe that the easy-looking word 'shame-faced' is unconnected with face. The term is, however, a corruption of 'shamefast,' an old word meaning 'fast,' firm, or steadfast in shame or modesty; and the last syllable, 'fast,' being pronounced so like 'faced' or 'face,' the part of the body most expressive of the feeling of shame, the transformation of the word into its modern form becomes easy of explanation. Quite as legitimate as this transition seems that between paying off a man and 'cashing' him; yet the verb 'to cash' has nothing to do either with 'cash,' meaning money, or with 'cashier,' a person who looks after it. The verb comes from an old French word meaning to break off or discharge, and thus is unconnected with 'cash,' which, though now used in the sense of money, was originally applied to the box in which it was kept.

Two words, 'purblind' and 'parboil,' are interesting as showing how a false derivation or association of sound can change the meaning of a word. 'Purblind' originally meant 'purely blind'; but probably, through confusion with the verb 'to pore,' it has now the meaning of 'partly blind.' In the same way, to 'parboil' at first signified to boil 'purely' or thoroughly; but through confusion with the word 'part,' the meaning has been modified to that of boiling 'partly.'

Perhaps few would venture to seek a connection between 'oakum' and 'oak,' but fewer still would be happy enough to give the correct derivation, and connect it with 'comb,' the tool with which the substance is teased out.

The verb 'gang,' to go, which we saw lay at the root of the word 'gingerly,' is also of use to distinguish the two terms 'gauntlet' and 'gantlet,' which seem in some way to have been confused in sense as well as sound. The term 'gauntlet,' in the phrase 'to throw down the gauntlet,' is evidently a diminutive of the French 'gant,' a glove, and refers to the old feudal practice of the challenger in the lists throwing down the mailed glove, which was picked up by the acceptor of the challenge. But in the expression 'to run the gantlet' we have a word of totally distinct derivation, coming from 'gang,' to go, and referring to the space over which the culprit or fugitive had to 'gang' before he was

clear of danger. Once more: many people nowadays connect the expression 'train-oil' in some way with locomotives and railroads. There was no danger of this mistake sixty years ago, when trains were little known, and train-oil (compare tear, something squeezed out), or the expressed fat of whales, was a common article of domestic use.

We now pass to a second class of words which illustrate, from a slightly different point of view, the vagaries of popular etymology. No philological principle is found to hold with greater consistency and completeness than this, that words which, though originally perfectly understood, have come to lose their first clear meaning, very frequently undergo a change, whereby they become connected in form and sound with others totally distinct. People must have words which they can understand and recall; and in order to gain simplicity and ease in remembering, they do not scruple to mutilate an offending term beyond recognition. In Scotland, for example, the popular ear found nothing to attract it in the term 'lilac,' a word of Persian origin; but by changing the foreign name into 'lily-oak,' familiarity and ease in recognition were gained at the expense of strict terminology.

It is said that the manifestly corrupted word 'isinglass' owes its change from a foreign to its English dress to the popular fancy, which, finding the Dutch term 'huizenblas' (sturgeon-bladder) meaningless in English, quietly changed it into 'isinglass,' and secured its easy remembrance from association with the 'icing' purposes for which it is used, and the 'glassy' appearance it presents. In the same way, 'Bocage' Walk, in London, being unmeaning to the ordinary ear, soon became transformed into 'Birdcage' Walk, not because there ever were any birdcages there, but in order to have a word which might be familiar and easily recalled. The two terms, 'crayfish' and 'causeway' singularly exemplify the same ready method of treatment to which words are subjected when they fail to convey their meaning with the requisite ease. The last syllable of the French *écrevisse* would necessarily be without sense to us; and the ingenuity which converted it into 'fish,' and the whole word into 'crayfish,' at once gave the name an English look and a sound which might suggest the thing signified. In the case of 'causeway,' again, we find popular etymology overdoing itself. We have the modern French word 'chaussée,' which, through its progenitors, was represented in English by 'causey.' A vulgar ingenuity, however, stepped in and accounted for the last syllable by supplying what it considered the original spelling, 'way,' and thus left the first part of the word quite unaccounted for, though the word as a whole gained a form which rendered it more familiar to the English eye.

A still more remarkable instance of this tendency to change and even mutilate a word in order to give it a familiar and suggestive appearance is found in the expression 'jerked-beef,' which is a ready English substitute for 'charqui,' the Peruvian word for meat cooked in smoke, or 'jerked.' Such a liberty taken with a foreign word may readily be pardoned when so happy in result; but the necessity for changing 'lustrine,' a French word for silk, into 'lutestring,' may be questioned, seeing we have many words,

such as 'lustre' and 'lustrous,' from the same root. But there is no accounting for fancies. Many persons must have been struck with the awkward beginning of the line in the hundredth psalm :

For why? The Lord our God is good.

The truth is, popular ingenuity—represented in this case, perhaps, by the printer—has taken the liberty of changing the old word 'forwhy,' meaning 'because,' which gave good sense, and translated the original, but which had fallen out of common use, into the modern 'for why?' Surely the restoration of the word might still be attempted before it is too late.

Another curious instance of the false ingenuity of the popular mind when put to the test is to be seen in the simple-looking word 'titmouse.' The first part of this word is very easy, and means something small, as we see in 'titlark' and 'tomtit.' The Middle-English form of our word was, however, 'titmose,' the last part of which means a small bird, and has nothing to do with 'mouse.' Not only, however, did the popular fancy seize on the form 'titmouse' as more familiar and suggestive, but it was so captivated with its own cleverness that the plural of the word became 'titnice!'

The explanation of the word 'belfry' in Mr Skeat's Dictionary is interesting in this connection. The word had originally no connection with 'bell,' an idea which is now intimately associated with the term. The first meaning given is 'watch-tower,' from the Middle English 'berfry,' a watch-tower. The first part of this word is connected with 'borough,' the second with 'free.' As the practice grew of hanging 'bells' in such towers, people reminded themselves of the fact by changing the word 'berfry' into the modern 'belfry.' In modern times, with our wide diffusion of education, the spread of books, and the steadying influences of printing, the tendency, illustrated above, to sacrifice accuracy in terminology to simplicity in form and sound, cannot much longer hope to find illustration. Yet in the word 'sparrow-grass,' a corruption of 'asparagus,' we can still trace the striving of the popular ear to find a word which will sound less unfamiliar and unmeaning. Were the counteracting influences of education and printing to cease, this vulgar substitute might possibly find a place among the acknowledged vocables of the language.

There is still another class of words to which it may prove interesting to draw attention. The tendency to throw unfamiliar words into more intelligible form is often supplemented by a striving to account for them as they stand by some fanciful and generally fictitious explanation. The ancients were unaccountably ignorant of the principles of word-formation, and even so late a writer as Justinian derives the word 'testament' from 'testis,' a witness, which is right, and 'mens,' the mind, which is nonsense. Every one has heard of the famous derivation of the Latin 'lucus,' a grove, from 'lux,' light, the connection between the two words being explained by the fact that in groves there is little or no light!

The Greeks, when put to it to explain the word 'Amazons,' a tribe of female warriors ex-

celling in archery, broke the word up into two, 'a' and 'mazon,' which in Greek mean 'without a breast,' and, to give colour to this derivation, invented the absurd story of these warriors cutting off their right breasts to enable them to draw their bows more easily!—The writer was taught that the word 'barbarous' came from 'barba,' a beard, because such people did not shave; and that 'Scot-free' meant as free as the Scots when returning from a marauding expedition across the Border! This latter word of course really means free from contribution, 'scot' being a payment which is 'shot' into a box. The true meaning of the term is seen in the phrase 'scot and lot,' which forms the subject of an interesting paper in the Transactions of the Philological Society for 1867.

The famous story of the word 'sirloin,' or, more properly, 'surloin,' is of more recent creation. A king of England—the 'Merry Monarch,' most likely—coming in hungry one day from the chase, had served up to him a savoury loin of beef. So delighted was the famishing king at the sight of his favourite dish that he knighted it on the spot, and is it not known as 'Sir loin' even to this day? The story is of course a mere fabrication. The first part of the word, which seems to have tickled the fancy of talemongers, is a common component of words in our language, and appears in the common term 'surface,' 'Surloin,' or 'sirloin' will therefore mean simply the upper part of the loin, just as the *surface* is the upper face of anything. This word suggests another which has more recently been stripped of the tale that hung thereby. To an ordinary reader the term 'beef-eater' presents no difficulty either in signification or form, and the first meaning that suggests itself—a person who eats the beef of another, that is, his attendant—has now been acknowledged as the correct one. Yet the term has been the subject of much subtle though futile ingenuity. Mr Steevens, for example, takes the word from 'beaufetier,' one who attends at the side-table which was anciently placed in a 'beaufet,' the business of the beef-eaters being to attend the king at meals. Mr Skeat in his larger Etymological Dictionary dismisses this explanation in these words: 'When the French "beaufetier" can be found with the sense of waiter at a sideboard, in reasonably old French, or when the English "beef-eater" can be found spelt differently from its present spelling in a book earlier than the time of Mr Steevens, it will be sufficient time to discuss the question further.' In Mr Skeat's book will be found many other instances of the kind of words of which we treat.

Another word to which popular fancy—always attracted by what is unusual and out of the way—has attached a story, which, though not baseless, is yet inconsistent with fact, is the term 'cabal.' The vulgar derivation which gives it as coming from a combination of the initials of the five statesmen who formed the Cabinet of 1671, Clifford, Arlington, Buckingham, Ashley, and Lauderdale, seems ingenious enough to be true, were it not for the awkward fact that the term is really of Hebrew extraction, imported into the language and used a century earlier than the date given above.

Two other words will suffice to bring our list

to a close. What is the etymology of the term 'cockatrice?' It is a lineal descendant of the English and Greek word 'crocodile,' but the 'r'—a frequent offender in this respect—dropped out, and the word then became easily confounded with the English 'cock.' But the word, through this confusion with the name of a familiar bird, had lost much of its original terrible significance. To regain for it its lost association of terror and 'uncanniness,' while retaining its familiar sound, the hideous story was invented of the cockatrice being hatched from a cock's egg!—Lastly, in the expression 'Jerusalem artichoke' we have a curious turnabout of words which would require a lengthy explanation. Suffice it here to say that originally the word had nothing to do with the Holy City, but comes directly from 'girasole,' the Italian name for a sunflower. This blunder is now doubly irreparable. People will always connect this vegetable in some way with Jerusalem, and we are even taught to call the soup made from it 'Palestine Soup'!—One other word and we are done. Many people must have wondered where all the briars are grown from the roots of which are cut the pipes so well known to smokers as 'briar-root pipes.' It need scarcely be said that no pipes are made from the briar. The word briar-root is undoubtedly a corruption; and the derivation of 'Beirout' (a town which is said to export large quantities of the wood used in the manufacture) has been suggested. Most people would, however, prefer to side with Kingsley, and ascribe it to the French word for heath (*bruyère*), the tough woody fibre of which is peculiarly adapted for the purpose required.

THUNDERBOLT'S MATE.

By E. W. HORNING.

I.

PENELOPE LEES, cantering from the wool-shed to the home-station in the red light of a Riverina sunset, was, beyond a doubt, the pick of all the merry-looking, black-haired, blue-eyed little minxes in the colony. It is true that there was not another minx of any description within fifty miles of the Bilbil boundary-fence; but there was not a second Penelope in New South Wales; at all events, not one to compare with the Penelope that cantered home so briskly this evening, after a long day out at the shed. Her spirits were not always so high, nor her looks so jaunty and engaging. It was a special occasion: the day now dying had been the happiest day of Penelope's life: it was the first day of the shearing at Bilbil Station.

All day long little Miss Pen, on her piebald pony, had been helping with the sheep—really helping, not hindering. It was not the first time she had helped with the sheep; she could 'muster' with the best, and the mysteries of 'yarding-up' were not mysteries to Pen; but it was the first time she had been allowed out at the shed during shearing. Last year she was too young: the privilege had been promised her

when she should have entered 'double figures.' And now that Rubicon was passed; the child was ten; and three times a week, while shearing lasted, Pen was to be one of the regular hands for mustering the woolly sheep and driving the shorn ones back to their paddocks. The first day of this stirring work was at an end, and it had not disappointed her. This was why her blue eyes were so full of light, and her brown little face of animation. This was why she was pleased to imagine herself a real, big, bearded bushman; and why she must needs ride in the thick scrub, a mile wide of the track—the very thing a real bushman would *not* have done.

Not that there was the least fear of Penelope. She was the very last person to lose her way on Bilbil run. She knew every mile of it—particularly those few between the homestead and the woolshed—too well for that. But it was good practice to strike a straight line through the scrub when opportunity offered; and Pen was now in one of the thickest belts of scrub on the run, which was famous for its small share of useless timbered country, and for the extent of its fertile salt-bush plains. Here and there, where the short trees grew sparsely, pools of lingering sunlight lay across the pony's path; once a great carpet-snake—thick as a strong man's arm, and exquisitely marked—glided into its hole almost under his cantering hoofs; and more than once huge red kangaroos bounded noiselessly past, in front of his nose. The pony did not mind, being bush bred, and used to the swift, silent movements of its denizens. The silence, indeed, was extraordinary; it always is in a belt of scrub. Even the pony's canter was muffled in the soft sandy soil. Penelope apparently grew tired of the silence all at once; for she uncoiled the long lash of her stock-whip—her real bushman's stock-whip—and cracked it smartly. With the long lash swinging in the air for a second shot, she suddenly pulled up the pony. She fancied she had heard a human cry. She cracked the whip again: this time it was no fancy; a man's voice was calling faintly for help.

Penelope was startled, and for an instant greatly frightened. Then, as she could see nothing, she took about the wisest course open to her: she marked the spot where she had first heard the cry—which was being repeated at short intervals—and took it for the centre of a circle which she now proceeded to describe at a slow trot. The immediate result of this manoeuvre was that she almost rode over a man who was sitting on the ground in the shadow of a hop-bush with his two hands planted firmly behind him, and half his weight upon his straightened arms.

The pony shied: kangaroos it knew, and snakes it knew; but a solitary man squatting behind a hop-bush in the heart of the scrub was a distinct irregularity. The next moment Pen leapt lightly from the saddle—and the man

uttered one word, and that indistinctly: 'Water!'

Pen tore from her saddle the canvas water-bag which was another of her 'real bushman's' equipments. 'There's precious little in it, but there's a drop or two, I know,' she exclaimed nervously; and she was down at his side, wrenching the cork from the glass mouthpiece.

'Take care of that leg, for God's sake!' ejaculated the man.

'Why? Whatever's the matter?' She had noticed that his left leg was lying in an odd position.

'Broken,' answered the man; and his lips closed over the mouth-piece.

It was no misfortune that there was not more water in the bag. There was enough to moisten lips and tongue and throat, and a mouthful or two besides. Had there been more, the man might have done himself harm, as men have done before on obtaining water after enduring the pangs of prolonged thirst. Though far from satisfied, however, the man was relieved. Moreover, he knew now that he was saved. He sank back and closed his eyes with a look of weary thankfulness.

Penelope gazed down upon him, not liking to say anything, and uncertain for the moment what to do. He was a man, she guessed, of about her father's age—between forty and fifty; but his long black hair was not yet grizzled, nor was there a single gray strand in the bushy black beard and whiskers. Below the line of black hair, the forehead was ghastly in its pallor; and the deep bronze of the lower part of the face had paled into a sickly, yellow hue as of jaundice. The features were pinched and drawn; the closed eyes like deep-set caverns. The limbs were large and powerful, and had all the grace and suppleness of vigorous life—all but the left leg. That limb had the hard and motionless outline of death, and lay, besides, in an unnatural position. The man had neither coat nor 'swag,' but he wore long riding-boots and spurs; and this led Penelope to the conclusion—which turned out to be correct—that he had been thrown from horseback. She also noticed that his right hand rested upon his wideawake, which was on the ground at his side, as though he feared its being blown away; and this struck her as odd, seeing that the day was closing without a breath of wind.

At length he opened his eyes. 'How far is it to the homestead, missy?'

'From here? About two miles,' replied Pen.

'Do you think,' asked the fallen man, half shyly, 'they would send—if they knew?'

'Think? I know they would; why, of course. Only, the worst of it is, there's hardly any one at the homestead. There's only mother, and Sid the butcher, and Sammy the Chinnee cook. I don't suppose the groom's got in yet; he was mustering—and so was I. The rest are out at the shed. The shearing began to-day, you know.'

'How far from this is the shed, then?'

'Well, it's six miles from the homestead,' said Pen thoughtfully; 'so it must be about four from here. I'm certain it isn't a yard less than four miles from here: I've just come from there.'

'Do you think *they* would send? My leg's broken. I've been lying here twenty-four hours. But for you, little missy, to-night would have finished me, straight; though, for that matter—Bless me, missy, you're smart at mounting that little pony of yours!'

Penelope had vaulted back into the saddle. Her red little lips were tightly pressed, her teeth clenched. And there were no more sun-rays anywhere to be seen, but only a pale, pink reflection in the western sky.

'Are you going to ride back to the shed, little miss—alone—so late?'

'Yes; I'm off. They'll be here with the buggy in another hour.'

The man muttered a blessing: it was no good blessing her aloud, for Pen and her pony were a good twenty yards away: the trees and their shadows closed over them.

Before the sound of the galloping hoofs died away, the broken-legged bushman lifted his wide-awake from the ground; and under it all the while had lain a brace of revolvers.

Before the sound of hoofs returned, and with it that of wheels, the revolvers had disappeared. No one would have guessed that they were ten inches under ground. But the man's finger-nails were torn and bent, and the sand had penetrated to the quick.

II.

The boss of Bilbil admitted that evening that there was something after all in the Ambulance Movement. The admission was remarkable, because for years he had vowed that there was nothing in that movement. During his last long holiday in Melbourne he had attended a course of ambulance classes, to pacify his wife, who worried him into it, and to convince her out of his own experience that there was nothing in those classes; and he accepted the certificate which was duly awarded him as a conclusive proof that that certificate was within any fool's reach; thus disparaging himself to disparage the movement of which he had heard too much. The Philistine was converted now. A simple fracture had come in his way, a few simple directions had come back to his mind: to his great surprise, he knew all about it when the moment came: to his greater delight, the broken leg seemed to set itself. Late into that night—as late hours go, in the bush—William Lees stumped up and down his wife's sitting-room in ecstasies; delighted with himself, delighted with the ambulance classes; delighted with his wife, who had goaded him into attending them. His delight might have been less had she taken her triumph less gently; but as a matter of fact, she was doing her very best to read a book, and could not for his chatter.

'I never saw a neater break in my life,' William Lees reported for the twentieth time—'plain as a pike-staff and clean as a whistle. And I do believe I've set it safe and sound. He's sleeping now like a top.'

Mr Lees was hard-working, open-handed, and kindly, and as popular among the station hands as any squatter need wish to be. He was a man of prepossessing looks, with eyes as merry and good-natured and almost as blue as those of his

small daughter; and he joined a schoolboy's enthusiasm with a love of personal exertion which no schoolboy was ever yet known to exhibit.

'I am glad you have been able to make the poor man so comfortable,' remarked Mrs Lees—not for the first time, either—without looking up from her book.

'Comfortable? I've fixed him up A1; you should just see. He's in young Miller's room. I'll tell you what I've done: first of all, I've shifted'—

'I don't at all know how I shall get on with him upon my hands while I am all alone, as I am to be this shearing.'

There was some slight petulance in her tone; she had been obliged at last to shut up her book in despair. It was not that she was an atom less kind and good than her husband, in her own way. But it was a very different way. Mrs Lees was robust neither in health nor in spirits; in appearance she was delicate and pale, in her manner gentle; but there were signs of determination in her thin sweet face—particularly about the mouth—which were not difficult to read, and which, by the way, were reproduced pretty plainly in Penelope. She lay in one of those long, wicker-work arrangements which are more like sofas than chairs, as her husband paced the room and puffed his pipe; she disliked the smoke no less than the incessant tramping to and fro; but she complained of neither.

'Why bother your head about him, my dear?' said the boss, still marching up and down. 'If you just look him up now and then, and see that Sammy feeds him properly—he must live like a fighting-cock, you know—that'll be all that's necessary. I don't fancy, from what I see of him, that he's the one to talk much to anybody; but if, for instance, he cared to be read to, why, you—or even Pen—could do that for him; though not, of course, to any wearisome extent.'

For a while Mrs Lees remained silent and thoughtful. 'Has he told you all about the accident, Will?' she asked at length.

'He fell off his horse.'

'But the circumstances—was he alone?'

'I should think so; I didn't ask,' and Will Lees shrugged his shoulders, as much as to say that that was no business of his.

'Then what happened to his horse? And where was he bound for?'

'I really didn't ask,' answered the boss.

'Well, I think you ought to know *something* of the man, Will, dear.'

Lees stopped in his walk, and pointed at his wife the pipe-stem of masculine scorn. 'You ladies are so horribly suspicious!' he said. 'What business of mine is it who he is? What business of mine—or yours—whether the man is a humbug or not, since that's what you're driving at? There was no humbug about the broken leg; that's enough for me. It ought to be enough for you too; for he can't get at your silver spoons, my lady, and good old family plate, and priceless old ancestral jewels, and closets full of golden guineas—he can't get at any of them just yet a bit.'

The boss laughed loud at his pleasantry, being pleased with himself in every way to-night.

'No, but'—Mrs Lees began earnestly; then

she broke off: 'Dear me, how late it is! I am going to bed.'

She went. It had been on the tip of her tongue to express the objection she felt to being left alone, or practically alone, from Monday till Saturday, for six long weeks, with this stranger within the gates. But she remembered how heavily her husband had paid, the previous year, through not giving to the shearing that personal supervision which was of little use unless it began with the first shift in the early morning. She knew that the overseer was too young a man to manage thirty-six shearers, and half that number of 'rousabouts,' single-handed. She also knew that at a word from her, her husband would give up sleeping out at the shed; and this was the reason of all others why she held her tongue.

Nevertheless, William Lees did receive a hint as to the doubtful wisdom of leaving his wife and child alone at the homestead without protection during the inside of every week. It came from an outsider; in fact, from no other than the object of Mrs Lees's feminine suspicions. It was Saturday evening, the man having been brought in on the Thursday; the squatter had returned from the wool-shed for the week-end; and his very first care was to see how the broken leg was mending.

The man lay in a room in the 'barracks'—a superior sort of hut, with four rooms, sacred to the bachelors of the station. 'Now, Brown,' said the squatter, bustling in—Brown was the name the man had given—'let's have a look at the leg.'

The brief examination that followed was entirely satisfactory to the amateur bone-setter—there was no professional one within seventy miles of Bilbil. The starched bandages were hard as flint; the form of the leg was perfect; that the snap had been really as simple as it seemed, there could be no longer any doubt. What was far less satisfactory was the patient's face.

'I like the leg; it's doing very nicely,' said Lees, sitting down on the edge of the bed. 'But I don't like your looks: you look like death, man! Are you eating anything, Brown?'

'Plenty, sir, thank you. Sammy's a first-rate attendant.'

'But not first-rate company, eh? Come, my good fellow, I'm afraid you're moping. Mrs Lees tells me you seem to prefer being alone from morning till night; indeed, you've as good as told her so.'

The patient smiled faintly, and gazed at Lees with a strange expression in his cavernous eyes. 'Shall I tell you, sir, who mopes more at this station than I do?'

'By all means—if there is such a person.'

'But I don't want to give offence'—

'Then none shall be taken. Who is it?'

'The missis.'

'The mistress! What on earth do you mean, man?'

'There! I knew you wouldn't like it. But it's a fact. The missis mopes more'n I do. It's nervous work for lonely women at a station at night-time. Mrs Lees, begging your pardon, sir, is nervous, and well she may be.'

'Well she may be! My good fellow, what are you driving at?'

Brown closed his eyes. 'You've heard of Thunderbolt, sir?'

'I've heard of a villain known by that name. What about him? He's in Queensland, isn't he?'

'He's a good deal nearer home, sir,' replied Brown earnestly. 'If I'm not mistaken, I saw him a very little while ago. I don't think I *am* mistaken: I know him: I have very good reason to know him well—by sight.' A dark look came over the white face. Brown ground his teeth savagely. 'I was once stuck up by him,' he continued in a low voice. 'I shall never forget him. And I saw him as plain as I see you, Mr Lees,' said Brown impressively, opening his eyes again—'the day I broke my leg—in the paddock I broke it in!'

'In my paddock?' cried William Lees.

Brown raised his head an inch from the pillow and nodded. 'As sure as I lie here, sir. You heard of Moolah Station, twenty miles south o' this, being stuck up last Wednesday?'

'Just heard of it to-day; but that was never Thunderbolt?'

'It was never any one else, sir!'

'Then why should he leave *us* alone?—Are you quite certain you aren't mistaken, Brown? And—what the deuce is there to grin at, my man?'

'Nothing, sir. I beg pardon. Only Thunderbolt and Co. never *did* do two jobs running, with only twenty miles between them. Strike, and show clean heels; that's their line. I know them—I tell you I've been stuck up by them. Now, if you was to hear of them twenty miles *north*—'

'Has he a mate, then?'

'He had. But he was alone on Thursday—curse him! As for being mistaken, I know I'm not. I was in the scrub; he was in the open. It was just before my horse fell and smashed me—the horse that's never been seen since. You can guess now who got it. Thunderbolt has a sharp eye for horse-flesh.'

The boss jumped up from the bed. 'I wish to Heaven you'd told me this before, Brown!'

'My leg was that bad; I couldn't think of things.'

At this moment a hum of voices came through the open window from the long veranda opposite. The squatter looked out hastily. 'The Belton buggy!' he exclaimed. 'Young Rooper and Michie!' He hurried out. Brown closed his eyes wearily. But the buzz of voices outside grew louder and louder; and presently, back rushed Lees to the sick-room, his face flaming with excitement. 'You were right, Brown! I couldn't have believed it! It *was* that villain you saw!'

Brown raised himself upon one elbow. 'You don't mean that—that—they've caught him?'

'I do! He was taken at Belton this afternoon; old Rooper has got him there now; and young Rooper and Michie are on their way to the township for the police.'

A grin of exultation spread over Brown's wan features—to fade rapidly into a peevish smile of unbelief. His shoulders sank back feebly upon the pillows; he shook his head slowly from side to side.

'They'll never keep him—never, never, though

they'd caught him twenty times over! A slippery gentleman is Thunderbolt; I know him well; he stuck me up, I tell you—he stuck me up!'

STUDENT LIFE AT THE INNS OF COURT.

THE Inns of Court, each with its pleasant garden, its hall, its chapel, and its library, offer an agreeable picture to the eye wearied by the monotony of street after street of dingy buildings. The Inns or *hostels*, as these schools of law were anciently called, are but a stone's-throw from the busy thoroughfare; and should the stranger, tired of the noise and bustle of the London streets, turn down one of the many narrow little lanes by which they are approached, he will suddenly find himself in a region of stately buildings and silent courts and squares. Here is much to interest a lover of things ancient. He may, if he has strayed within the precincts of the Temple, visit the fine old church, with its effigies of recumbent Crusaders. Here, in a corner of the churchyard, is Goldsmith's grave; and hard by is Brick Court, where stood the building in which he wrote his *Animated Nature*, and in which, when times happened to be prosperous with him, which did not occur often, he made merry with his friends.

There is an old-world air about the Inns of Court that might easily beguile the stranger, if he were in a dreamy mood, into a fancy that time had slipped back a century or two. Nor would the illusion be dispelled if he could peep into the hall of the Middle Temple at six o'clock—the dinner hour—during term-time. He would see the benchers in their black gowns walking slowly up the hall, preceded by the head-porter in embroidered robe, carrying a long wand or mace. He would have noticed this official, before entering the hall, strike the floor twice with the end of his mace, and all the occupants, clad in black gowns, rise to their feet at the signal. These are the barristers and students. They remain standing till the benchers have reached their table and grace has been said. After dinner, another grace is said, and the benchers retire in the same order. At the Middle Temple, students and barristers dine together in messes of four, and the dishes are passed round in a manner prescribed by immemorial usage. Each mess is supplied with wine, and the old-fashioned custom of drinking with one another is still preserved.

Every afternoon during term-time a blast from a horn signals to the hungry student the approaching dinner hour. An old writer thus refers to this ancient custom: 'The panyer-man, by winding of his horn, summons the gentlemen to dinner and supper.' This 'panyer-man' also provided mustard, pepper, and vinegar for the hall; 'and hath for his wages yearly £3, 6s. 8d., and the fragments of certain tables.'

In a quaint old folio, published more than two centuries ago, the writer, describing the Inns of Court as they existed in his day, gives some curious information. The chief cook, he says, 'had divers vailes appertaining to his office—namely, dripping and scummings, the rumps and

kidneys of loynes of mutton, which is the usual supper-meat of this society, there being seldome any other joynt served in the hall.' Besides getting these delicacies, 'for his further benefit he was wont to prepare every Easter a breakfast of calves' heads, for which every gentleman gave twelvence or more, according to his discretion.' The same authority observes that only the sons of gentlemen studied the law, 'the vulgar sort of people not being able to undergo so great a charge.' The manners possessed by these sons of gentlemen could hardly have come up to modern notions of refinement, for in an enactment dated the fortieth year of Elizabeth, it was ordered that 'to avoid disturbance and confusion of service, every gentleman of this house [Gray's Inn] who should henceforth go down to the dresser, either to fetch his own meat or change the same; or not presently to sit down to his meat when the servitors have messed him; or take meat by strong hand from such as should serve them, to be put out of commons.'

Books in the olden time were scarce and very dear; but at the Middle Temple 'they had a simple library, in which were not many bookes besides the law, and that the library, by meanes that it stood alwayes open, and that the learners had not each of them a key unto it, it was at last robbed and spoiled of all the bookes in it.' But though they had lost their library, these gentlemen had other resources. After dinner and supper, the 'students and learners sat together by three and three in a company, and one of the three put some doubtful question in the law to the other two, and they reasoned and argued it; and this was observed every day through the year except festival day.' At the end of every term 'examination and search was made what exercises had been kept the same term and by whom; and likewise in the beginnings of the terms it was the custom to examine who kept their learning in the vacation time.' It is not stated what befell those who had failed to 'keep their learning.'

In hall and in church, students wore gowns and round caps; but boots and spurs, swords and cloaks, and extraordinary long hair, were forbidden. The regulations as to dress varied somewhat at the different Inns. At Gray's Inn a member wearing 'any gown, doublet, hose, or other outward garment of any light colour,' was to be expelled; and no member was to come into the hall to breakfast, dinner, or supper, or to any 'exercise of learning,' in boots. At Lincoln's Inn wearing a hat in hall or in chapel, or 'going abroad to London or Westminster' without a gown, was prohibited; 'and likewise, if any fellow of this house shall wear long hair or great ruffs, he shall be put out of commons.' The members of the Middle Temple were more fortunate, for 'they have no order for their apparell, but every one may go as he listeth, so that his apparell pretend no lightness or wantonness in the wearer.'

The authorities at the different Inns seem at one time to have strongly objected to their members wearing beards. There are several regulations on the subject. In the thirty-third year of Henry VIII., an order was issued that 'none of the fellows being in commons, or at his repast, should wear a beard;' the culprit

to pay double commons 'during such time as he should have any beard.' Apparently this order was insufficient; for in the first year of Mary's reign it was enacted that 'such as had beards should pay twelvence for every meal they continued in them; and every man to be shaven upon pain of putting out of commons.' Again, in the first year of Elizabeth, another order appeared 'that no fellow should wear any beard above a fortnight's growth.' But the fashion at that time of wearing beards grew so rapidly that the very next year, at a council held in Lincoln's Inn, it was agreed that all orders before that time touching beards should be repealed.

The chief butler had orders to take the names and inform the benchers of those who offended in the matter of hats, boots, long hair, and the like; 'for which he is commonly out of the young gentlemen's favour.' A delinquent was punished by fine or by 'putting him forth of commons; which is,' explains the chronicler, 'that he shall take no meate nor drynke among the fellowship untill the elders list to revoke their judgment.'

The masques and revels held in the halls of the Inns were often most magnificent entertainments. Stage-plays were sometimes performed; and at other times the barristers danced with each other, and afterwards one of the gentlemen was called on to give the judges a song. But that other kinds of play were not neglected appears from an order issued on the 17th of November in the fourth year of Charles I. Herein, it was ordered that 'all playing at dice, cards, or otherwise, in the hall, buttery, or butler's chamber should be thenceforth barred, and forbidden at all times of the year, the twenty daies in Christmas only excepted.'

At the present day, a student, if he be duly qualified in legal knowledge, may obtain his call to the bar after keeping twelve terms. Students who are at the same time members of one of the universities in the United Kingdom 'keep term' by dining in hall three times during term; other students must dine six times every term. The ceremony of 'call' varies slightly at the different Inns. The student dines in hall that night. At the Inner and Middle Temples he must appear in evening dress; and at the latter he must also be fully robed as a barrister, in wig, gown, and bands. The men called sign the roll, and the senior benchers makes a short speech wishing them success. At the Middle Temple, the new barristers, who dine in their wigs, &c., have the privilege of inviting their friends to a wine-party in the hall after dinner.

Between entrance at one of the Inns of Court and the final 'call' a period of three years usually elapses. During this time the student, when not engaged in study, may attend the lectures of the professors, or visit the law courts, or exercise his oratory at one of the legal debating societies. He may, if he need a little relaxation, play tennis in the gardens, or take martial exercise with his rifle corps. This volunteer regiment is recruited solely by barristers and students for the bar; hence, it is playfully nicknamed the 'Devil's Own.' Then there are the 'common rooms' attached to each Inn, where newspapers may be read and smoking indulged

in, and where lunch and other refreshments may be obtained. Lastly, on Sundays, the student can repair to the church belonging to his Inn and listen to a sermon by an able preacher.

This slight sketch may conclude with a pleasing account of the Inns as they appeared to Sir John Fortescue, writing in the reign of Henry VI. Sir John was Chief-justice of the King's Bench, and it is in his work written in praise of the laws of England that the following occurs: 'The students resorted thither in great numbers to be taught as in common schools. Here they learn to sing and exercise themselves in all kinds of harmony. On the working days they study law, and on the holy days Scripture, and their demeanour is like the behaviour of such as are coupled together in perfect amity. There is no place where are found so many students past childhood as here.'

THE SPORTSMAN'S CALENDAR IN PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

BY A RESIDENT.

THERE is no part of the continent of North America where sport of every kind, save deer-stalking, is more accessible and abundant than in the beautiful province of Prince Edward Island. Reposing on the cool, blue waters of the Gulf of St Lawrence, which bathe its sandy beaches, and lying directly in the route of the migratory birds, it cannot be otherwise.

Native game is scarce, and limited to the dusky grouse and blue or Arctic hare. There are foxes and bears and, until quite recently, beavers. The migrants are very numerous, and comprise the Canada goose, brent goose, black duck, teal, wid-geon, woodcock, snipe, golden plover, and about fifteen other varieties of the same family, great flocks of curlew, and many waders of less importance.

Early in March the 'Houk! houk!' of the wild goose is heard in the land, and sportsmen are everywhere on the alert. Geese come to the island in immense flocks, arriving before the ice disappears from the coast, but not before it breaks up. Gladdened by the first glimpse of water after their long and rapid flight from southern rice-fields and lagoons, the tired birds alight in the pools of water amid fissures in the ice, and there wait until the movements of the ice-floes shall have given them more sea-room. It is now in large part that the sportsman has to bag his game, since the geese are partial to fresh water, and there may have been early freshets in some of the rivers and brooks. At all events, he will get no sport without the aid of the goose-boat or tub, or both.

The goose-boat is of small dimensions, ill-proportioned, white, and fitted with side-wheels, which are worked from within by means of an ingenious pedal arrangement conveniently placed amidships. Thus it is easily carried from one place to another, pretty nearly resembles a lump of ice—which it is intended to do—and may be propelled through the water in almost absolute silence, when drifting is not possible. The boat is carried out across the 'board' or standing ice some time previous to the expected arrival of the

geese, and placed in a position whence it may be easily and rapidly launched. Decoys are placed in the water at various points, and the sportsman's patience and skill are rarely unrewarded. If the tub be used, it is sunk into a hole previously cut in the ice, of sufficient depth to conceal its occupant, who, having set out the decoys around him, awaits the incoming of the birds. This is, in fact, the more general method of circumventing the geese. Spring goose-shooting lasts about a month, and the quantity of birds killed is always large. There is scarcely a creek or a cove throughout the whole coast of the island where geese may not be found, hence every one who can goes after them. A youth of our acquaintance shot three hundred during the spring of 1891, for all of which he found a ready sale in Boston; and this is not an isolated case. Still, the number of geese does not sensibly diminish from year to year; indeed, sportsmen declare them to have been more plentiful last year than ever.

When they return in the autumn from their breeding-places in the arctic and semi-arctic regions of Greenland, Labrador, and Newfoundland, they are again shot in considerable numbers, and, because wilder, giving better sport than in the spring. Latterly, at this season, pinnaces have been employed to pursue the geese in the rivers and creeks. But since they have proved hobgoblins to the birds, in some instances frightening them away altogether from favourite haunts, their use has been forbidden, and more sportsman-like methods adopted.

Though fascinating to an unusual degree, spring goose-shooting involves serious risks to the health and personal safety of the sportsman, by reason of his long enforced exposure to the chilly winds that blow across the ice; and there is always the possibility of the ice suddenly breaking up and floating away seaward.

The departure of the common goose for higher latitudes allows the sportsman just enough time to prepare for the arrival of the more desirable and delicate, if smaller, brent goose, which takes place early in May. Brent are not nearly so plentiful as the Canada goose, though they are found at many points in the island in pretty considerable numbers. By this time the ice has almost disappeared, though a few blocks may possibly linger about. Again, the goose-boat, as described above, tub, and decoys are called into requisition, and good sport will be secured. The habits of the brent are such that the early morning is the best time to get them when they come to the inshore feeding-grounds. At other times they paddle off to sea, where it is next to impossible to get within range of them. The brent goose enjoys the distinction, with the black duck, of being one of the best table birds in existence. Since they do not, generally, reach our shores before the farmer begins his spring ploughing, brent are not so generally hunted as the common goose; hence they rarely fall save to the guns of the leisured class. The high market value of these fine birds, and the keen sport they provide, are powerful considerations, and, not uncommonly, quite enough to turn young yeomen from the field and tempt them to exchange the prosaic plough-handle for the gun. Brent leave the island about the middle of June with the same

mysterious suddenness as that which seems to mark all their movements, nor does a single bird appear thereafter until late in the autumn, when they pause with us for a brief breathing-space while passing south. As we write, a large flock are disporting themselves in the Hillsborough River, over against our residence, evidently preparing for their southward flight.

During the spring, goose-shooting parties of sportsmen leave Charlottetown for the haunts of the birds. Besides the usual sporting appliances, each party is provided with horse and wagon, the latter being built with a view to carrying the goose-boat if necessary. During their expedition they generally put up at the most convenient farmhouse.

It is generally thought that Prince Edward Island furnishes but little first-rate trout-fishing, though the exact contrary is the fact. We may not, it is true, boast of our rivers, for they are few; but such as they are, they really afford good opportunities for trout-fishing. The principal trout-rivers are the Dunk and Morrell, lying respectively east and west of the capital, and within easy access therefrom. Both rivers are carefully preserved, hence there is always a fixed certainty of sport. Besides this, heavy baskets may be caught all through the summer months in the tidal rivers, off the numerous sand-points which jut out from the land, though the fish are not generally larger than from one to three pounds. Good old Izaak has an extensive following in the Garden Province of Canada; nor is the gentle art as practised nowadays a whit less conducive to good manners and amiability than when he dropped his cunningly baited hook into the Cherwell and Avon and sat contemplatively on their grassy banks. The beginning of August brings the mackerel to our shores. On the 10th of August, black-duck shooting begins. At the end of the month the fields are everywhere dotted with golden plover and many other varieties.

Few islanders, save those whose living depends on it, devote any time to mackerel-fishing, though it is such rare sport if the fish be abundant. This rich and valuable fish is found in all our waters, sometimes in enormous numbers, though, we believe, somewhat less than in former years. In Great Britain and Ireland, mackerel are generally caught from boats under sail; with us, on the contrary, the boats are always anchored, finely chopped herring being thrown overboard to attract the fish thereto. In this way immense catches have been made; as, for instance, on a morning in August last a friend hooked and caught seven hundred and eighty fish in the space of a few hours. The chances of success in mackerel-fishing are fewer than in most other forms of sport. We have gone out to the fishing-grounds many times in succession, and have returned without a fish, though the good haul invariably came sooner or later.

Breeding in the island, black ducks are always abundant, and are shot from the 10th of August until about the middle of November, at which time they leave. They generally arrive from the south in June, though we have seen them on two occasions as early as March, and last year a couple were shot by an Indian some time in that month. The event was sufficiently noteworthy to be

reported in the newspapers. Our grass-grown and willow-clad mill-dams appear to be the favourite breeding-places of the black duck.

Plovers are to be found all over the island, though, unlike the geese, they only visit it once in the year on their homeward flight. The golden plover are always abundant, though they are rarely got at without decoys, and then they fall an easy prey. The decoys are often so irresistibly life-like as to deceive not only birds but men.

In September, snipe and woodcock may be shot in the marshes and covers, though these last are growing scarcer every year. Good bags, however, may yet be made in the less frequented parts of the island, and there is quite sufficient of this game to satisfy the true sportsman who enjoys a good day's walk. The woodcock is a good deal smaller than his British namesake, though nothing behind him in delicacy of flavour. He hails from the Southern States.

By the end of November, if the weather be open—if not earlier—the migrants have all departed; but so long as we have the grouse and hare, there is always something to shoot. The former is an excellent table-bird, and at the present moment cannot be bought in our markets for less than forty-five cents per brace, so great is the demand for it. Unlike the grouse—more properly ptarmigan—of Newfoundland, it never changes its colour, though its feathers are thicker and more abundant in winter than in summer. Grouse are growing scarcer every year, and, unless the mild provisions of our game-laws so far as they relate to these birds are strictly observed, they will ere long have become a thing of the past in Prince Edward Island. The hare is very abundant in every copse and grove. With the assistance of a good dog, he gives capital sport; but his flesh is of little value as food.

Deer have not been found on the island within the memory of any one living, nor, it would appear, for a long time before; but there can be little doubt that herds of moose and caribou roamed over the island at a remote period, since there are so many existing evidences to the fact.

In the absence of large rivers, we have but few salmon, though they occasionally ascend the Dunk and Morrell rivers, and have been taken there with the fly.

SPRING'S HERALD.

A VIOLET! sweet-scented, dainty-hued,
Within a hazel's snow-bound cranny set;
Safe sheltered from the northern tempests rude,
A violet!

Gray sombre skies and leafless trees; and yet—
Lest under Winter's sullen sway and crude,
Sweet Summer's sights and scents we might forget—

Deep in the woodland's dreary solitude,
'Mid last year's leaves—emblems of vain regret—
Nestles the pledge of Spring's beatitude,
A violet!

ERNEST A. CARR.

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A VISIT TO ROCKALL.

ASK any decently informed person which is the most westerly of the British Islands, and it is ten to one that the first answer you get will be 'St Kilda.' Possibly your shake of the head will elicit—if your friend be a thoughtful person, with some knowledge of Ireland—the admission that it may be Achill or the Blaskets; and if you permit him a glance at the atlas, he will shut it up again with a bang and exclaim: 'I told you so—the Blaskets.' But do not give him time to register a private resolve to catch his less observant friends out in their geography with this answer to the question. Reopen the atlas, and take his hand and gently but firmly guide his finger to latitude 57° N. and longitude 14° W., and then chuckle softly to yourself as the map reveals to his astonished gaze the little red-coloured speck of Rockall.

Yes, unnoticed as it is in the school geographies, this lonely rock—more than one hundred and eighty miles west of St Kilda, and two hundred and ninety miles from the nearest point of the Scottish mainland—has a right to call itself a British Isle. For it is separated by an ocean a thousand fathoms deep from all other lands or island groups except the British, and stands, in fact, upon the edge of what we may call the British plateau, a solitary outpost left at the front, last relic and mute witness of the western coast of that retreating continent out of which the Atlantic waves have carved our Islands. But Trinity House sets no light upon its cliffs, and the Post-office ignores it; for it is uninhabited. Small wonder, then, that in this business age it is overlooked; small wonder even if it disappears altogether from the cheap atlas and primer of geography, even as it is doomed at no distant date to disappear actually beneath the waste of waters.

Yet there are plenty of people to whom the existence of Rockall is still a fact of practical interest. Ask the Shetland fisherman who sometimes in the summer lies for weeks in his stout-

built, well-found, but malodorous yawl, fishing in the neighbourhood of its rocky reefs and ledges. Ask the skipper of the outward-bound Baltic trader going north about, whom in foggy weather the clamour of its sea-fowl has warned, only just in time, of his proximity to its granite mass. Ask the weather-beaten master of the Dundee whaler who, caught in his return voyage by the equinoctial gales, has strained his eyes into the gloom and driving mist all night, fearful, while he steams vainly against the hurricane, of suddenly spying the gleam of its breakers. Ask the dark wiry little Breton sailor, whose tiny schooner, running before wind and waves with bare poles on the way home from the deep-sea fishing on the Iceland banks, has lurched helplessly past those thundering cliffs, only saved by the eddy of the wind recoiling from them. No one of these toilers of the deep forgets the existence of Rockall, or counts it too insignificant for its whereabouts to be carefully noted.

But should your curiosity be excited, as mine was long ago, to learn the features of the isle from those who have seen it, you will find it no easy task. They are scattered folk, and hard to come across; and harder still is it, when you have chanced upon one of them, to draw forth from him anything like a description of its appearance. To indicate with a dab of a tarry thumb its position on the chart seems description enough to a mariner. By dint of tedious cross-questioning I did once gather from a Shetlander that it was 'a peerie bit rock wi' shoal water to west'ard;' and from a more imaginative Swede, that it was 'jusst like a ship;' but anything more satisfying to the sentimental interest I always felt in this lone outlier of our shores I could not for many a year obtain. Last summer, however, I induced a friend, whom I met at Oban, and who begged me to come for a cruise in his yacht, to extend the voyage to Rockall.

The morning of our third day out from Stornoway—where we laid in provisions—was hazy, and the sea as calm as glass. By the patent log and the course we had run, my friend M— reckoned

that we must be pretty close to our destination. Nothing, however, broke our limited horizon; so, with directions to the mate to keep her on her course and sing out if he sighted anything, we went below to breakfast; nor did we allow our meal to be interrupted by the mate's announcement through the skylight of, 'A sail on the port bow.' When we came on deck, however, M— turned his glasses on the 'sail,' which the mate now pointed out abeam. 'By Jove!' he cried presently, 'that's the rummiest rig I've seen for many a long day;' and, as I took the glasses from him, he added: 'She must be a brig that has just bent on new royals or top-gall'ns'ls, or perhaps is busy bending them on now. Her lower sails are black, and whatever she is putting aloft is as white as snow. I suppose she is lying becalmed.'

I was just turning away, satisfied with M—'s explanation, and not much interested, when the man at the wheel, after ejecting his quid, and slowly drawing his sleeve across his mouth, hoarsely remarked: 'Beg pardon, sir; that's no vessel, that's a rock.'

In another glance we instantly recognised our error. The mysterious brig was the island we were in quest of! The yacht's head was at once laid direct for it by the somewhat crestfallen mate, and we busied ourselves with conjecture as to the possibility of the island possessing so lofty a peak as to be covered with perpetual snow. Rapidly nearing it, however, we soon made it out to be not more than a hundred feet high—as a matter of fact it is only seventy feet—and the snow hypothesis had to give way to the more obvious explanation that the white was due to the droppings of the countless seabirds which make the rock their home. About a quarter of a mile off, as we approached it from the north-west, a cast or two of the lead showed rapidly shoaling water; so the yacht's engines were stopped and her head swung round. The gig was quickly manned, and in a few minutes we were in the cool shadow cast by the cliff. Finding this side precipitous, we rowed slowly round by the east, half-deafened the while by the screams of the myriads of startled sea-fowl, till we came to the southern side, and there found a place where it was just possible, thanks to the fortunately calm state of the sea, to scramble from the boat on to the rocks, and thence up a small rift to the summit. Here we found ourselves on a scanty plateau, the greater part of which was taken up by the whitened hummock or peak which we had thought to be the topsails of a brig. No need for any botanist to make a pilgrimage hither! Not a scrap of vegetation could we discern in any part of this strange remnant of a vanished land. But what a paradise for the egg-collector in May! Fragments and chips of egg-shells abounded, some of them easily distinguishable as belonging to rare specimens.

While M— was busy taking an observation—the results of which, not tallying with the chart, gave him several hours' subsequent occupation in finding out his errors—and endeavouring to ascertain the extent of the island's surface by rough measurements with a rope, I occupied myself in identifying as far as I could the numerous varieties of sea-birds whose haunt we had invaded, and which kept up an indescribable din on every side. Kittiwakes predominated; and I soon perceived that the eastern face of the rock was the special preserve of their noisy colony. Terns, herring-gulls, and lesser black-backs formed most of the rest of the hovering crowd; while puffins, razor-bills, guillemots, and occasionally a little auk, darted seaward from their clefts and crannies and plumped into the water. Presently I made out some tiny petrels, owners, no doubt, of some of the holes abounding in the two feet or more of guano on which I stood; and then a bird which I took to be a shearwater, and now an extra flutter among the terns, directed my gaze to the dark form of a skua high aloft; perhaps one of the Great Skuas whose last breeding haunt in Foula I know but would not for untold gold reveal. At length the sight of a fulmar petrel, a specimen of which I greatly desired, determined me to send the sailors off to the yacht for my gun, forgotten in the hurry of our departure for the rock.

M—, who had completed his observations, and was now pouring a libation of Scotch whisky over a small cairn—which it had cost him and the men much labour to construct out of the few loose bits of granite available—decided to accompany them, declaring that he had enough of the heat and stench of the place, and would like to have a bath and be comfortable. So I sat down in the shadow of a rock by the water's edge, after shoving them off, and, lighting a pipe, fell to lazy speculation on the past history of this queer islet. Perhaps, I thought, when the volcano of Mull was rearing its cone of scorise and lava ten thousand feet into the frosty air, and the glaciers of Norway were grinding Caithness into shape, Rockall was a tall mountain bearing its ice-cap, and lording it over rugged dales where the western-wandering reindeer trooped amid the sparse junipers and birches and stunted firs, and browsed on the abundant mosses. Perhaps—who knows?—Tertiary man dwelt in its caves, and hunted the seal in its already sea-harassed fringe. And then, ages after the Continent retreated before the resistless ocean surge, it must have been an island, large at first, but ever dwindling, slowly dwindling, and watching its smaller brethren swallowed up one by one till it was left alone. Surely, in these later times, before it crumbled to a single peak, it had inhabitants, rude fisher folk, like those of St Kilda. What was their race? When did the last of them perish? Has

even no tradition of them survived into historic times?

Musing thus in the drowsy heat of noon, I presently fell into a doze, from which a splash of cold brine on my face awakened me. A gentle swell was beginning to sweep past my resting-place and to break against the rocks. Hastily rising, I became aware that a startling change had taken place. Sun, sky, horizon, yacht, all were blotted out from my view by a dense white veil of fog. I looked at my watch and found it was past one. But the boat had not returned! No; nor was it likely that the boat would even attempt to find the island till the fog lifted. Meanwhile, the current, which I now noticed setting strongly past my feet, was drifting my friends away. Here was a pretty go! I began to think I had had enough of Rockall, though it was not for some time that the full danger of my position dawned upon me. These summer fogs often last for days together; and should stormy weather come on before the yacht had an opportunity of finding me, my chance of getting off was small. I climbed up to the little peak, hoping to catch sight of the *Norah's* topmasts above the bank of mist; but it was in vain. Then I restlessly perambulated the whole of my little domain, barely fifty feet square, disturbing, perhaps, fresh varieties of sea-birds, but not caring to notice them; then I sat down upon the cairn and tried to smoke.

Hour after hour passed, and my anxiety grew. Late in the afternoon my hopes were raised by the sound of the *Norah's* steam siren, only to be dashed again as the melancholy hoots grew fainter and fainter and died away. Then night came on. I crept into the rift on the south side and shivered there till daybreak. I dare not say I slept. Mysterious noises, probably made by seals, and uncanny chucklings and sibilations, which I tried to put down to the birds, kept my nerves ajar. Had I possessed more imagination I suppose ghosts of wrecked mariners, phantom vikings or buccaneers, or corpses from galleons of the Armada or Dutch East Indiamen, would have crawled and flitted about the rocks and harrowed my susceptible soul. But the physical pain of hunger, cramp, and cold was enough for me.

The gray dawn at length came, and to my joy, brought with it a breeze which quickly dispelled the fog. How eagerly I stood up on the cairn and waved my cap and shouted as I saw the *Norah* emerge from the fog-bank and point her head towards me! How quickly all the oppressive sense of utter loneliness and abandonment melted away, and left me laughing at the fears which seemed so real a few minutes ago! With what confidence in the presence of my fellow-beings I threw myself into the water and swam out, cold and stiff as I was, when the boat on arriving, with M—— in it, more anxious and fagged than myself, could not, for the increased swell, venture alongside! And what a breakfast I ate!

No; I did not return to shoot that fulmar petrel. Stormy weather came on; and with a last look at the lonely rock that might easily have been my grave, already, as we looked, beginning to be enveloped in the spray of the

rising waves, we were glad to run before the gale to the shelter of Lough Swilly. But it will be long before I forget my visit to the most westerly and most solitary of British Isles.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER VIII.—IN HONOUR OF THE EVENT.

MAY one dwell upon so simple a thing as a small family dinner-party? It is generally undramatic and uneventful: it is not generally marked even by a new dish or a bottle of rare wine. Yet there lingers in the mind of every man the recollection of pleasant dinners. I should like to write a Book of Dinners, not a book for the *gourmet*, but a book of memories. It might be a most delightful volume. There would be in it the schoolboys' dinner. I remember a certain dinner at eighteen-pence a head, at Richmond, before we had the row in the boat, when we quarrelled and broke the oars over each other's heads, and very nearly capsized: a certain undergraduates' dinner, in which four men—three of whom are now ghosts—joined: the Ramblers' dinner, of lamb chops and bottled ale and mirth and merriment: the two-by-two dinner in the private room, a dainty dinner of sweet lamb, sweet bread, sweet peas, sweet looks, sweet Moselle, and sweet words. Is it really true that one never—never—gets young again? Some people do, I am sure, but they are under promise to say nothing about it. I shall—and then that dinner may perhaps—one cannot say—one never knows—and I suppose—if one was young again—that they would be found just as pretty as they ever were. There is the official dinner, stately and cold: the city dinner, which generally comes to a man when his digestion is no longer what it was: the family dinner, in which the intellect plays so small a part, because no one wastes his fine things on his brothers and sisters: the dinner at which one has to make a speech. Indeed, this Book of Dinners promises to be a most charming volume. I should attempt it, however, with trembling, because, to do it really well, one should be, first of all, a scholar, if only to appreciate things said and spoken, and in order to connect the illustrious past with food and drink. Next, he ought to be still young: he certainly must have a proper feeling for wine, and must certainly understand when and why one should be grateful to good Master Cook: he should be a past or present master in the Art of Love and a squire of Dames: he should be good at conversation: he must, in the old language, be a worshipper of Bacchus, Venus, Phœbus Apollo, the Muses nine and the Graces three. He must be no poor weakling, unable to enjoy the good creatures of flesh, fowl, fish, and wine: no boor: and no log insensible to loveliness.

Dinner, which should be a science, has long been treated as one of the Fine Arts. Now every Fine Art, as we all know, has its fashions and its caprices. Those who are old enough to remember the dinners of twenty, thirty, or forty years ago can remember many of their fashions

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and caprices. In the Thirties, for instance, everything was carved upon the table. It required a strong man to give a dinner-party. Fortunately, a dinner then consisted of few dishes. They drank sherry with dinner and port afterwards. The champagne, if there was any, was sweet. The guests were bidden for half-past six; they sat down to dinner before seven. At eight the ladies went up-stairs: at half-past ten the men joined them. Their faces were flushed, their shoulders were inclined to lurch, and their speech was the least bit thick. Wonderful to relate, brandy-and-water used to be served to these toppers in the drawing-room itself.

Mr Dering had altered little in his dinner customs. They mostly belonged to the Sixties, with a survival of some belonging to the Thirties. Things were carved upon the sideboard: this was in deference to modern custom: champagne formed an integral part of the meal: but the dinner itself was solid: the cloth after dinner was removed, leaving the dark polished mahogany after the old fashion: the furniture of the room was also in the old style: the chairs were heavy and solid: the walls were hung with a dark crimson paper of velvety texture: the curtains and the carpets were red: there were pictures of game and fruit: the sideboard was as solid as the table.

Checkley the clerk, who was invited as a faithful servant of the house, to the celebration of the new partnership, was the first to arrive. Dressed in a hired suit, he looked like an undertaker's assistant: the gloom upon his face heightened the resemblance. Why the partnership caused this appearance of gloom, I know not. Certainly, he could never expect to be made a partner himself. It was perhaps a species of jealousy which filled his soul. He would no longer know so much of the business.

George came with the Mother-in-law Elect and the *fiancée*. Forgiveness, Peace, Amnesty, and Charity sat all together upon the brow of the elder lady. She was magnificent in a dark crimson velvet, and she had a good deal of gold about her arms and neck. Jewish ladies are said to show, by the magnificence of their attire, the prosperity of the business. Why not? It is a form of enjoying success. There are many forms: one man buys books: let him buy books: another collects pictures. Why not? One woman wears crimson velvet. Why not? In this way she enjoys her wealth and proclaims it. Again, why not? It seems to the philosopher a fond and vain thing to deck the person at all times, and especially fond when the person is middle-aged and no longer beautiful. We are not all philosophers. There are many middle-aged men who are extremely happy to put on their uniform and their medals and their glittering helmets. Mrs Arundel wore her velvet as if she enjoyed the colour of it, the richness of it, the light and shade that lay in its folds and the soft feel of it. She wore it, too, as an outward sign that this was a great occasion. Her daughter, Lady Dering, came also arrayed in a queenly dress of amber silk with an aigrette of feathers in her hair. To be sure, she was going on somewhere after the dinner. Elsie, for her part, came in a creamy white almost like a bride: but she looked much happier than most brides.

Hilda's husband, Sir Samuel, who was some six or seven years younger than his brother, was in appearance a typical man of wealth. The rich man can no longer, as in the days of good old Sir Thomas Gresham, illustrate his riches by costly furs, embroidered doublets, and heavy chains. He has to wear broadcloth and black. Yet there is an air, a carriage, which belongs to the rich man. In appearance, Sir Samuel was tall, like his brother, but not thin like him: he was corpulent: his face was red: he was bald, and he wore large whiskers, dyed black. The late dissensions were completely forgotten. Hilda embraced her sister fondly. 'My dear,' she whispered, 'we have heard all. Everything—everything is changed by these fortunate events. They do you the greatest credit.—George'—she took his hand and held it tenderly—'I cannot tell you how happy this news has made us all. You will be rich in the course of years. Sir Samuel was only saying, as we came along'—

'I was saying, young gentleman,' the Knight interrupted, 'that the most beautiful thing about money is the way it develops character. We do not ask for many virtues—only honesty and diligence—from the poor. When a man acquires wealth we look for his better qualities.'

'Yes, indeed,' Hilda murmured. 'His better qualities begin to show.—Elsie, dear, that is a very pretty frock. I don't think I have seen it before. How do you like my dress?'

George accepted this sudden turn in opinion with smiles. He laughed at it afterwards. For the moment it made him feel almost as if he was being rewarded for some virtuous action.

Dinner was announced at seven—such were the old-fashioned manners of this old gentleman. He led in Mrs Arundel, and placed Elsie on his left. At first, the dinner promised to be a silent feast. The two lovers were not disposed to talk much—they had not yet recovered from the overwhelming and astonishing events of the day. Sir Samuel never talked at the beginning of dinner—besides, there was turtle soup and red mullet and whitebait—it is sinful to divert your attention from these good creatures. His wife never talked at dinner or at any other time more than she could help. Your statuesque beauty seldom does. Talking much involves smiling and even laughing, which distorts the face. A woman must encourage men to talk: this she can do without saying much herself.

Presently Mr Dering roused himself and began to talk, with a visible effort, first to Mrs Arundel of things casual: then to Elsie: and then to his brother, but always with an effort, as if he was thinking of other things. And a constraint fell upon the party.

When the cloth was removed and the wine and fruit were placed upon the dark and lustrous board, he filled a glass and made a kind little speech.

'My Partner,' he said, 'I drink to you. May your connection with the House be prosperous! It is a very great good fortune for me to have found such a partner.—Elsie, I join you with my Partner. I wish you both every happiness.'

He drained the bumper and sent round the decanters.

Then he began to talk, and his discourse was most strange. 'Had it been,' said his brother afterwards, 'the idle fancies of some crack-brained writing fellow, I could have understood it; but from him—from a steady old solicitor—a man who has never countenanced any kind of nonsense—to be sure he said it was only an illusion. I hope it isn't a softening. Who ever heard of such a man as that having dreams and illusions?'

Certainly no one had ever before heard Mr Dering talk in this new manner. As a rule, he was silent and grave even at the head of his own table. He spoke little and then gravely. Tonight his talk as well as his face was changed. Who would have thought that Mr Dering should confess to illusions, and should relate dreams, and should be visited by such dreams? Remember that the speaker was seventy-five years of age, and that he had never before been known so much as to speak of benevolence. Then you will understand something of the bewilderment which fell upon the whole company.

He began by raising his head and smiling with a strange and new benignity—but Elsie thought of her portrait. 'We are all one family here,' he said; 'and I may talk. I want to tell you of a very remarkable thing that has recently happened to me. It has been growing, I now perceive, for some years. But it now holds me strongly, and it is one reason why I am anxious to have the affairs of the House in the hands of a younger man. For it may be a sign of the end. At seventy-five anything uncommon may be a sign.'

'You look well, Mr Dering, and as strong as most men of sixty,' said Mrs Arundel.

'Perhaps. I feel well and strong. The fact is that I am troubled—or pleased—or possessed—by an Illusion.'

'You with an Illusion?' said his brother.

'I myself. An Illusion possesses me. It whispers me from time to time that my life is wholly spent in promoting the happiness of other people.'

'Well,' said his brother, 'since you are a first-class solicitor, and manage the affairs of many people very much to their advantage, you certainly do promote their happiness.'

'Yes, yes—I suppose so. My Illusion further is that it is done outside my business—without any bill afterwards'—Checkley looked up with eyes wide open—'I am made to believe that I am working and living for the good of others. A curious Illusion, is it not?'

The City man shook his head. 'That any man can possibly live for the good of others is, I take it, always and under all circumstances an Illusion. In the present state of society—and a very admirable state it is'—he rolled his bald head as he spoke and his voice had a rich roll in it—'a man's first duty—his second duty—his third duty—his hundredth duty—is to himself. In the City it is his business to amass wealth—to roll it up—roll it up'—he expressed the words with feeling—'to invest it profitably—to watch it, and to nurse it as it fructifies—fructifies. Afterwards, when he is rich enough, if ever a man can be rich enough, he may exercise as much charity as he pleases—as he pleases. Charity seems to please some people as a glass of fine

wine'—he illustrated the comparison—'pleases the palate—pleases the palate.'

The lawyer listened politely and inclined his head.

'There is at least some method in my Illusion,' he went on. 'You mentioned it. The solicitor is always occupied with the conduct of other people's affairs. That must be admitted. He is always engaged in considering how best to guide his fellow-man through the labyrinthine world. He receives his fellow-man at his entrance into the world, as a ward: he receives him grown up, as a client; he advises him all his life at every step and in every emergency. If the client goes into partnership, or marries, or buys a house, or builds one, or gets into trouble, the solicitor assists and advises him. When the client grows old, the solicitor makes his will. When the client dies, the solicitor becomes his executor and his trustee, and administers his estate for him. It is thus a life, as I said, entirely spent for other people. I know not of any other, unless it be of medicine, that so much can be said. And think what terrors, what anxieties, what disappointments, the solicitor witnesses and alleviates! Think of the family scandals he hushes up and keeps secret! Good Heavens! if a solicitor in large practice were to tell what he knows, think of the terrible disclosures! He knows everything. He knows more than a Roman Catholic priest, because his penitents not only reveal their own sins but also those of their wives and sons and friends and partners. And anxiety, I may tell you, makes a man better at confessing than penitence. Sometimes we bring actions at law and issue writs and so forth. Well now: this part of our business, which is disagreeable to us, is actually the most beneficent of any. Because, by means of the cases brought before the High Court of Justice, we remind the world that it must be law abiding as well as law worthy. The Law, in order to win respect, must first win fear. Force comes before order. The memory of force must be kept up. The presence of force must be felt. For instance, I have a libel case just begun. It is rather a bad libel. My libeller will suffer: he will bleed: but he will bleed for the public good, because thousands who are only anxious to libel and slander, to calumniate and defame their neighbours, will be deterred. Oh! it will be a most beneficent case—far-reaching—striking terror into the hearts of ill-doers.—Well—this, my friends, is my Illusion. It is, I suppose, one of the many Illusions with which we cheat old age and rob it of its terrors. To anybody else I am a hard-fisted lawyer, exacting his pound of flesh from the unfortunate debtor, and making myself rich at the expense of the creditor.'

'Nonsense about how a man gets rich,' said the man of business. 'He can only get rich if he is capable. Quite right. Let the weak go under. Let the careless and the lazy starve.'

'At the same time,' said Elsie softly, 'it is not all illusion. There are others besides the careless and the lazy?'

'Sometimes,' the old lawyer went on, 'this Illusion of mine—oh! I know it is only Illusion—takes the form of a dream—so vivid that it comes back to me afterwards as a reality. In this dream, which is always the same, I seem

to have been engaged in some great scheme of practical benevolence?

'Practical—What? You engaged in Practical Benevolence?' the City man asked in profound astonishment. The Illusion was astonishing enough; but to have his brother talk of practical benevolence was amazing indeed.

'Practical benevolence,' repeated Mr Dering. His voice dropped. His eyes looked out into space: he seemed as one who narrates a story. 'It is a curiously persistent dream. It comes at irregular intervals; it pleases me while it lasts.—Oh! in the evening after dinner, while one takes a nap in the easy-chair, perhaps—it is, as I said, quite vivid. The action of this dream always takes place in the same room—a large room, plainly furnished, and looking out upon an open space—I should know it if I saw it—and it fills me with pleasure—in my dream—just to feel that I am—there is no other word for it—diffusing happiness. How I manage this diffusion, I can never remember; but there it is—good solid happiness, such as, in waking moments, one feels to be impossible.'

'Diffusing happiness—you!' said his brother.

'A very beautiful dream,' said Elsie. But no one dared to look in each other's face.

'This strange dream of mine,' continued Mr Dering, 'does not form part of that little Illusion, though it seems connected with it. And as I said, mostly it comes in the evening. The other day, however, I had it in the afternoon—went to sleep in my office, I suppose.—Did you find me asleep, Checkley? It was on Friday.'

'No. On Friday afternoon you went out.'

'Ah! When I came back, then—I had forgotten that I went out. Did I go out? Strange! Never mind. This continuous dream opens up a world of new ideas and things which are, I perceive, when I am awake, quite unreal and illusory. Yet they please. I see myself, as I said, diffusing happiness with open hands. The world which is thus made happier consists entirely of poor people. I move among them unseen: I listen to them: I see what they do, and I hear what they say. Mind—all this is as real and true to me as if it actually happened. And it fills me with admiration of the blessed state of poverty. In my dream I pity the rich, with all my heart. To get rich, I think—in this dream—they must have practised so many deceptions'—

'Brother! brother!' Sir Samuel held up both hands.

'In my dream—only in my dream. Those who inherit riches are burdened with the weight of their wealth, which will not suffer them to enter into the arena; will not allow them to develop and to exercise their talents, and afflicts them with the mental and bodily diseases that belong to indolence. The poor, on the other hand, who live from day to day, sometimes out of work for weeks together, practise easily the simple virtues of brotherly love, charity, and mutual helpfulness. They have learned to combine for the good of all rather than to fight, one against another, for selfish gain. It is the only world where all are borrowing and lending, giving and helping.'

'Brother, this dream of yours is like a socialist tract.'

'It may be. Yet you see how strongly it takes hold of me, that while I see the absurdity of the whole thing, it is not unpleasant to recall the recollection of it. Well—I do not know what set me talking about this dream.'

The smiles left his face: he became grave again: he ceased to talk: for the rest of the evening he was once more the old solicitor, weighed down with the affairs of other people.

'Checkley'—it was on the doorstep, and Sir Samuel waited while his wife said a few fond things to her sister—'what the devil came over my brother to-night?'

'I don't know indeed, Sir Samuel. I never heard him talk like that before. Doin' good to 'em? Servin' a writ upon 'em is more our line. I think he must be upset somewhere in his inside, and it's gone to his head.'

'Practical benevolence? Living for other people? Have you heard him complain of anything?'

'No, Sir Samuel. He never complains. Eats hearty, walks upright and strong, works like he always has worked.—Doin' good! And the blessedness of being pore! Seems most wonderful. Blessedness of being pore! Well, Sir Samuel, I've enjoyed that blessedness myself, and I know what it's like. Any or'nary preachin' chap might talk that nonsense; but for your eminent brother, Sir Samuel, such a lawyer as him—to be talking such stuff—if I may humbly so speak of my learned master's words—it is—Sir Samuel—it really is!'

'He said it was a dream, remember.—But I agree with you, Checkley. It is amazing.'

'Humph! The blessedness of being pore! And over such a glass of Port, too! I thought I should ha' rolled off my chair—I did, indeed.—Here's your good lady, Sir Samuel.'

'Elsie,' said Mrs Arundel in the carriage, 'I think it was high time that Mr Dering should take a partner. He to dream of practical benevolence? He to be diffusing happiness with open hands? Oh! most lamentable—I call it. However, the deeds are signed, and we are all right. In case of anything happening, it is a comfort to think that George's position would be only improved.'

MAGIC FINGERS.

BY ONE WHO IS BLIND.

It is said there are 'none so blind as those who won't see;' and if such obtuse folks are contrasted with those who can't see, the truth of the dictum becomes especially apparent. If we have the opportunity of observing them, we must occasionally be struck by the fact that the intelligent blind often know quite as much as, if not more of what is going on around them than many of those who are in full possession of all their senses. Their quickness of apprehension, their keenness of hearing, the sensitiveness of their touch, and the rapidity of their mental if not their bodily activity, are quite startling.

Albeit the eye is the most direct channel of knowledge to the brain, it is curious to observe not only how Nature compensates for the loss of

that organ, but how alert the other senses become. This seems to be generally assumed and admitted, yet only very recently has the world acted towards the blind in accordance with this assumption. Forty or fifty years ago they were regarded in Great Britain as an entirely helpless, unhappy class of beings, whom it was vain to try to educate up to the ordinary standard; and who could not be taught any methods of adequately earning their own living. It appeared to be thought that the loss of eyesight implied the loss of capacity to learn. Apart from the difficulties incident to the affliction, they were treated as incapable of understanding ordinary facts; all their faculties were supposed to be equally deadened, or at anyrate they were treated as if such was the case. Infinite pity was bestowed upon them of course, and the more so from the assumed hopelessness of their condition.

Amongst the indigent blind especially the state of things was lamentable to a degree quite incredible, and it should be more widely known than it is that the first steps in the way of reformation were taken by the late Lord Shaftesbury. He showed the direction in which the very poor and ignorant required help; and the good work which he began has been ably carried on and developed, until even in their case it has been found possible to endow their fingers with a certain amount of magic. The commencement of the movement started by this eminently noble man and his band of equally philanthropic workers is worth briefly recording. His own words describe what it was that stirred him to the effort. At one of the annual meetings of the 'Indigent Blind Visiting Society,' which has its offices at 27 Red Lion Square, W.C., he said: 'When we first began our movement, the poor blind were altogether uncared for. They were known to exist; but there were very few people who knew where they were to be found. They were hiding away in cellars and all sorts of places. At that time, a gentleman called on me and proposed that an institution should be founded for the purpose of visiting these poor people; and they were discovered in dark, damp slums, and were looked upon more as reptiles than human beings. It was supposed that because they did not see the light, they never were in need of warmth or fresh air; they were never visited or comforted; they never went out of doors because there was no one to take them; and a more wretched condition than they were in could not be conceived.'

In a recently published account of an interview with the then secretary of this institution, the late Mr W. C. Lester (himself blind), he gives many interesting details of its work. 'Its object is fourfold,' he says—namely, to provide the blind with readers at their own homes; with the means to obtain guides to conduct them hither and thither; with schools where they are taught the rudiments of education—reading, writing, arithmetic, and such small handicrafts as they seem capable of executing, such as knitting, netting, &c.; and finally, with temporal relief at the discretion of the Committee.

The result of all these efforts in their behalf has been to transform the condition of this lowest class of sufferers into one of comparative comfort, usefulness, and cheerful well-being.

On a higher social and intellectual level, however, it is that a much vaster change has happily taken place, and is at last advancing with rapid strides, thanks, no doubt, to the wider enlightenment of our times on most subjects, but mainly owing to the example set us on the Continent, and particularly in the United States. France, Germany, Norway, Sweden, and America long ago discovered what, as we have said, has been but slowly admitted here, and never acted on—namely, that when knowledge at one entrance is quite shut out, the remaining powers of acquiring it are stimulated to an unusual degree; and that, consequently, these need only be properly encouraged and trained to enable the sufferer to be placed comparatively on the same footing as the rest of mankind. We know, of course, that individual efforts in this direction, like that above quoted, have not been wanting, and that from time immemorial asylums have existed where the afflicted are taken good care of. But within the last twenty years only has any real attempt been made upon a broad comprehensive, wise, or scientific system to train and educate the blind physically and mentally. Following the example, however, set by the European nations and by our brethren across the Atlantic, the 'Royal Normal College and Academy of Music for the Blind' at Norwood, hard by the Crystal Palace, has commenced the labour in earnest in England, with results no less satisfactory than extraordinary. A visit to this interesting and admirable institution will show what a sound system of cultivation will do to make up for the loss of sight. It will prove beyond dispute that the pupils may be trained to fight the battle of life with a reasonable chance of passing through it victoriously, and not much in rear of their more fortunate fellow-creatures.

A feeling of the utmost astonishment in the first place will certainly be aroused by any one who chances to arrive at the College during play-time. It is scarcely possible to believe that those young people scampering about, shouting and rejoicing in all the exuberance of youthful spirits, are bereft of sight. Their activity and freedom of demeanour are amazing; and when, by closer acquaintance with the establishment, we learn how this is acquired, our surprise is only partially modified. The grounds attached to the College embrace some six acres, and afford ample opportunities for exercise. Free gymnastics, military drill, running, &c., and skating, develop the physical strength of the pupils.

A large covered gymnasium for boys, another for girls, and a swimming bath, have been added from time to time; so that for physical training there is probably no public school of its size for the 'seeing' that is better equipped, or where the average strength and agility of the pupils are greater. This physical training was from the first considered of paramount importance, and every year has confirmed such a view. Blind children are often enfeebled from the same cause which produced their blindness; added to which, from their difficulty in moving about freely, they are not inclined to take the active exercise which is so characteristic of the seeing at the same time of life; they therefore become timid, weak, and awkward; and these tendencies must be artificially counteracted.

Striking instances of how comparatively little the infirmity need interfere with the activity and the capacities of manhood might be cited; but as one is as good as a score, we have only to turn to the case of the late Henry Fawcett, Postmaster-general, as the freshest in our mind. True, he was not blind from childhood, which of course makes a great difference; but the determination he displayed not to allow his misfortune to interrupt his career, and the success which attended it, sufficiently proves what is possible. His love of the open air, manly exercise, and sport, had made him familiar with Nature; and he used to boast that, with an intelligent companion by his side, he could enjoy as fully as ever the beauties of the outer world in his walks, drives, and rides, for he rode as boldly almost after he had lost his sight as he did before. He also continued to the last to exercise with the keenest enjoyment his favourite sport of fishing, whilst intellectually he pursued his studies and executed his multifarious business transactions with a degree of energy and completeness not to be exceeded by the most competent.

Say that his case is scarcely representative of the ordinary run of blind people, we can still find in it the spirit which should animate us as to possibilities. As a rule, blindness entails a certain amount of poverty; and where a child is born blind of indigent parents, its case indeed looks hopeless. But it is just in this direction that the public has required, and is now receiving enlightenment. That child in all probability if subjected to the Normal College system of education, &c., may be eventually placed, as has been said, in a position to take his stand in the world on a nearly equal footing with his seeing brother. He can be taught to read, write, and cipher with all that these lead up to, if not as readily at least nearly as completely as any other average boy or girl; and if he is never wholly able to compete with the seeing in bread-winning, he can preserve a large amount of independence; whilst, if he possess a common capacity for music, that gift can be developed to a degree which will ensure him a career in certain branches of the art whereby he can, in every sense of the expression, earn his own living.

If we are surprised at the spectacle of blind children at play, assuredly we shall not be less so when we come to observe them at work. Then, indeed, we might believe that their fingers are endowed with magic. It is not our intention here to describe in detail the modern forms, apparatus, machinery, and systems of teaching. They will, however, well repay investigation; and as a compendium on the subject in all its bearings we would, short of a visit to Norwood, point to *The Education of the Blind—what it has been, is, and ought to be*, by T. R. Armitage, M.D. In passing, it may be added that to Dr Armitage is mainly due the improvement in the educational system now universally adopted in England. A rising physician, of high attainments and infinite promise, he was overtaken by atrophy of the optic nerve when still a young man; and knowing that he would be thus obliged to abandon his career in medicine, and having some independent means, he at once manfully faced his difficulty. Thenceforth, he determined to devote himself to the cause of his fellow-sufferers. He immedi-

ately set about mastering the state of their affairs in England; and contrasting it with what he found it to be in other countries, he sought with the utmost diligence, perseverance, and untiring zeal to bring up our teaching and training to the same level of excellence. The success which has crowned his efforts is proverbial amongst the blind. He is emphatically their friend; and is regarded, and will continue to be regarded, as one of the truest pioneers and reformers in all appertaining to the welfare of the class for whom he labours.

Everybody knows that there are embossed books, &c., for reading; but few outside those concerned are aware what a vast change has taken place in the system of embossed literature. That bulky volume of one of the Gospels which we have seen on the knees of some blind mendicant at a quiet street corner, and from which he is pretending to read with his fingers, in a dull monotonous voice, and with the air of a lesson known by heart, can be replaced by a book a quarter the size—more complete and far more quickly to be deciphered by the sensitive fingertips. The 'Braille' dotted alphabet has taken the place of all others, at least for educational purposes, and is one of the most ingenious of arbitrary alphabetical inventions, readily to be learned by the young, and possessing the immense advantage of being as readily written and afterwards read by the blind writer. By its means, too, music can be taught through the touch as completely as through the eye; and in listening to a concert given by the scholars of the Normal College, we might find a difficulty in believing that such perfect execution and such admirable compositions as are sometimes heard could emanate from a class living entirely in the land of darkness. Magic is the only word for it; the fingers become eyes; and there seems to be an optic disc in each of their tips capable of conveying intelligence to the brain as quickly, and in all respects as efficiently, as the veritable 'window of the soul' itself.

Whether the independence gained by such training as that afforded by the Normal College is greater in those who are blind from childhood or in those who meet with the affliction in mid-career, is a question. Cases like that of Henry Fawcett—and there are not a few similar—would indicate that a brave man can face the inevitable without the training—or very little of it—by which those who have never seen the light are enabled to make their way through the world. It is said that the first thing a person has to do who becomes blind in maturity is 'to learn to be blind'; whilst those who are so from childhood have, so to speak, always been in training. There is no novelty for them in the situation, and they should therefore, one would think, be morally if not physically better off in all respects. The affliction in their case is shorn of half its terrors—indeed, it cannot be called an affliction—the absence of light to those who have never seen it means nothing. Hence it might be argued that they should be fuller of resource; the more capable, the more independent; the more up to contrivances and dodges—in a word, the better able to contend with and outwit their infirmity. On the other hand, Henry Fawcett's career would go to prove the contrary, or that it made little

difference whether a man began life by learning to be blind or only took up the business midway. We must not forget, however, that his was an exceptional nature. His great intellectual powers carried him successfully through all he attempted; and it would have been strange if he had not speedily mastered the difficulties of the new trade so lamentably thrust upon him. Doubtless, he found a very short apprenticeship sufficient to make him an expert, although as a matter of fact he served his full time, and a great deal more, counting by the years of his blindness. The question, however, is a very large one, and we suspect it must greatly depend on the individual himself; for, with the blind as with the seeing, there are the dull and stupid as there are the bright and intelligent; and contrasting a blind specimen of the latter with a seeing specimen of the former, we shall justify the assertion with which we started—namely, that 'there are none so blind as those who won't see.' They have eyes for nothing; whereas the really blind are, so to speak, bristling with eyes. Every sense is alive with an intelligence often of more value than mere physical sight, and hence it may truly be said that theirs are Magic Fingers.

THUNDERBOLT'S MATE.

III.

THE Belton buggy had come twenty-five miles at express speed; the horses were steaming; and it was three miles farther to the township. Nevertheless, young Rooper was flicking his whip to push on, when Lees ran back, breathless, and got to the horses' heads. 'Hold on!'

'Can't, Mr Lees.'

'You can—you must. I'll send a man on horseback to the township in half the time it'll take you to drive. He'll be back with the police long under the hour. Meanwhile, you will have had something to eat with us, and I shall have run up a fresh pair for your buggy. These are dead-beat. It will save you time in the end.'

Rooper and Michie put their heads together, but only for an instant. The good sense of the squatter's proposal was as obvious as its good nature; besides, it was the Bilbil dinner hour, and the young men were hungry. As they alighted from the buggy, Lees ordered the Belton horses to be watered and turned loose, and Bushman and Bluebeard, his own favourite pair, to be run up from the horse-paddock. Then, Mr Lees having promptly despatched a messenger, they all adjourned to the dining-room, where they found Mrs Lees awaiting them. She was slightly pale, and scared by the sensational news, but eager to hear everything; and she was soon in possession not only of the facts of the present case, but of many other facts in connection with the notorious Thunderbolt, to say nothing of hearsay.

Thunderbolt, then, was rumoured to be a man of far greater refinement than most practitioners in his line—Burke, Morgan, or Ben Hall, for instance; he had also in some quarters a reputation for an alleged gallantry of bearing towards all women who came in his way professionally;

but in violence, in daring, and in insolence, he was not second to the worst of them. The Roopers had yarns about him from a station of theirs in Queensland, which was Thunderbolt's own colony and his commonest hunting-ground; but Michie, the Belton overseer, had actually exchanged shots with the desperado on a former occasion. You might have known Bob Michie a lifetime without knowing a word about that incident, or indeed about any other incident in which he had himself played a prominent part; but the old story was wrung from him to-night. He had been on the lower Queensland roads, in charge of sheep, and had happened to camp outside a township on the very night that the bank there was visited by Thunderbolt and his mate. Well, when the family at the bank were discovered sitting round the supper table like corpses—gagged every one of them and tied to their chairs—a hue and cry was started. It chanced that the discovery was made much sooner than the bushrangers had bargained for. The latter were surprised in camp, a few miles from the township; they had just time to mount their horses, which they had not unsaddled, and a hot chase followed. Michie outstripped competitors in pursuit, had a bullet through his hat, and in return shot off the little finger of either Thunderbolt or his mate; in the darkness it was impossible to tell which, only the finger was found.

'So I suppose the first thing you did to-day, when you'd got your man safe, was to make him show his hand, eh?' asked Lees, laughing; but neither Michie nor young Rooper had thought of it; and at this moment voices were heard outside. The messenger had returned with the buggy and with a policeman. The sergeant and another trooper were following on horseback, and would overtake the buggy. With hasty apologies and good-byes, the young men left the table and drove off. The meal would have gone on rather silently after that, for the men were all yearning to be at Belton and see the fun; but Penelope kept them busy answering her questions. She had drunk in every word that had fallen from the lips of the redoubtable Michie, and the item of the little finger in particular had entertained her greatly.

All this was on the Saturday evening. Sunday brought startling news. The buggy and the police had arrived at Belton only to find the bird flown—none knew how—none knew whither. Thunderbolt was at large again, and in Riverina.

It went against the grain with William Lees to return to the wool-shed that night; but his wife assured him that she had no fear so long as Penelope and she were not left entirely alone; and indeed the chances were that the bushranger, if not speedily recaptured, would press northward to the Queensland frontier. So Lees went, but left both the overseer and the storekeeper behind him at the homestead. It was arranged that these two should drive out to the shed the first thing each morning, returning at sundown; and the plan answered admirably. Never had the Bilbil flocks been better shorn; never had there been more perfect discipline at the Bilbil shed, never less grumbling. Moreover, the 'clip' throughout Riverina was likely to prove a better one than had been obtained for years.

Meanwhile, the broken leg went on mending in the most satisfactory fashion, and its owner seemed quite to have ingratiated himself with Mrs Lees and her little madcap daughter, Penelope. From the very first he had been patient, and grateful for the smallest thing done for him; but a certain moroseness, that had disfigured his manner in the earliest days, disfigured it no longer. Now he seemed glad enough of company; and Mrs Lees often sat with him. Once or twice he even asked to be read to; and Mrs Lees was not only good enough to read to him by the hour, but sensible enough to make the literature the lightest she could lay hands upon. Yet the man was far from desiring perpetual entertainment. Mrs Lees presently discovered that silent companionship had an attraction of its own for Brown. She found that she could sit beside him for hours, the silence of which he made no attempt to break so long as she showed no sign of going. She had only to gather up her work, however, for Brown to run up a barrier of questions to keep her where she was. It was as though silence lost its charm for him the moment it was enforced by solitude—as though a sympathetic presence was essential to the enjoyment of his reveries—queer traits, both of them, in a rough common bushman. But Brown was scarcely a common bushman, there was so much that was uncommon in him. Mrs Lees furtively watching the dark, brooding face, would have given worlds to share just one of poor Brown's waking dreams. Daily she burned for one little glimpse of the scenes that were passing before those wide-open, sunken eyes, staring at nothing in particular, but staring at it so long. Being a woman, and one without much to occupy her in the long, hot, sleepy days, this curiosity was very natural; but it was very well for her peace of mind that Mrs Lees had no way of gratifying her curiosity.

Once a day, sometimes twice, the dark inscrutable face underwent sudden transfiguration, and became ten years younger in expression; the eyes shone with delight and interest and admiration. It was when little Penelope appeared on the scene.

The homestead at Bilbil consisted of so many little trifling buildings, that to enumerate them would be insufferable; but there was one big building, with a little pocket edition of itself tacked on to one end of it, that was the centre of the system. The component parts of the big building were two long, bare, parallel verandas, with the station store, the dining-room, and some spare bedrooms enclosed between them. The pocket edition was called the Cottage, and as it only contained Mrs Lees's quarters, it was also something of an *édition de luxe*. Here the veranda was anything but bare; it was closed in by a screen of trellis-work and creepers, which turned it into a long room with open ends. In this cool retreat Mrs Lees's work-table and Mrs Lees's long wicker-work chair were generally pitched; in fact, Mrs Lees spent most of her time between this veranda and the sitting-room which opened upon it.

From the latter half of August, the long wicker-work chair—which was really more of a sofa—began to be occupied all day and every day by one person—the man Brown; and by

the first of September Brown was able to get backwards and forwards, between this and his room in the barracks, on a pair of makeshift crutches. It was here, then, that he saw so much of Mrs Lees—and spoke to her so little; and it was here that his face changed so when little Miss Pen flitted through the veranda and popped into the sitting-room, to take leave of her mother before her day's work out at the shed began, and when she came in—with her sprightly steps, and with sand and dust clinging to her little blue riding-habit—to report herself at the day's close. It is true that Pen seldom forgot to fling a word to poor Brown, lying quietly there in the long chair; but she was too completely self-engrossed, it is to be feared, to stop and talk to him for many seconds together; and he saw the last of her always too soon, with wistful eyes.

'Morning, Brown—how's the poor leg?' she would jerk out; or: 'Better, Brown? That's all right; lucky thing I found you though, eh?'

Brown was always ready with a cheerful answer; but she seldom waited to hear it; and as for firing questions back at her, with a view to detaining the sunbeam, that was a foregone failure.

One evening, however, she came in with a splendid emu's egg, which she had found for herself on the run; and this she could not resist stopping to show to Brown. He took it in his left hand—his right lay thrust in his breast-pocket—and admired it deliberately, so deliberately, that Pen could hardly restrain herself from snatching it away from him, in her eagerness to dart off and show it to some one else. But Brown had the egg in his hand, and his opportunity too. 'Have you ever seen one of these carved, missie?' he asked her shyly.

'Only once—over at Belton,' replied Pen. 'We have two carved ones here.'

'Would you like to have a carved one? Would you like to have this egg carved?'

Giddy little Pen was arrested at last: she forgot her anxiety to show the egg to the others: and her eyes glistened. 'Would I *not*!' she cried, with great emphasis. 'You don't mean to say *you* can carve emu eggs?'

'Well, I used to be able to do it; I used to turn an honest penny at the game—once,' Brown sighed. 'I suppose I haven't forgot how.'

Pen began clapping her hands—but quickly stopped. 'I say,' she said gravely, 'I haven't got any money, you know! I've only got what's in my money-box—and I don't think I may touch that,' she added doubtfully.

Brown stared at her out of his deep-set eyes; there was something reproachful in his look. 'It isn't likely I'm going to charge *you* anything, Miss Pen—now, is it? I'll carve this egg for love—as the saying is; and I'll carve it better than ever I carved an emu egg in my life before. Consider what you done for *me*, little miss!'

Pen considered. It yielded nothing. She was not accustomed to consider. 'What *have* I done?' she asked at last with eyes wide open.

Brown gazed at her some moments without replying; then he said: 'You saved my life, little miss—that's what you did!'

His tone struck the child as odd, somehow. 'Aren't you glad?' she asked, laughing. 'You

don't say it as though you were. And you ought to be *jolly* glad, you know.'

'I ought to be grateful—and grateful I am. But glad? Pretty well, Miss Pen—pretty well.'

Pen opened her eyes very wide indeed, and suddenly they filled with tears. She had never dreamt of any one being anything but glad not to die. The very idea of indifference in the matter was frightful to her, and frightening too. This poor man's pain, then, must be terrible; his unhappiness—very likely about something else—must be unbearable. Would it cheer him up at all if she, Pen, were to stop at home to-morrow and chatter to him all day, instead of going out as usual to her beloved shed? At all events, Pen resolved to try it; and as it was not quite the easiest thing in the world for such an extremely keen little stock-rider to do, she bound herself down then and there by a promise, and consigned the precious egg to Brown's safe keeping.

'To-morrow morning you shall carve it, Brown, do you see? And I'll sit here and see it done; and I shan't show it to any of the others till it is done—so just now you may keep it.'

Brown smiled upon her as she went. He was not smiling when she rushed and found him in the same place immediately after breakfast next morning. He was looking decidedly crestfallen. The emu egg was stuck in the wicker ring with which these long chairs are provided, and intended, if required, to hold a tumbler. Penelope snatched up the egg; but there was not a scratch upon its dark-green surface.

'Why,' cried Pen, visibly disappointed, 'you haven't even begun yet, you lazy man! Aren't you going to?'

'No, miss,' said Brown ruefully.

'Then why did you promise, I should like to know?' Pen had coloured up.

'Because I had forgotten something, Miss Pen.'

'Pray, what had you forgotten?' Pen demanded scornfully.

'Why, that an accident, which happened since I last touched an emu egg, has crippled me so that I can't carve any more.'

'Your right hand?'

'Yes.'

His right hand was out of sight, as usual, in the breast of his coat. Nor did he withdraw it; but, quick as thought, Penelope did so for him. The next moment she started back. The little finger was gone!

Brown saw her start, and he changed colour. A struggle was going on in the child's mind; he read it in her frightened, plucky little face; but he did not read the end of it; he expected her to run away and bring the place about his ears: instead of which, she looked him boldly in the face and exclaimed solemnly: 'You're Thunderbolt!'

Brown answered coolly: 'I'm not, miss. Whatever makes you think so? When have you heard of him?'

'The other night; Mr Michie was telling us—it was he that shot off your little finger for you! Stop a moment: of course you can't be Thunderbolt, because they'd taken him just then: so, then, you're his mate!'

Brown did not answer. His face was pale, his deep eyes were full of distress.

'Are you?' asked the child, in a wild whisper.

Their eyes were fastened together in a long mutual gaze. Even at that moment Pen realised, with a thrill of wonder, that she was neither trembling nor quailing under his glance, which indeed was gentle enough and reassuring; but she felt no surprise when he gravely bowed his head towards her, nor did her fears increase. She was certainly an odd child brought up in an odd way; but even so, she may not have realised quite what a bushranger was, for she stared this one out of countenance, and then said severely: 'Did you ever shoot any one?' (She may not have realised the full force of 'shooting any one,' either.)

'Never,' said Brown firmly.

'Never, on your word of honour?'

'I'm not supposed to have a word of honour,' said Brown, smiling faintly; 'but I only know I never did shoot a fellow-creature—as sure as I'm lying here! There was only one man I ever felt like shooting—Thunderbolt himself! When I was thrown, crossing the run here, he took my horse and left me to die.—Curse him; I could shoot *him* as I'd shoot an ox!—But forgive me, missy: it was you that saved me: it was you that saved me!'

For one moment Pen did feel frightened—the moment in which he had spoken of Thunderbolt. Then Brown's face had flared up with sudden passion; but now it was calm again; now it was calmer than before. And there was truth in the deep, dark, wistful eyes; and his eyes seemed to Pen more sad and more sunken than they had ever been before; and the whole appearance of the man was more pitiable to look upon—from grief and shame—not from fear and trembling. Child as she was—possibly, because she was a child—Pen read his look aright. It touched her to the heart. She took between her own brown fingers the maimed, coarse hand that she had dropped with such sudden terror. 'Look here,' she whispered distinctly, while a strangely wilful expression came over her determined little face. 'If I really did do what you say I did—if I really saved you that day—I'm not going to undo it by letting on. So I shan't tell a soul. I'll die first!'

THE DESERTS OF CALIFORNIA.

THE railroad of the Southern Pacific Company connecting San Francisco and New Orleans has in its passage through Southern California opened a most interesting and extensive region to the enjoyment of travellers, who, nevertheless, pass quickly across it, satisfied with what glimpses to the right and left they may catch on their way to the land beyond of perpetual roses and endless succession of fruits, never dreaming that they are ignoring the most novel and weird experiences of the trip.

The word 'desert' brings at once before us wide expanses of loose gray sand, varied only by white and glistening patches of the alkali so deadly to all serviceable growth; but the picture is true only in part. The Deserts of California are as varied in their surface and vegetation as

are those sections so noted for their wealth of production. Between San Francisco and Los Angeles lies the Mojave Desert, fast narrowing its limits by the encroachments of settlers, who utilise even the smallest streams from the mountains, that were once allowed to lose themselves in the sands, but are now conducted through pipes or trenches for domestic and irrigating purposes. Sometimes wells are dug or bored, the waters raised by the strong arms of a windmill, and dispensed as the all-powerful inspiration to use and beauty. Carried swiftly across the wide plains of Western California, the eye of the traveller yet has time to note the novelty and beauty of the scenery, varying with the season of passage: the numerous ranches, or farms, lying in every direction, separated by a mile or two of level grain-land, look like little villages, with their groups of buildings, their trees and shrubbery, and, crowning all, the giant windmills that wrest from earth its long-locked stores. Like gems of green they shine out from their golden setting of ripening grain, and at all seasons the winding roads and beaten paths are hospitable invitations that promise one a welcome to the hearts of tasteful homes.

Unreclaimed desert lands, with their wild growths of cactus, often intervene before reaching Los Angeles, or 'the city of the angels,' so long the theme of verse and story, but now fast losing its romantic Spanish characteristics in its metropolitan growth. Still eastward lies Pasadena, not a town in the usual sense, but a wide suburb of Los Angeles. In passing through it we see mile after mile dotted with tasteful villas, and green with their surrounding orange groves, all wrested from the so-called desert lands; then in quick succession we pass thriving villages and towns, the growth of the last ten years, until the largest, Colton, is left behind; here we ascend gradually for twenty-three miles, until a height of nearly three thousand feet above sea-level is reached at the San Geronio Pass, now so noted for its revivifying influence upon consumptive invalids. On its fertile breast nestle the little towns of Beaumont and Banning, sheltered by the Sierra Madre range on the north, the San Jacinto Mountains on the south, and opening eastward to the warm dry breath of the desert, refusing entrance to the coast-fogs by the forbidding shoulders of the intervening mountains.

Some six miles from Banning begins the great eastern desert of California, known as the Colorado. Our downward course here stops only at one hundred and fifty feet below sea-level, where the microscope shows the sand to be made up of tiny sea-shells, delicately perfect though so minute. These and the larger shells, abounding so plentifully, prove to the scientist that here was once the bottom of the sea, though his wisdom has not yet solved the riddle of the change to its present condition. However, shift-

ing sand is but one feature of this desert. In climbing the farther slope, Mammoth Tank Station is reached, its name suggested by the great natural tanks existing in the mountains near by, that, being filled during the heavy rains, are never empty the year round. This neighbourhood is one of the most picturesque and interesting of the eastern desert. Long stretches of the surface are often so hardened by the action of rain, wind, and sun, that a carriage and horses passing over them leave scarcely a trace behind; and where the disintegration of the rocks is going on among the mountain ranges that traverse these plains, the rush of the waters after heavy rains carries far out the many-angled fragments, dovetailing them together into a mosaic that runs through the gamut of rock-colours from white to black, forming a surface so firm and even that one might ride for miles without jolt or jar, were it not for the numerous dry water-beds that intersect it, dug out by the force of the torrents succeeding to the cloud-bursts that occur in their season on the mountain tops.

These wayward streams do not always follow the same channel; but where they do, there the moisture lingers, and often long lines of trees outline their borders; the branches interlacing overhead, form a grateful shade for a walk or a drive along the hardened water-bed.

Where the sand is loose and driven by the wind, a succession of hills has been formed to the south, whose soft tints change from misty white to a glowing salmon pink according as they are affected by the enchantment of distance or other atmospheric influences. Driving gaily along your boulevard of hardened sand, at its end you may go with a rush to the very top of one of these smooth-breasted mounds and behold a new wonder. Fenced in by many a neighbouring drift, a little sheltered nook is found where the lingering moisture inspires the growth of grass and flowers; and the desert quail come here for food and drink; and with your shot-gun in hand, if you are quick and sure with aim and trigger, a brace or two of these toothsome morsels may prove to you at the dinner hour that you are still a being of common earth and air, and not a sojourner in a land of myths and dreams. Here little groves of Mesquite trees nestle against the breast of the motherly mounds, and even from their tops a gnarled and twisted and uncertain growth often waves its wild arms in the changing winds. One symmetrical base I remember as an object of amused surprise, upon whose top writhed the serpents of the 'Laocoön' around the three central figures, in such close imitation of the originals in marble, that, were it not for the single branch of living green that grew from the head of the tallest of the group, there might have been a suspicion of some complicity between the hands of man and of Nature.

Water, then, is the wonder-worker, and it alone is needed to redeem much of this seemingly barren waste; hence the late agitation as to the

feasibility of supplying this want through deflecting the waters of neighbouring rivers into vast reservoirs for distribution. Late American newspapers state that a plan is on foot among capitalists in Chicago for irrigating three hundred thousand acres of these lands. Companies of capitalists have already done much in this direction, but on a smaller scale, and the redemption of all the desert lands is a scheme of such gigantic proportions that it is thought the Government only should take charge of its development.

The deserts are not so destitute of water as is often believed. Besides the many mountain streams that lose themselves in the sand, springs with varied characteristics abound; and occasionally wells furnish exhaustless supplies. One of the last-named is at Indio, the first station of any importance east of Banning. At Volcano, a few miles distant, are curious mud springs, boiling, evidently, over the influence of subterranean fires.

About twenty-six miles east of Banning, and a little off from the track of the Southern Pacific Railroad, between two spurs of the San Jacinto range of mountains, is a place called Palm Springs. It can be reached from the station of Seven Palms by a drive of about six miles across the sands. Here a few capitalists have interested themselves in testing the productiveness of the desert soil by supplying it with water. Orange, lemon, lime, and fig trees have been set out; some of the last-named began to bear the second year; for the others, a longer time is needed to test their success; but grape-vines come rapidly and abundantly into bearing, and vegetables can be raised the winter through. This place takes its name from a curious warm spring, the bottom of which has never been reached, as it indignantly resents all explorations in that direction by throwing up the lead, or the venturesome man, to the top, like a cork, and scratching him well with the sheets of fine sand it flings out with its bubbling waters. Persons, however, who are rheumatic, and who persevere in such baths, soon leave most of their pains behind.

The California rains occur between November and May, except on these sandy plains where the storms and 'washouts' are usual during the heated term. This makes it possible for the health-seeker to avoid all injurious dampness by passing the winter months in the gentle and balmy air of the desert, thus enjoying a perpetual summer without any great extremes of heat.

Dr Welwood Murray, a Scotchman, formerly of Edinburgh, whose health has been restored by a few years' enjoyment of this climate, has built a most picturesque and comfortable home at Palm Springs, where, during the winter months, he often receives those who, in his belief, may be benefited by a sojourn in this interesting region. Gradually, other homes are clustering around this central one; improvements of various kinds are being inaugurated, and the time cannot be far distant when this lovely spot will be a favourite resort and a sample of what may be repeated many times in like situations. It has long been a place of sojourn for the native Indian, and a few trained grape-vines of unknown age and astonishing circumference attest the fact; and it is no wonder that he should wish to linger here and feast his eyes before resuming his restless

tramp, when even as early as February and March the earth is aglow with flowers. You may go for miles through blossoms of the wild verbena, mostly purple and white, though occasionally a pink one blushes shyly between, while here and there tall stalks bearing flaunting colours wave like flags above the sea of bloom. In quiet nooks or in deep broad canyons of the mountains are the stately palms; and the climbing vines swing to the music of the waterfalls, hiding their charms for the lovers of Nature, who, patiently seeking, shall find and enjoy them.

The varied shapes and blossoms of the cactus are better known than other characteristics of these sections, as their fantastic forms and brilliant colours are easily seen *en route*, but a closer study of their peculiarities is abundantly rewarded. The tongue-shaped cactus, of which specimens are found in our conservatories, can be grown into an impenetrable hedge of twenty feet in height, its fruit being quite palatable if you can succeed in removing the skin, which is so filled with microscopic spines that it can be a torture to the unwary for days after eating. The cone-shaped cactus, which seldom grows beyond four or five feet in height, is crowned once a year with circles of blossoms, some shading from white through the yellows into green, others gorgeous in reds. One species takes the shape of branching coral, protects itself by innumerable yellow spines an inch in length, and it flowers in delicate yellows. The cane-shaped variety often shoots to a height of from ten to fourteen feet, and bursts, rocket-like, into brilliant bloom, from the top. Where moisture has failed to keep alive some of these children of the desert, and the storms have washed away the green pulp and the thorns, you find a delicate skeleton tube of lacework, regular and beautiful in its design, and all unarmed against your appropriation of its charms.

Mining in the mountains of the desert is carried on to some extent, but there, too, the lack of water is a limitation. There is no lack of gold and silver, but the expense of freeing them from their neighbouring rock discourages enterprise; but many of the Indians, Spaniards, and Mexicans, by working a few months in the mountains, unearth enough for their needs during the remainder of the year. It is true that they are primitive in their habits and desires, yet they are often as reckless in their expenditures as their more enlightened neighbours.

Wild rumours of boundless wealth hidden away in these mountain fastnesses often reach the ear of the traveller. The tale of the 'Lost Mine' in its various phases is as enchanting to his adult ear as were the wonders of the *Arabian Nights* to his youthful imagination; and many fruitless searches and schemes have been tried to win the secret from the rock or from the knowing ones among the tribes of Indians, who, it is said, are vowed to secrecy, the knowledge descending from father to son, and never to be revealed to a white man—a terrible death being the penalty of the broken oath. Whatever truth there may be behind these rumours, certain it is that there is a fascination in the wild life of the gold-seeker to many men who have expatriated themselves for the best years of their lives in their too often fruitless search; and the charms of the desert,

known best to the homeless tramp, who often winters in her warm bosom, have yet a growing hold upon those who are wearied with the sameness of all known things.

B E P P O.

BEPP0 was the name of the new pony; and whatever in the world could be the matter with him neither master nor man could make out. The master was the new rector of Mackstey, Mr Martin, inexperienced in country life; and Beppo was his first adventure in horse-flesh. The man was Roger. Roger was a character; once seen, never forgotten. Mr Martin's new living was so far away from a railway station that a pony-carriage seemed a necessity; and there was a large garden, which he certainly could not work without assistance. He therefore retained the services of the late rector's factotum, and a good servant Roger made. He was masterful, it was true, and had his own way in everything. He ruled the stable and garden with the rule of an autocrat. He mercilessly snubbed his master when he displayed any innocent want of understanding of the details of Roger's departments. But he was a good servant; he had the interests of his master thoroughly at heart; and he had further a great notion of the dignity of his position in the village. He was indeed held in high esteem as the best authority on stock in the place; he was capable, moreover, of cutting hair, or shaving a sick man, or clipping a horse, and could, in short, turn his hand to almost anything that was wanted.

Roger was in dismay on hearing that the new rector was going to buy a pony. 'What does the master know about horse-flesh? Sure as I'm here, he'll be done.' But he was forced to admire Beppo when he arrived, and to approve of the purchase when he had seen him in harness. He was fourteen and a half hands high, six years old, a light chestnut. Mr Martin had been to Suffolk to look at him, and had been driven round the neighbourhood by his owner—who was a medical man retiring from the active work of his profession—to try the pony's paces. So pleased had he been, that the bargain was concluded, and in a few days Beppo arrived safely at Mackstey.

To drive he was excellent. He made a good pace, stepped out well, and seemed to be frightened at nothing. Wheelbarrows and tricycles had no terrors for him, nor even trains at the level crossings. But when he got into his stable, all seemed changed. He flagged, drooped his head and ears, looked uneasily round whenever the door opened, and was generally out of sorts. At first this was set down to the change of groom; but he had no dislike for Roger, and indeed had taken to him readily. Could it be change of air? If so, he would be equally uneasy when being driven. After a week or ten days a farrier was called in; but he professed himself unable to do anything, until some definite ailment declared itself. And so master and man were both getting dispirited.

'You'd better let me go, sir,' said Roger.

'Why, Roger, wouldn't you have bought him?'

'Well, perhaps'—with reluctance the man

admitted—'I suppose I should. But I should have asked more about him, and found out if anything wasn't quite right. You can't buy a horse like you buy a leg o' mutton.'

'Well, but he's a good beast, Roger, and I'm sure you would have bought him if you had gone.'

'Maybe so, maybe so; but I never bought a pig in a poke yet.'

The gentleman from whom the purchase had been made was communicated with, and was much annoyed that anything should seem to be wrong. Nothing of the sort had ever been noticed before, and the animal was sound in every way. Mr Martin had in fact paid a guinea for a certificate to that effect. And so what to do they did not know.

Now it happened, about a fortnight after the purchase, that Mr Martin had to drive to the station, some six miles off, to fetch his sister's son, Alfred, to spend a portion of his holidays at Mackstey. He was a very bright boy of twelve, and a great favourite with Mrs Martin, and with his little cousin Lucy, who was some three years younger than Alfred, and who regarded him as a sort of perfection of boyhood. He was full of tricks and dodges and fun, without being mischievous; and as good-humoured and affectionate as a boy could be. At home he had numbers of pets, having a craze for live creatures; but he was never charged with ill-treating them, or neglecting them, or getting tired of them.

'How do, uncle?—Oh! what a jolly cob!' were the words with which he announced himself, bag in hand, as he emerged from the station gateway.

'How are you, Alfred?—All well at home?—That's right.—Yes, the pony looks nicely, doesn't he? You shall see him trot directly. But there's something wrong with him, I don't know what. He isn't all right in the stable.'

'What's amiss?' asked the boy.

'I wish I could tell you. Can't find out. He doesn't seem happy. Do you know anything about horse-flesh? I should think a couple of half-crowns well laid out, if you can give us a hint.'

Alfred laughed at the idea; but his experience was not among horses. And so they chatted on till they reached the rectory.

Here Lucy took possession of the boy at once, and showed off the premises to him. His interest was greatly aroused when he realised the immense capacity of the stable yard for a private menagerie. A broken-down summer-house in a neglected corner of the garden at once suggested rabbits.

'Will aunt let you keep rabbits, Lucy? I could soon turn this into a rabbit hutch.'

And so, chatting and laughing, skipping and trotting, the little girl led her cousin round to introduce him to Roger. The indisposition of the pony was heavy on Roger's soul; and he disliked visitors to the stable in consequence. There was a reproach to him, Roger, in asking a stranger what he could suggest.

Alfred went up directly to the pony's head, and patted it and spoke to it. 'Good old Beppo! What's amiss, Beppo? Don't you like Mackstey?'

The pony had looked round when the stable door opened, but drooped his head again listlessly when the children came in.

'Are you a horse-doctor, sir?' asked Roger.

'No, I'm not,' answered the boy; 'but I'm very fond of live beasts, and they generally like me.—You'll soon like me, won't you, Beppo?' And the creature certainly did seem to respond to the boy's caresses. 'And I've got an idea,' proceeded the boy; 'and I'll tell uncle.'

'What's your idea, sir? Better tell me. The master don't know much about horse-flesh.'

'Never mind. I'll tell him first.'

And so the children moved away. But no sooner were they out of Roger's hearing than Lucy began to coax. 'Tell me, Alfred dear, do tell me.'

'Promise not to tell, Lucy. I believe Beppo misses something—something on the ground. He keeps looking down. There has been a tame bird, or a puppy, or something, where he came from, that he was fond of. And he can't make it out. Haven't you got a dog?'

'Father talks of getting one,' answered the girl; 'but he hasn't heard of one yet.'

'Well, let's find uncle, and see what he thinks of my idea.'

Mr Martin was soon found, reading in the greenhouse. He was much tickled with the boy's fancy, and thought it characteristic and original; but was laughingly obliged to admit that he did not see much in it. However, on being pressed by Alfred, he undertook to write to Beppo's late owner and ask the question. Until a reply came, Roger was unceasing in his banter.

'Won't you tell me your idea, Master Alfred?' he asked. 'Come to nothing, eh? *Not* come to nothing? Going to cure him yet? We want a new farrier hereabouts. You might set up and make your fortune.'

Alfred did not mind this sort of joking at all, and generally retorted with effect.

And in a few days a letter came with a hamper from Beppo's late master. The letter said that the suggestion was a most happy one. There was a little kitten that used to frisk about Beppo's stable. The pony and the kitten were much attached to one another. Pussy would jump on the pony's back, play between his ears, drop into the manger, stand up and pat his nose; while Beppo would always look for her on his return from a drive. She had been much dispirited since her big play-fellow had gone, and as they were looking out for a home for her, they thought the best thing to do was to send her off at once to Mackstey, on the chance that Mr Martin might be able to keep her.

'Where's Alfred?' shouted Mr Martin. 'He shall open the hamper. He shall work out his idea all by himself.'

The boy took out the kitten carefully and gently and began to pet it and talk to it. Then he took it to the kitchen and buttered its paws, which he understood was the correct thing to do with a new cat. And then a procession advanced to the stable; Alfred bearing the kitten—who did not in the least understand what was going on—led the van; Lucy came next, in a state of great excitement; and last came Mr Martin, much amused, and very curious as to the result.

The result was as completely successful as their most sanguine expectations could have imagined. As soon as the stable door opened, the kitten jumped down with a loud 'Miew!' and bounded with tail erect to Beppo. He for his part at once recognised his friend, gave a glad whinny, and put his head down to the ground and fondled the little thing gently. Then she jumped up to the manger, on to the pony's head, and ran up and down the whole length of his back. It was the prettiest thing to see, both creatures almost beside themselves with delight. The pony indulged in a gentle murmur of content; the kitten purred loudly.

The cure was complete. Roger gave in. Lucy admired Alfred more than ever.

'Let's see if I can find those two half-crowns I promised you,' said Mr Martin, as they left the stable; 'I never paid money better earned in my life.'

THE ROYAL ASSENT.

'THE sittings of both Houses were temporarily suspended in order to allow time for a Queen's messenger to proceed to Osborne to obtain the Royal Assent to the Appropriation Bill. Her Majesty's assent was telegraphed to Westminster, and at the re-assembling of the Houses the Queen's Speech was read, and Parliament prorogued with the usual formalities.' Such was the announcement that appeared in the daily papers at the close of the last session of Parliament; and to those unacquainted with parliamentary procedure, a few words in reference to the practice that prevails regarding the Royal Assent may be of interest.

In the first place, every Bill, whether it be a public or private one, that has passed through all its stages in both Houses must, before it can become law, receive Her Majesty's assent. Previous to the reign of Henry VIII. this assent had to be given in person; but by an Act passed in that monarch's reign, enabling the assent to be given by Commission, signed by the royal hand, this necessity was dispensed with. When the royal assent is given in person, the Clerk of the Parliaments waits upon Her Majesty in the robing-room before she enters the House of Lords, reads a list of the Bills, and receives her commands upon them. When Her Majesty is seated upon the throne, the Clerk of the Crown reads the title of each Bill; the Clerk of the Parliaments, if it be a public Bill, then signifies the royal assent in Norman-French as follows: '*La Reyne le veult*' (The Queen wills it so to be). If the Bill be a private one, the form of assent is, '*Soit fait comme il est désiré*' (Be it as it is desired). When, however, a Bill of Supply is passed, the assent is expressed thus: '*La Reyne remercie ses bons sujets, accepte leur benevolence, et ainsi le veult*' (The Queen thanks her loyal subjects, accepts their benevolence, and wills it so to be). After each declaration by the Clerk, a gentle inclination is given by Her Majesty, indicating her assent. If, on the other hand, the royal assent is refused to any Bill, the Clerk declares, '*La Reyne s'avisera*' (The Queen will advise—or think—upon it).

When the assent is signified by Commission,

the Lords Commissioners read the Commission, and precisely the same formalities are observed as in the Queen's presence.

Before proceeding further, it may be well to note that at the time of the Commonwealth, Cromwell's assent to Bills was given in English; but at the Restoration, the old form of words, in vogue since the reign of Henry VII., was resorted to; and only one attempt has since been made to abolish it, when, in 1706, the House of Lords originated and passed a Bill to abolish the use of the French tongue in all parliamentary proceedings; the Bill was, however, dropped in the House of Commons; hence it is that the ancient custom of giving expression to the royal assent in Norman-French still prevails.

There have been occasions, though not many, on which the royal assent has been refused to Bills. Thus, it is recorded in the Journals of the House of Lords that this prerogative was exercised by Queen Elizabeth at the close of a session in 1597 to the extent of withholding her assent to no fewer than forty-eight Bills. Again, in 1692, we learn that William III. refused his assent to a Bill for the establishment of triennial parliaments. He was, however, induced some two years later to allow the Bill to become law. The last occasion on which the royal assent was withheld was in 1707, when Queen Anne refused assent to a Bill entitled, 'An Act for settling the Militia of that part of the Kingdom called Scotland.' Just one hundred years later, when Lord Howick (afterwards Earl Grey) introduced a Bill to allow Catholics to serve in the army and navy, it is said that George III. strongly intimated that he would rather abdicate than give his assent to such a Bill; imagining that he was forbidden by his coronation oath to admit Catholics to any offices in the State. When at length, in 1829, the Act was passed in both Houses, George IV. at first refused his assent to it, but yielded on learning from Lord Eldon that the withholding of the assent would involve the resignation of his ministers. Sir Archibald Alison, the historian, deals with the matter in touching detail, showing the agony of mind of the king during the progress of the measure through Parliament, and concludes his account by saying: 'Such was the despair of the king that the unhappy monarch threw his arms around Lord Eldon's neck and wept, entreating him not to desert him, for he had no other to advise with.'

Circumstances have arisen when the strict formula observed in reference to obtaining the royal assent has had to be abandoned, as at the passing of the Regency Bill in 1811, when the assent to the measure was obtained under peculiar circumstances. The king being incapable of exercising any authority, the Great Seal was nevertheless affixed to a Commission for giving the royal assent. Again, in 1830, when it became painful to George IV. to sign with his own hand, recourse was had to a special statute, passed for the purpose, by which he was enabled to appoint one or more persons with full power and authority to each affix, in the king's presence and by his command, the royal signature by means of a stamp prepared for the purpose.

A curious instance is chronicled of the royal assent having been given to a Bill by mistake. Such an occurrence is recorded as having taken

place in 1844, when one of two railway Bills, which had not passed through all its stages in the House of Lords, received, in error, the assent intended for the Bill in which all the formalities had been complied with. This singular oversight necessitated the passing of a special Act in order to rectify matters.

Finally, it may not be generally known that in 1876, when the Queen was about to visit the Continent, some doubts were expressed whether she could legally give her assent to Bills by Commission during her absence. No case could be found in which the assent had been so given; but it was discovered that in the reign of William and Mary this contingency had been provided for to the effect that 'nothing should be taken to exclude or debar His Majesty from the exercise of any act or royal power, but that every such act should be as good and effectual as if His Majesty was within the realm.' Her Majesty was advised, therefore, that she would be able to give her assent to Bills while absent from the realm. Accordingly, several Bills received the Queen's assent under these unique circumstances.

CONFIDENCES.

MAIDEN.

Oh, you merry, idle fellow, high upon a beech-bough
swaying,
Have you really no employment all the long bright
forenoon through
But to watch the golden sunbeams 'mid the green
leaves flitting, playing,
And the glist'ning pilewort gleaming in the meadows
under you?

BLACKBIRD.

Pretty maiden, pretty maiden, in the branches green
and shady
There's a nest with five eggs resting on a smooth and
cosy bed,
And since the dawn of morning I am singing to a
lady
Who above her cosy dwelling lifts, to hear me, her
brown head.
But now tell me, pretty maiden, do you linger here
each morning
Just to see the daisies flutter as the south wind rushes
by,
Or to view the Lenten Lilies all the breezy slopes
adorning,
Or the tassels swinging gaily on the scented larch-
trees nigh?

MAIDEN.

Whisper, blackbird, for a moment: much, indeed, I
love the meadows,
Gorsy fells, and fragrant larch-woods, where the south
winds murmur low
To the wind-flowers flushed and trembling, and the
shifting lights and shadows—
But I'm watching for my lover, and you must let no
one know.

M. ROCK.

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THE MODERN WONDER-WORKER, ELECTRICITY.

It has constantly been the subject for remark that Britain is very backward compared with other countries in her adoption of Electricity for lighting and other purposes. But it is evident to those whose business takes them to the metropolis and our other large cities and towns that such a reproach cannot much longer hold good, for it is evident that electricity, for lighting purposes at least, is fast coming to the front.

It is not, perhaps, on the whole a misfortune for us that various circumstances have combined to cause some delay in calling in this comparatively new agent to our help. These circumstances comprise ill-considered legislation, which sought to tie too tightly the hands of those who wished to make commercial enterprise of electricity, under the fear that gigantic monopolies might be created, to the public prejudice. The nation had already been taught a severe lesson in the matter of gas and water companies, and the government erred on the right side when they sought to render such monopolies impossible in the case of electricity. But this delay has had one good effect, in enabling us to profit by the experiments, the failures as well as the successes, of others, notably our American friends, who, with characteristic energy, have allowed nothing to prevent them from lighting their towns, running their railways and tram-lines, and accomplishing all kinds of other work, by means of electricity.

Now, as we have already intimated, there is decided evidence of a reaction in this country. In London alone at this moment there are eleven different Electric Supply Companies, with a capital of more than four millions sterling. These companies hold sixteen central stations, and they have already laid conducting wires, or cables, under three hundred miles of streets. But this work is not all simply preparatory; for there are now more than half a million lamps burning every evening in the metropolis which owe their

radiance to the incandescent system, as well as nearly two thousand of the more brilliant arc-lights. Electricity, too, is used as a motor; and its use is increasing, driving various small machines, chiefly of a domestic character. It goes without saying that the price of the electric current must have been brought more in harmony with that of gas than it was a short time ago before these results could be brought about. But those who wish to get a really correct idea of the improved position which electricity is likely to assume in the near future as part of our commercial life and resources, should endeavour to pay a visit to the present International Electrical Exhibition at the Crystal Palace, which is without doubt the finest Exhibition of the kind which has yet been held. The directors have been fortunate in gaining the support of all the chief electricians in this country and abroad, and they have had the further advantage of conference with the special Committee appointed by the electrical section of the London Chamber of Commerce. The Exhibition, therefore, has been started under the most favourable auspices, and its success is unmistakable. Although the Crystal Palace at Sydenham has more available space than any other building in the kingdom, the area is by no means too large to accommodate the various magnificent exhibits which have been collected there.

The extent of the show may to some extent be appreciated when we point out that these exhibits have been arranged under fifteen different sections. These comprise the Phenomena and laws of Electricity; Electrical Measurements; Batteries of all kinds, both Primary and Secondary; and Dynamical Electricity. This last section is a very important one, for it includes the wonderful dynamo-machine, which in a measure may be looked upon as the very foundation of modern electrical science. The same section, too, comprises various types of steam-engines which have been devised for the express purpose of driving the modern dynamo-machine in its various forms. We should notice, too, that under

this head come numerous forms of gas-engines, a type of machine which has lately reached marvellous perfection, owing chiefly to the circumstance that the original patents have expired, and therefore the manufacture has been thrown open to all.

Electrical transmission, distribution, and regulation of the current form the subject-matter of another large section of this Exhibition. Under this head come cables, insulators, switches, and various minor appliances which are as necessary to success as the larger and more showy engines and machines already mentioned.

The section next in order is a most important one, for it deals with Motors. We say important, because there is no doubt that electricity in the near future will to some extent supplant the steam-engine, and we have here plenty of evidence that this will be the case. We may remind our readers that the electrical motor is really another name for the dynamo-machine; for it was soon discovered—and one of our greatest scientists pointed this out as one of the chief discoveries of the nineteenth century—that if this dynamo-machine, driven by a steam-engine or by water-power, as the case might be, were connected to a second machine of the same kind by wires, that machine, although it might be at a great distance from the primary one, was thrown into motion. It stands to reason that this being the case, it would be possible, from a central station, to convey motion to several machines at different distant points. This power has made possible electric railways, electric tramcars; besides which it has enabled the electrician to apply power to various machines, such as lifts, cranes, &c., which before were worked by steam or water. We do not here enter into the question of cost, which at present is a moot-point, but merely record the fact that these applications are possible by the use of the dynamo-machine used as a source of motion.

To the general public the question of electric lighting is the one that most closely appeals to them, and here the eye is literally satiated with the extraordinary brilliancy and beauty of the lights shown. The fascinating little Incandescent glow-lamp appears here in various forms, and suites of elegantly decorated rooms show how this wonderful illuminant can be used artistically, and can be made to lend itself to all kinds of decoration. For practically it is a lamp without danger of fire, and therefore it can be put in situations where any other form of light would be prohibitive. The more intense Arc-light is also exhibited here, in the form of street lamps, as search-lights for shipboard, and for other purposes where an intense illumination is called for. Electric heating naturally comes next to lighting, but for various causes this application of the current is quite in its infancy. Every tyro knows that if a current travelling along a conductor of a certain thickness is interrupted by

the interposition of a finer wire in the circuit which offers resistance to the passage of the current, that resistance is manifested by heat; and a well-known lecture-experiment proves that such a wire becomes incandescent in consequence of that resistance. Upon this principle there have been invented various appliances for boiling, heating, and soldering. Under the same head, too, should be included those wonderful machines which have recently come into use for the welding of metals. By bringing together two pieces of metal through which a powerful current is flowing, the junction is subjected to such an intense heat that the metals partly fuse; and by this means a more perfect weld is secured between them than by the old process of hammering.

The application of electricity to the various needs of metallurgy is more familiar to most people than are some of its more modern achievements, for electro-plated goods have now become familiar objects in most households for a number of years. The most recent phase of the process is the art of nickel-plating, which is bound to find extensive employment. We may also notice in this connection the possibility of procuring pure copper from its ore by means of electric deposition; and there is every hope that by the same agency the ores of the noble metals may some day be made to give up their riches. In our review of what the electric current does for us, it would be ungrateful to forget how much we owe to this modern magician for the power which it gives of inter-communication. In telegraphy there is nothing particularly new to record; but it is most interesting at this Exhibition to trace the history of electric telegraphy from the first needle instrument, that of Cook and Wheatstone, which was produced in the same year which saw the accession of Queen Victoria, and to follow the various improvements upon this instrument which were produced from year to year up to the present time, when the science of telegraphy has reached such wonderful perfection, that three or four messages can be sent along one wire in different directions at the same moment.

The telephone next claims our attention, and at the Crystal Palace we have the option of hearing by its means musical performances which are taking place in London, about ten miles distant; or in Liverpool or Manchester, which are about two hundred miles away from the building. Some of these performances are extraordinarily distinct, for the old difficulty of induction noises has in modern times been greatly reduced in intensity. There are various other applications of the electric current to be found in this wonderful Exhibition, but it would occupy too much of our space to describe them all.

Before closing our review of it, we should point out that enormous power is requisite to furnish the various lamps and other appliances with electrical energy. The source of this power is represented by a row of enormous boilers at one end of the vast machine-room; but besides these, the Crystal Palace District Supply Company, which has a station more than a mile

distant from the Palace, carries a cable to the building, through which energy equal to five hundred horse-power is called in to furnish additional help.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER IX.—AT THE GATES OF PARADISE.

MANY women have advanced the doctrine that the happiest time of life is that of their engagement. Of course no man can possibly understand this theory; but from a woman's point of view it can be defended because it is for some girls the most delightful thing in the world to be wooed; and until the church service is actually said and the ring is on the finger, the bride is Queen and Mistress; afterwards—not always. But the happiness of it depends upon its being a courtship without obstacles. Now, in the case of the young couple whose fortunes we are following, there was plenty of love with excellent wooing; but the engagement had been opposed by the whole tribe of Arundels, so that every time she met her lover it was in open rebellion against her mother. To go home from a walk with him only to find the silence of resentment at home is not pleasant. Again, we have seen how they were looking forward to a life of poverty—even of privation. Dame Penury with her pinching ways and shrewish tongue was going to be their constant lodger. Then the young man could not choose but ask himself whether he was not a selfish beast to take a girl out of plenty into privation. And the girl could not choose but ask herself whether she was not selfish in laying this great burden upon the back of her lover. No one can be indifferent to such a prospect: no one can contemplate with pleasure the cheese-parings, the savings, the management of such a life: no one can like having to make a penny do the work of sixpence: no one can rejoice as one steps down, down, down the social ladder; no one can anticipate with satisfaction the loss of gentleness for the daughters, and the loss of an adequate education for the sons.

'You will make me happy,' said the lover, 'at the cost of everything that makes life happy for yourself.'

'If I make you happy,' said the girl, 'I ask for nothing more. But oh! I am laying a heavy burden upon you. Can you bear it? Will you never blame me if the burden is greater than you can bear?'

And now all the trouble vanished like a cloud from the morning sky—vanished so completely that there was not a trace of it left anywhere. The accusing figure of her mother was changed into a smiling face of pleased and satisfied maternity: reproaches were turned into words of endearment, angry looks to presents and caresses. And as for her sister, you might have thought that all this good fortune was actually achieved and conquered by Elsie—otherwise, how could one justify the praise and flattery that Hilda now lavished upon her? She gave a great dinner as

a kind of official reception of the bridegroom into the family: she also gave a dance, at which she herself was the most beautiful woman—she stood in a conspicuous place all the evening, magnificently dressed, statuesque, wonderful: and Elsie was the prettiest girl at the party; but between the most beautiful woman and the prettiest girl was a difference! There is nothing like good fortune to bring out a girl's good qualities: Elsie had always had friends, now she might have numbered them by hundreds. Good fortune breeds friends as the sunshine creates the flowers. She was congratulated, caressed, and flattered enough to turn her head. Now, girls are so constituted that they love admiration, which is a kind of affection, even when it takes the form of flattery: and their heads may be easily turned; but they are as easily turned back again. And the house—the widow's house—which for so many years had been so dull and quiet a place, was transformed into a place of entertainment. It only wanted coloured lamps to make it another Vauxhall: it was crowded every night with the younger friends of bride and bridegroom. George had many friends. He was gregarious by nature: he was a rowing man on the athletic side: he had a healthy love and a light hand for things like billiards, shooting, and fishing: they are tastes which assist in the creation of friendships.

These friends—young fellows of like mind—came to the house in multitudes to rally round the man about to desert their ranks. Young men are forgiving: George would row no more among them: he would be lost to the billiard table, and to the club itself: yet they forgave him, and accepted his invitation and went to see the bride. They found her with the friends of her own age. Heavens! how the daring of one man in taking away a maiden from the band encourages others! There are six love-stories at least, all rising out of these evenings, and all of surpassing interest, had one the time to write them. They are both grave and gay: there are tears in every one: the course of true love in no case ran smooth except in the Story of the Two Stupids. Love's enemies can never effect aught against a Stupid, and so these Two Stupids became engaged without opposition, and were married with acclamations; but they are too Stupid—perhaps—to know their own happiness.

All this went on for three weeks. It was arranged that the happy pair should be married in the middle of August: they had resolved to spend their honeymoon in France, staying a few days in Paris, and then going on to see the towns and the country along the Loire, with the old city of Tours for their centre. They proposed to live entirely upon fruit and wine and kisses. No place in the world like Touraine for those who are so young, and so much in love, and so perfectly satisfied with so simple a diet. Even for those who take a cutlet with the fruit and the wine, there is no place equal to Touraine. Meantime, against the home-coming, a desirable flat was secured, not one of your little economical flats, all drawing-room with two or three rabbit hutches for bedrooms, but a large and highly decorated flat with all the newest appliances, large rooms, and a lift and plenty of space for the dinner-parties and receptions which Elsie

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would have to give. The servants were engaged. The furniture was ordered, all in the advanced taste of the day—carpets, curtains, pictures, overmantels, cabinets, screens. Elsie went every day to her new home and found something omitted, and sat down in it to wonder what it would be like—this new life she was entering upon. Oh! it was a busy time.—Then there was her trousseau—everybody knows the amount of thought and care required for a trousseau: this was approaching completion—everybody knows the happiness, peculiar, and unlike any other kind of happiness, with which a girl contemplates a heap of 'things,' all her own. I suppose that it is only at her wedding that she can enjoy this happiness, for afterwards, the 'things' are not her own, but the things of the family. The bride's dress, another thing of supreme importance, had been tried on, though as yet it was very, very far from being finished. The bridesmaids, two of George's sisters, had also already tried on their dresses. They came every day, two very sweet girls, who have both to do with those six love-stories which will never, I fear, be told, to talk over the events and to see the presents. These came in daily, and were laid out in a room by themselves, looking very splendid: their splendour proved the wealth and the position of the pair, because rich presents are only given to rich people.

In a word, everybody was heartily, loyally sympathetic, as if to make up for the previous harshness and coldness. For four weeks this happiness lasted! It was on Monday, June 29th, that the golden shower descended upon them: it was on Monday, July 20th, that the rain of gold ceased, and another kind of cloud came up which speedily changed into a driving storm of rain and sleet and hail and ice and snow.

Look at them on Sunday. Before the storm there is generally a brief time of sunshine, warm and fine: after the storm, the calm that follows is a time of dismay, speechless and tearless. Sunday was the day before the storm: it was a day of sunshine without and within. The lovers spent the whole day together, hand in hand. They went to church together: they sat side by side, they warbled off the same hymn-book. The service proved, as the Preacher used to say, a season of refreshment, for never doth religion so uplift the soul as when it is entirely happy: the voices of the choir chanting the Psalms filled them with joy, and would have done so even if they had been penitential minors, and the lamentation of a sinner. Their hearts rose higher and higher as the Preacher exhorted, and would have flown upwards just as much whether he had brandished the terrors of the law or held out the gracious promise of the Gospel. For you see, at such a time as this, whatever was said or done only led this faithful pair farther and deeper into the shady glades and fragrant lawns and flowery dells of Love's Paradise.

Every church, at every service, and especially in the evening, contains many such lovers. You may know them by certain infallible signs. They sit very close together: they sing off the same book: their faces betray by the rigidity of their attitude, which is that of pretended attention, the far-away expression of their eyes, and

the absence of any external sign of emotion or sympathy with the preacher, that their hands, beneath some folds of the feminine gabardine, are closely clasped. It has sometimes pleased the philosopher and relieved the tedium of a dull sermon to look round the congregation and to pick out the lovers—here a pair and there a pair. Even in the Church, you see, Love is conqueror and King.

These lovers, therefore, went to church in a frame of mind truly heavenly: nobody in the whole congregation felt more deeply pious: every response was an Act of Praise: every prayer an Act of Gratitude: every hymn a personal Thank-offering. Beneath those calm faces was flying and rushing a whirlwind and confusion of hopes, memories, plans, projects, and gratitudes. He who looks back upon the days immediately before his wedding-day—most men no more remember their own emotions than a child remembers yesterday's earache—will wonder how he lived through that time of change, when all that he prayed for was granted, but on the condition of a turning upside down of all his habits, customs, and petted ways.

All round them sat the people, no doubt with minds wholly attuned to the service of Prayer and Praise. Well, the sheep in a flock to outward seeming are all alike, yet every animal has his own desires and small ambitions for himself. So I suppose with the congregation. As every man shuts the street door behind him and trudges along the way to church—the *Via Sacra*—with wife and children, he carries in his waistcoat pocket, close to his heart, a little packet of business cares to think upon during the sermon. And if all the thoughts of all the people could be collected after the sermon instead of the offertory, they would make a salutary oblation indeed.

'George,' said Elsie, as they came out, 'let us go into the Gardens and sit under a tree and talk. Let us get away from everybody for half an hour.'

Kensington Gardens were filled with the customary throng of those who, like themselves, had been to church. The carping philosopher says unkind things about Church, and Gardens, and Fashion. As if Church would ever keep like from congregating with like! There were shoals of beautiful girls, dressed as well as they knew or could afford: dozens of young fellows, and with them the no longer quite so young, the no longer young, the no longer young at all, the middle-aged, the elderly and the old, not to speak of the children. Elsie looked up and down the walk. 'We are never so much alone as in a crowd,' she said, with the air that some girls assume of saying an original thing—which no woman ever did say yet, unless by accident.

They joined the stream: presently George led the girl out of the road and across the grass to a place where two or three chairs were set under the trees. They sat down. Then occurred the miracle wrought in these gardens every day and all day long. Out of the ground sprang a man—for such he seemed, though doubtless a spirit-messenger—who demanded twopence. This paid, he vanished straightway. After the ceremony they talked.

'George,' said the girl, 'every day now, wher-

ever I am, even at church, I feel as if I should like to jump up and to sing and dance. This morning I should have liked a service all to ourselves—you to read and I to sing: you to pray and I to praise. I kept wondering if there was any girl in the place so happy as myself—or so unhappy as I was three short weeks ago.

'Elsie,' said George—a simple thing to say, but it had a thousand meanings.

'We have not deserved it. Indeed, indeed—we have not. Why are we singled out for such joy? We already had the greatest thing of all—we had love. That is happiness enough for some women. We only wanted a little more money, and now we have all this great fortune.'

'It is wonderful, Elsie!'

She laid her hand on his and spoke in her sweet low voice, gazing upwards. 'George! I am so happy, that I want everybody else to be happy as well. The angels, I am sure, must lose some of their joy in wishing that all were with them. I pity all those poor girls who have no lovers: all those poor married people who are lying in poverty: all those poor creatures who are trying for what they cannot get: all those who are weeping outside the gates of Heaven. George, it is a beautiful world, and it should be such a happy world: there should be nothing but joy all through life. There is such an abundance of happiness possible in it. Sadness is only a passing cloud: anxiety is only a touch of east wind: evil and pain are only fleeting shadows.'

She sighed and clasped her hands, and the tears rose to her eyes.

'We shall grow old together, George,' she went on, murmuring rather than speaking.—I omit her lover's interruptions and interjections.—'You will always love me, long after my beauty—you know you will call it beauty, George—is past and gone: even when I am a poor old crone doubled up in my arm-chair: you will always love me. My life will be full—full—full of love. Perhaps.'—Here her face flushed, and she stopped. 'We shall have no trouble about money: we shall go on always learning more and more, growing wiser and wiser and wiser. You will be a wise and good man, thinking and working all your life for other people, just as Mr Dering imagined—three weeks ago. Everybody will love and respect you. Then you will grow gray-headed, you poor, dear boy; and all the world will say how wise and strong you are; and I shall be prouder of my old husband than even I was of my young lover. The life that others have dreamed, we shall live. Every day shall come laden with its own joy, so that we would not, if we could help it, suffer it to go away.' She struck a deeper note, and her voice trembled and sank and her eyes filled with tears: 'Life shall be all happiness, as God intended for us. Even Death will be little sorrow, for the separation will be so short.' Once more she laid her hand on his.

Even to the most frivolous, the prospect of the wedded life awakens grave and solemn thoughts: for those who have eyes to see and ears to hear and brains to understand, there is no prospect so charged with chances and possibilities, where even life itself may become a Death in Life.

When George left her in the evening, he drove to see Athelstan.

'So,' he said, 'you have been courting all day. I suppose. You ought to have had enough of it. Sit down and have something—a pipe—a cigar.—Well—you are going to be very jolly, I suppose. Elsie's little fortune will help a bit, won't it?'

'I should think so, indeed.'

'Yes—I've been very glad, ever since you told me that the child had had this stroke of luck. I wonder who gave her the money? To be sure, there is plenty of money knocking about among the Arundels. Most of us have had a sort of instinct for making money. Put us down anywhere among a lot of men in a city, and we begin to transfer the contents of their pockets to our own.'

'Meanwhile, give up this old resentment. Come back to your own people. Come to our wedding.'

'I cannot possibly, unless you will tell me who forged that cheque. How could I go back to people who still believe me guilty? When you are married, I will go and see Elsie, which I can do with a light heart. You have not told any one about my return?'

'Certainly not. No one suspects, and no one talks or thinks about you.'

Athelstan laughed a little. 'That is a doubtful piece of information. Am I to rejoice or to weep, because I am completely forgotten and out of mind? It is rather humiliating, isn't it?'

'You are not forgotten at all. That is a different thing. Only they do not speak of you.'

'Well, George, never mind that now. I am glad you came to-night, because I have some news for you. I have found the commissioner who took the cheque to the Bank—actually found the man.'

'No! After all these years?'

'I wrote out the particulars of the case—briefly. Yesterday I took the paper to the commissioners' barrack in the Strand and offered a reward for the recovery of the man who had cashed the cheque. That same evening the man presented himself and claimed the reward. He remembered the thing very well—for this reason: the gentleman who employed him first sent him with a bag to a Parcel Delivery Office: he did not look at the address. The gentleman was staying at the Cecil Hotel. Now the commissioner was a one-armed man. Because he had only one arm, the gentleman—who was a pleasant-spoken gentleman—gave him ten shillings for his trouble, which was nine shillings more than his proper pay. The gentleman sent him to the Bank with this cheque to cash, and he returned with seven hundred and twenty pounds in ten-pound notes. Then it was that the gentleman—who seems to have been a free-handed gentleman—gave him ten shillings. The man says that he would know that gentleman anywhere. He was old, and had gray hair. He says that he should know him wherever he saw him. What do you think of that?'

'Well—it is something, if you could find that old man.'

'Why, of course it was Checkley—gray-haired

Checkley. We'll catch that old fox yet. Beware of Checkley. He's a Fox. He's a Worm. He's a creeping Centipede. When the old man goes, you must make Checkley pack.'

CONCERNING TRUFFLES.

FRUITFUL Nature has reserved to herself the exclusive right of reproducing certain of her most valued products, and in this category the Truffle must occupy a foremost place. Numerous have been the attempts to cultivate artificially this valuable fungus; but although many have devoted years of patient study to the problem, failure has marked their efforts, and the secrets of truffle growth and development have not yet been unveiled.

Oh! who can tell

The hidden power of herbes, and might of magic spell?

sang Spenser; and the query, so far as the truffle is concerned, still remains unsolved.

Although Nature guards so closely and so jealously the processes whereby the truffle is evolved, she shows no stinting hand in the distribution of this edible titbit. There are at least some forty varieties of the truffle native to British soil; but these, with one or two exceptions, are far inferior to those of France, which must be regarded as the real home of the truffle.

Perigieux and Angoulême have long enjoyed the reputation of producing the finest specimens of *Tuber melanosporum*; and Perigord pie has attained a world-wide celebrity. The common French truffle, like all true truffles, is a subterranean growth, and attains the size of a walnut or small potato. It is a winter growth, and its flesh when mature is of a blackish gray colour marbled with white veins. Late autumn and early winter are the best seasons for gathering, and such is the marketable value of the tuber sought after, that in a reputed truffle district but few escape detection. An argillaceous or calcareous soil is best adapted for their growth; and here, at the foot of oak and beech trees, diligent search is made for them. The truffle receives marked attention from other than human seekers, however. Squirrels, and hogs when they are turned loose to forage for themselves, are keen truffle-hunters. Advantage is taken of the penchant of the pig for truffles to train it to hunt systematically for the underground prize. The odour of many truffles is so potent—epicures compare that of the finer specimens to strawberry—that it exhales through the porous soil, and thus affords a clue to the keen-scented of the treasure that lies beneath.

When once a hog has tasted truffles, it needs but little encouragement to develop it into an inveterate truffle-hunter. Dogs, however, from their greater docility and the less voracious character of their appetites, are preferred for this business. The canine fungus-hunter receives his training while young, and the method generally pursued is as follows. Finely-cut or sliced truffles are mixed daily with their food until they become imbued with a liking for the flavour, and, what is perhaps of quite as much importance, they come to regard the flavour of truffles as

an inherent quality of all their food. The very odour of truffles will thus suggest a meal. The next step is to take the dog into the fields or woods and place a dish of *filet aux truffes* in some sequestered nook and cover it with earth. The dog is then encouraged to hunt for it; and the promptings of hunger contribute as much to the desired result as do the urgings of its master, for the dog is always taken out fasting. On finding the game the dog is always rewarded with some little delicacy, which incites him to further exertions. Poachers for truffles are great nuisances, and landowners are loud in their complaints at the mischief wrought by them and their attendant dogs or pigs.

In the Italian markets the best French truffles are sold at prices ranging from ten to twelve shillings a pound. Italy, however, is not devoid of its own truffles, in the eating of which the Italians allow themselves a much wider latitude than they do in the case of fungi which grow on the surface of the ground. Our meadow mushroom, with its pretty pink gills and delicate flavour, comes in Italy under the ban of things poisonous; and the Italian peasantry in certain districts, renowned as they are for the extensive nature of their vocabulary of imprecations, can give vent to no bitterer curse than, 'May you die of a Pratiolo,' mushroom-poisoning being supposed to be the most fearful of deaths.

To truffles, however, they are more tolerant, and less superstitious as to their unwholesome character. In the case of mushrooms, the policy generally adopted is, 'Prove it harmless, and we will eat it.' With truffles, however, you must prove the vegetable noxious before they will abstain from eating it.

The Italian truffle (*Tuber magnatum*) is essentially Italian. It is brownish-coloured without, liver-coloured within, and strongly scented with the odour of garlic. Some authorities state the odour of old truffles of this species to resemble onions or strong decaying cheese. It resembles its French *confrère* in that it is best gathered in the autumn, and most frequently found in plantations of willows, poplar, oak, and beech; but it differs from it by sometimes occurring in abundance in cultivated fields. The Italian peasantry prefer their truffles boiled or roasted in hot ashes; and the wealthier section of the community prefer to import their truffles from France rather than patronise the varieties indigenous to their own soil.

We have stated above that the number of species found in Great Britain is upwards of forty. Of this number *Tuber aestivum* is the most esteemed. In size it resembles a small apple, and it is covered with coarse polygonal warts. It grows best between July and December, and prefers beech or oak woods and a chalky or clayey soil to any other. Its market price varies from two to five shillings per pound, and its odour, like that of its continental brethren, is strong and penetrating. The demand for English truffles is much greater than is imagined, much greater, indeed, than the supply, and the result is that the public have palmed upon them an inferior substitute.

The most common of the 'false truffles' is a fungus of the puff-ball family, by name *Scleroderma vulgare*. In France, large quantities of

this growth are canned each season, and exported as genuine truffles; while in Epping Forest, many needy Frenchmen and Italians earn a precarious livelihood by gathering this 'false truffle' and selling it to restaurant keepers of the baser sort. For *Scleroderma vulgare* forms an important ingredient in the manufacture of the 'continental dishes' of many of the inferior London dining-rooms.

Of the forty British species, fifty per cent. have been pronounced edible. The question thus very naturally suggests itself, why are these twenty species not more sought after and esteemed than they are? The query is easily answered. British prejudice is the factor that mainly determines which shall be eaten and which not. *Tuber aestivum* is eaten, and its virtues are recognised; but the others are classified as 'poisonous,' and are rigidly eschewed as articles of diet. The same blind prejudice is evidenced in the classification of all fungi which grow above ground as 'mushrooms' and 'toadstools.' The former are edible, the latter are poisonous. The first-named includes in many persons' minds but a solitary specimen, the meadow mushroom, the toadstools all the rest. Signal failure has marked the efforts of those who have attempted to popularise the eating of British truffles other than *T. aestivum*. The elevation of the poorer truffles to the status of edibility is, alas, a difficult and almost impossible process!

Germany and Holland, Spain and Algeria, all have their respective truffles; but they are much inferior to those of their Gallic neighbours. Alexander Bornholz, a German scientist, claims to have successfully transplanted and raised French truffles. The measure of success, however, is so small that the experiment must be regarded as a failure. A French savant professes to have discovered a soil so adapted to the growth of that article that the world's trade in truffles is threatened with revolution, and we are informed that truffles will ere long be sold in Paris at the French equivalent for a penny a pound. There is a vast difference between this and sixteen shillings a pound, which is their present price. The Committee appointed by the French Académie des Sciences to inquire into the matter, will, it is feared by truffle experts, have but another failure to report.

During the year 1889, France exported 452,361 pounds of truffles, of which 204,633 pounds came to England; 107,276 pounds went to Germany; 38,990 pounds to Belgium; and 24,387 pounds to the United States. The last-named country will soon cease to be a market for French truffles, for the native varieties, it is found, are of marked excellence and wide distribution. During the past few years, a considerable amount of attention has been devoted in the State of California to the gathering and preserving of truffles. Lately, a party of Americans interested in the truffle trade went to Bordeaux and made themselves familiar with the various processes of the export industry. The canning process is extremely simple, and almost exactly analogous to that adopted in the preserving of tomatoes and asparagus. The truffles are partially boiled, then placed in the can or tin, and sealed up in their own diluted juice. 'Truffled' game is simply

game stuffed with truffles, which for this purpose are cut into small squares and inserted in the object to be stuffed.

We have already alluded to true and false truffles. The distinction between the two is so strongly marked, that there is little difficulty in detecting an imposture. All truffles, like fungi generally, are produced by minute spore seeds, which when magnified five hundred diameters appear as large as a small pin-head. In the true truffles the spores are deposited in sacs which contain from four to eight spores, and are embedded in vast numbers in the flesh of the tuber. In the false truffles the spores are free, and borne on spicules or supports. After all, perhaps, the best test of the quality of the 'most delicious product of the whole vegetable kingdom' lies in the eating of it. Even the time-honoured test, traditionally so efficacious in the case of mushrooms, of placing a silver spoon in juxtaposition with the cooking truffles, in the belief that if good the colour will remain unchanged, if poisonous it will become deep black, must be abandoned as worthless. Scientific research has, however, discovered, chiefly by the aid of the microscope, that an extension of the list of British edible fungi in general and truffles in particular can be made with safety. Those who avail themselves of the teachings of science, and regale themselves on the vegetable dainties which Nature places at their disposal, run the risk of being dubbed fungus-eaters, and classed with him of whom it was said: 'He ate strange flesh.' The opprobrium of the term, however, grows weaker as knowledge extends and prejudice wanes; and ere long we may hope to see, if not French truffles at a penny a pound, at least an increase in the quantity and varieties of English truffles exposed for sale in our market.

THUNDERBOLT'S MATE.

IV.

On the evening of Tuesday, September 8, at a quarter past six, Penelope Lees opened the double gates of the Bilbil home-paddock, squeezed through on her pony, shut and fastened the gates behind her, and rode up very slowly to the home-stead. There was a good sunset that evening—a sunset on a grand scale, for quite half the sky was tinted pink and amber; but Pen only noticed it when she stopped to give her pony its evening drink at the horse-tank, which mirrored the whole thing. Eastward, however, at the horizon, the sky was gray-edged, and the edge was growing broader; but this Pen never noticed at all. The fact is she had ridden home from the shed this evening with downcast eyes, for the shearing was all but over. It had been such splendid fun all through that it seemed to have flown over in one week, instead of in six. But what was a thousand times worse than the close of shearing was the approach of schooling; for it was settled that when William Lees went down to Melbourne at the beginning of November he was to take his little girl with him and leave her at a school there—hundreds and hundreds of miles away. This had only just been arranged;

but the arrangement was final; and it must be confessed that 'downcast' does not tell the whole truth with regard to poor little Pen's eyes on her ride from the shed this evening.

She dismounted at the stables, took the saddle and bridle from her pony, and sent him off towards the horse-paddock at a gentle trot. Then she walked slowly to the house, which, with the flaming west behind it, looked like an unambitious carving in ebony. The long bare veranda in front of the store and the dining-room telescoped, as it were, with the Cottage veranda; and before she set foot in the former, Pen could see the square screen of sunset at the far end of the latter, and, blotted like ink upon this screen, motionless figures sitting in silence.

As the child's step rang through the long, empty veranda, some heads turned in the other one, but no one spoke. A vague fear seized Pen, their motionless attitudes seemed so strange. She hesitated; but the reactionary impulse followed speedily, and hurried her forward, with faltering steps, into as queer a Quakers' meeting as could well be imagined.

In the sitting-room doorway stood Mrs Lees, drawn up to her full height, her pale face cold and proud, and bitterly indignant—but quite calm, with the composure that sometimes, at a crisis, seems to come natural to the last woman you would have expected it of. Robert Ayrton, the overseer, was spread out on the floor, his back against the weather-board wall of the Cottage, his arms folded, and his head thrown forward on his chest. The man who called himself Brown lay in his usual posture in the long chair, and his dark deep eyes were turned upwards with their usual inscrutable stare.

Seated on a chair at some little distance from them was a man whom Pen had never seen before. He wore riding-boots, spurs and breeches, a short neat jacket, and a 'cabbage-tree' wide-awake. His face was half turned to the glowing light, which shone upon a clear gray eye, the half of a ruddy moustache, and a sunburnt cheek and chin; the other side of his face was necessarily in deep shadow. The man was smoking a pipe—the smoke hung in silvery puffs upon the screen of rosy sky at the end of the veranda. Penelope advanced shyly, with her eyes fixed, as was only natural, upon the stranger. Suddenly she stood still and shivered. The red light glittered upon something bright and steely that lay in the stranger's lap—a revolver.

'Come to me, Pen,' said Mrs Lees, in a cold mechanical voice.

Pen obeyed promptly enough, and slipped an arm round her mother's waist and nestled close beside her. And Mrs Lees answered aloud—in a curiously scornful tone—the child's upward look of terrified inquiry: 'These men are bush-rangers. We are all in their power!'

Pen clung closer to her mother. 'Which men?' she whispered. 'There's only that man over there with the pistol—is he Thunderbolt?'

'Yes,' said Mrs Lees, in the same dauntless, disdainful tone; 'and the one with the broken leg (if it ever was broken)—the man that we have nursed and attended to all these weeks—is his accomplice!'

A guilty blush suffused Pen's face to the roots

of her hair. She had known this for days, yet kept it to herself! But then she had never suspected treachery of this kind. Was it treachery? She glanced to where Brown lay, hoping to find a reassuring expression on his face. But there was nothing reassuring there. His eyes were still gazing vacantly upward; but the ghost of a smile played over the pale haggard features. This faint smile seemed to Pen a confession of treachery, and she burst into tears.

At this moment, a pleasant voice, singing carelessly, broke upon their ears. The voice came nearer and nearer; then a swinging footstep and the jingling of spurs were heard in the long veranda. The bushranger handled his revolver. A moment later, the store-keeper—a young fellow fresh from England—stood aghast in their midst.

Ayrton, the overseer, raised his head.

'Throw up your hands, Miller,' said he coolly, with the true colonial drawl; 'up with them, old man, or you're a stiff 'un! We're stuck up. Let me introduce you to the celebrated Thunderbolt'—pointing to the man with the revolver—'and his mate'—pointing to Brown.

Young Miller turned pale; then he stuck his hands deep in his trousers' pockets. He was a very young man—a Rugby boy but a year ago.

'It's a bit of colonial experience for you—a bit worth having,' went on Ayrton calmly, slicing a cake of tobacco as he spoke; 'something for you to write and tell the old folks at home. Look out—you'd best stand still, I say!'

Young Miller had taken a quick step forward; but he stopped as quickly; for Ayrton's warning was driven home by the cocking of Thunderbolt's revolver.

The bushranger now rose to his feet and stretched himself coolly. 'Is this the last of them?' he asked of Ayrton.

'There's the butcher'—

'We can do without him.—Call the cook.'

'And there's the groom.'

'We won't wait for him.—Call the cook, d'ye hear?'

Ayrton obeyed. The Chinaman came.

'Tell him to dish up dinner in here—and sharp,' said the bushranger, pointing to the sitting-room.

Ayrton repeated this order as though it had been an order from William Lees.

'Now, my friends,' said Thunderbolt, addressing the whole company, 'some find me a man of few words—some t'other thing; but anyway it's precious little I've got to say now. You'll have heard of me before, mayhap; and you'll have heard of some o' the things I've done when pressed. I've done enough, I daresay, to set a pretty high figure upon myself, alive or dead. Whatever you may force me into doing to-night, it can't make it any hotter for me, when my time comes, than it would be as things stand already.' He tapped the butt-end of his revolver significantly. 'But really, ladies and gentlemen,' he went on in a more insinuating manner, 'there need be no unpleasantness at all: all I ask is a square meal: then we'll adjourn, the lot of us, and any more as may happen to drop in and join us—to the store: and after that—I don't promise, mind—but it's

very likely I'll be saying good-bye to you.—As for you, ma'rm,' continued Thunderbolt, bowing snavely to Mrs Lees, 'if you've heard anything about me at all, you'll know that *you're* safe—whatever happens—and the little lady too!'

Mrs Lees treated this assurance with silent contempt; and the outlaw now ordered them all into the sitting-room, which, as he had been careful to find out first, had no second door, and no windows beyond the two that looked out upon the veranda. The young store-keeper was the last to enter, and he turned on the threshold to shake his fist at Thunderbolt's mate.

'You villain!' he muttered savagely—'you double-dyed, immeasurable'—

Some swift momentary change in Brown's face—to which Thunderbolt for the moment had turned his back—made the young man stop short in the thick of his epithets. It set him thinking, too. And a little conversation between Thunderbolt and his mate, which now took place, made his thinking run in unexpected grooves.

'Can you walk yet?' asked Thunderbolt.

'No.'

'Where do you sleep, then; and how do they shift you?'

'I sleep in the barracks; the gentlemen carry me to and fro morning and evening.'

As young Miller, and indeed every one, knew, Brown was *not* carried to and from the barracks; he hobbled on crutches. Miller, moreover, had a shrewd idea as to where those crutches were at that moment; the creepers grew so thickly at the base of the trellis, and the long chair covered so much ground just there, that they could not quite be seen; but that they were within Brown's reach, Miller could not doubt. His ideas became almost too much for him; for none but himself had heard the small conversation between the bushranger and his quondam mate, and Miller yearned to whisper the gist of it to Ayrton, though, happily, he had too much sense to attempt this.

An hour passed. Supper was over: the bushranger had eaten heartily enough, if no one else did—and had not touched a drop of anything stronger than tea; and all the while with half an eye upon the veranda and Brown, and an eye and a half upon the room and its occupants. The number of the latter was now materially increased. After dinner had been served, Sammy, the Chinese cook, was not allowed to return to the kitchen. Then the groom had come in to say that a strange black horse was tethered in the pines, and the groom had been detained. Then the butcher had come to see what had happened to his friend the groom, and the butcher had been detained. The maid-servant, also, had surrendered of her own accord, being tired of the dust and discomfort and solitude under her mistress's bed; so she was in the room too, in a state of intermittent hysterics. But Mrs Lees sat through it all in haughty silence; and little Pen, clasping her mother's hand tightly, did her best to follow her mother's example.

'I was once in pretty much the same fix before,' Thunderbolt told them good-humouredly, though really the 'fix' did not seem to be on his side. 'It was at a Queensland station, Clermont way;

and I'd bailed up all hands in the store quite comfortably; but they were fools enough to attempt a rush, and—*how* many was it I shot, mate?' asked Thunderbolt, glancing through the door.

'Three,' replied Brown shortly. 'So you said—I was not there.'

'Ah, three: so it was: three. Now, they could only hang me once for them three. What's more, if I was to shoot three dozen more to-night—supposing there was three dozen here to shoot—still, they could only hang me once. That's where I've got the bulge, you see!'

Thunderbolt puffed his pipe complacently. He seemed enamoured of the situation, and glad to prolong it. Suddenly, however—quite suddenly—he turned to the young storekeeper.

'You sing, mister—eh? I heard you as you came along the veranda. Give us a song now.'

Young Miller, though his eyes met the bushranger's, saw a white face nodding to him through the open door; and the reluctance with which he went to the piano was only feigned. Then and there he sang, to his own accompaniment, a song that fell agreeably upon Thunderbolt's ears, but sank like lead into all other hearts, save that of Thunderbolt's mate. The song ended, the bushranger said authoritatively: 'Give us another.'

Young Miller glanced inquiringly at Mrs Lees. The circumstances had not quite robbed him of his English manners. Before the first song, he had asked permission in the same mute way, and received a nod. It was almost a pity she did not confine herself to a nod this time, for it only amused the bushranger when she said sarcastically: 'Certainly, Mr Miller. Pray, do not be murdered for the sake of a song!'

Miller struck up a lively jingle, reminiscent of burnt cork and the banjo, and straightway plunged into a song that purported to be comic. It was highly appreciated. Thunderbolt beat time with his spurred heels, joined in the chorus, and, at the end, rapped out his applause upon the door-panels with the butt-end of his pistol. He had laughed uproariously at least once in every verse, and faint echoes from the veranda had further encouraged the singer.

In high good-humour, the bushranger now asked Miller to play one of the old English ballads. Miller got out the book; and a strange scene followed. Thunderbolt—this bloodthirsty desperado—stood up, revolver in hand, and sang 'The Lass of Richmond Hill'; moreover, he sang it with excellent expression, and in a full manly voice that only just missed being sweet into the bargain. None of the party ever heard the song again without recalling his singing of it. It was greeted with loud applause from the veranda, to which Thunderbolt had turned his back while singing. The merry ruffian's spirits rose still higher, and he undertook to give 'Tom Bowling' as a wind-up.

He looked really very handsome, and taking, and good-natured, as he stood up there framed in the doorway. The light of the lamp on the table and of the candles in the piano sconces fell upon his tall athletic frame and strong regular features: his teeth, as his mouth opened—like a true singer's—in a perfect circle, were white and even; and he sang that tender old

song of Dibdin's with a rough, effective tenderness of his own; though the revolver was in his hand and his finger on the trigger!

Never before or since, one ventures to assert, has 'Tom Bowling' been rendered under such very exceptional circumstances. It occupied some minutes. Your rough-and-ready singer's tendency is ever to overdo the andante, and this one had a particular weakness for *rallentando*. So the song, which was sung much better than the previous song, took up some little time; and when it was over, there was no applause. The leader of the applause was silent. There was not a sound from the veranda. Thunderbolt turned round quickly, almost before the last note had died away, and uttered a sound that seemed to come from another throat, and a wild beast's, for it was a roar of rage. His former mate—the helpless man with the broken leg—was gone!

Thunderbolt strode out, but only a yard from the door, and stood listening and peering through the darkness. He could see nothing; he could hear nothing. Wheeling round, he stalked back into the room, livid and furious, and clapped his revolver to young Miller's ear.

'You young hound!' he yelled, 'I've a mind to blow your brains out where you sit! You've had a hand in this!'

And Tom Bowling had not been thirty seconds 'gone aloft!'

OUR DOORS.

A THOUSAND years ago an Anglo-Saxon poet wrote of the door of the hall, or house, as 'the mouth of the roomy mansion.' We have yet several of the hoary doorways of this old time; some in the 'dark and true and tender north,' some in the sunny south; others in the east and west; but the doors of them all have perished. The doorways were wrought in stone, and have endured; but the doors were made of oak or other hard wood, and have consequently decayed, though, probably, not till after many years. When, however, the poet said the door was the mouth of the mansion, he evidently meant to apply the metaphor to the doorway.

Though we have no doors handed down to us with our numerous Saxon doorways, we have many magnificent examples of somewhat later centuries. We have ancient doors of fourteenth and fifteenth century workmanship with hinges covering the whole of the woodwork, with floriated ramifications of ironwork; some others that have their original handles in good preservation, though they were already old before the Tudors came to the throne; some with the first escutcheons the clever smiths put over the keyholes when they were new; and some with the splendid and intricate locks with which they were originally furnished.

Many of our cathedrals, for instance, have preserved some of their ancient doors as well as their superbly sculptured doorways. These relics are generally in comparatively unimportant places, on account of the fact that the more

frequent use of the principal doors, over and above their more prominent positions, has led sooner to their dilapidation, and subsequent renewal. In the north aisle of York Cathedral there is a massive arch-headed door three or four hundred years old, studded all over at regular intervals with bolt-heads, and traversed across its width by two plain flat strap-like hinges. Westminster Abbey has several heavy massy iron-bound doors belonging to its palmiest days, one of which opens out of the beautiful cloisters. Ely Cathedral has a carved oaken door in the south transept which is said to have been reverentially returned to it after having been removed to Landbeach. Durham Cathedral has not only a door wrought by medieval carpenters, but the identical one, with the bold and grotesque knocker upon it, used for centuries by those who applied for sanctuary within its sacred precincts. Rochester Cathedral has a fine example in the north transept. The doorway has a porphyry column on each side of it, and on the oaken door stretch out long plain iron hinges, terminating in fleure-de-lis at its outer edge; and although we may be pondering over the pending question whether the choir-screen should be maintained in its present place or removed so that the choir may be better seen, or may have been loitering outside to view the Medway winding through the deep green meadows, or to scan the great ruined castle close by, or the circling of the countless pigeons there, this old dark recessed door has a mystery and charm that vanquishes all other impressions. There is another heavy old oaken door in this pleasant city, it may be added, in a neighbouring alley for foot-passengers from the High Street. This is chequered all over with broad strong mouldings and panels, studded evenly with small bolt-heads; and the old latch and ring first used in opening and closing it are still on it, with a general effect of sombrousness and cumber-someness that is arresting.

The Temple, London, is especially rich in old doors of several periods. There are Elizabethan doors in some of the rooms, and large floriated doors in the great Hall rejoicing in the carved foliage of Stuart times. The most interesting of all, perhaps, is a small door in the penitential cell in the thickness of the wall on the north side of the church, in which disobedient brethren were confined. The woodwork of this door has been renewed; but the hinges and catch are the same that closed on brother Walter le Bachelor, Knight and Grand Preceptor of Ireland, who was placed in the tiny cell for disobedience to the Master of the Temple, and is said to have been starved to death in it. A narrow winding stone stair leads up from the superb 'round,' where in the centre of the circle, formed by the ring of noble columns, lie four grand effigies of knights, who were perhaps less unfortunate, and passes on, up and up, past this low and massive door, to the triforium. The cell is but four feet long by two feet and six inches in width, and has but two slits looking into the church for light; and detention in it for any length of time must doubtless have been severe punishment.

One of the most interesting doors in the metropolis is in the west doorway of the church of St Bartholomew the Great, Smithfield. This opens in the centre, and is panelled into many recessed

compartments, and studded with iron bolts. It is perhaps four inches thick, and was doubtless placed there more than two hundred years ago. A door on the north side of the same time-marked fabric carries us probably still farther back, if not to the days of the martyrdoms in the great square close by. They are both chiefly noticeable, however, on account of the access they give to the noble remains of the famous Priory Church. Among dilapidated houses and the most dismal surroundings of a crowded neighbourhood, down a narrow passage, the choir end of the great church is still standing, with all the solemnity of its pillared apse and broad eastern ambulatory for processions, its mighty columns, its air of venerable grace and dignity. The sites of the Priory buildings, halls, galleries, dormitories, refectories, cloisters, butteries, pantries, kitchens, stables, and mulberry gardens, are all covered with closely-packed houses, reached by such well-known approaches as Little Britain and King Edward IV.'s Street; and these sturdy doors seem to protect from further encroachment one of the most delighting fragments of medieval London.

Public halls, as in the case of St Mary's Hall, Coventry, have some valuable examples. Besides the fine hall in which the corporation of Coventry holds its court, which is handsome with tapestry, armour, and pictures; besides the mayoress's parlour with its ancient oak chair of state and stained glass, and the great crypt and vaulted kitchen, there are many old doors of contemporary age, with enormous strap-hinges strengthening them, that form no mean part in the general picturesque result. Private mansions, too, can point to many precious specimens. In an antique hall, bewitching with step gables and mullioned windows, in Conway, there are several Elizabethan doors and doorways, the latter incised with pithy legends entreating that we should 'Bear and forbear.' One door in the north court is composed of fine sturdy planks studded all over with large nails; another opening on to a terrace is equally enriched, and large floriated hinges make them at once more enduring and more ornamental.

It is in our country churches, however, that we find the largest number. At Hickling, in Nottinghamshire, and at Little Hornead, in Hertfordshire, there are ancient church doors with richly-wrought hinges that completely cover them with ramified scroll-work; and there are examples scarcely less admirable at Caistor in Lincolnshire, Weston in Suffolk, and Staplehurst in Kent. Deep in the hearts of their respective counties, far from the towns with the improvements that sweep away so much of antiquity, and the wear and tear that destroy so much more, we come upon scores of charming old churches, patched, perhaps, with orange-coloured, or gray and green, velvety lichens and mosses, or clad with ivy and belted with yews, and approached by crumbling lychgates; and those who look for them may find, besides other treasures, such as curious pulpits with, perhaps, hour-glasses attached to them, carved stalls, grotesque gargoyles, ancient 'pues,' sculptured effigies, great slabs sealed down with memorial brasses, strong chests ornamentally bound in iron, many an olden door as full of interest as any part of the sacred pile. Let us look into Astley Church, for instance, in War-

wickshire. It is many miles from either of the grand old cosy towns, with their proud spires and tall chimneys, their bulging, overhanging almshouses, and their smart shops and modern villas, and is indeed in the silence of the green core of the park-like county. Down on the floor at the west end lie three beautifully sculptured effigies, as though they had been removed from tombs, or were waiting to be placed upon them. Two of them represent the mother and father of Lady Jane Grey; and the third, which has the small slight stature of a girl, is supposed to represent that uncrowned queen. These personages lived in the moated castle close by; and when Sir Thomas Wyatt's insurrection, in 1554, was suppressed, it was to Astley that the Duke of Suffolk came and sought to hide his head. In this church, then, they worshipped, and when the end had come, those who loved them placed these sad memorials in it. Here are eighteen old brown-black oaken canopied seats with misereres ranged against the walls; here are slabs from which the brass presentments or heraldic bearings have been plucked out; here is a panelled enrichment of the space over the chancel arch that is rarely seen; here is a winding stone stair leading up to the belfry; and here is an ancient chest for the parish books. Seeing who passed in and out of the old doorways, should we not take note of them, likewise?

Now and then we come upon doors in curious places. In very old churches we may often see a small dark door of plain oblong outlines high up in the piers of the chancel arch, leading, apparently, to nothing. Those who know, however, are aware that these seemingly inaccessible and useless doors once gave access to a narrow walk on the top of a screen or rood-loft, now removed. In communication with them will be found similar doors on the ground, unless they have been destroyed or covered over with plaster-work; and then we can see how those in charge of the sacred building and its decoration will have entered by the lower one, ascended the winding stair within the wall, and emerged through the upper door on to the footway on the screen, probably for the purpose of lighting it or decorating it. In Hinckley Church, in Leicestershire, one of these deserted doors may be seen. The light and spacious interior of this church has been stripped of many of the tokens that past centuries left with it; but this, and the fine tapering steeple, and an old chest, have been spared. In Ross Church, Herefordshire, in which we may see the pew occupied by 'the man of Ross' for so many years, both lower and upper doors have been preserved, though the screen has been removed, as at Hinckley.

It may be mentioned that on the right jamb of ancient church doorways can be detected, occasionally, a small unobtrusive cross, forming no part of its ornamentation, and only about four feet from the ground. It has been conjectured these are dedication crosses made at the ceremony when the edifices were first used. It is just as possible, however, they may have had some other origin not hitherto ascertained. One church in Sussex, at Preston, has two, one on either jamb. There are examples of one cross only in the churches at Northfleet and Barreton in Kent. We know that twelve crosses were

marked on a large stone and placed inside the church at some dedications, as in Moorlinch Church, Somersetshire, and New Shoreham Church, Sussex; but these differ, inasmuch as they are simply incised in the stonework of the doorway.

An Italian authority, Scamozzi, with the same thought in his mind as passed through that of the Anglo-Saxon poet quoted, laid down as a rule that a door should be in the centre of the front of a building, just as the mouth of an animal was placed in the middle of its face; and the great Italian architects of the Cinquecento period seem to have agreed, too, that the proper proportions for a door required that it should be twice the height of its width. Modern builders are all of the opinion that doors should open inwards, lest they strike those who would enter by them in the face; but it is not so clear that they agree in points involving more costliness. It is certain, however, that whether looked upon as mouths or not, all of us must admire the doorways handed down to us by the skilful workmen of successive centuries, the simplicity and honesty of the Saxon work, the zigzag and other beautifications of the work of the Normans, the use of polished columns in later years, at first singly, and then clustered, and afterwards with tiers of sculptured figures in their interstices; and still more the rarer instances in which the work of our old carpenters has been preserved for us in our ancient doors.

SAFE No. 27.

By CARROL KING.

It was some time in the early eighties, I was appointed agent for Rawlin's Bank, at least for the branch of it located in the busy seaport town of Keppelwade, on the Yorkshire coast. I was graciously informed by my superiors, the Rawlin Brothers, principals of the Bank, that my trustworthiness and punctuality had induced them to promote me to this post at an earlier age than bank clerks usually blossom out into inspectors or agents. I thanked them deferentially, but adhered to my own previous private opinion, which was, that I was indebted for it partly to the influence of my uncle, Sir Gilbert Varcomb of Keppelwade, and partly to the adventure which I am now about to relate.

The agent under whom I had qualified for my present position was John Seaton, a canny old Scotchman, slow as the tortoise, but of exceeding kindness and faithfulness of heart. To know him was to love him. He and I both lived in the Bank House, just above the business premises, which were large and commodious. It was a substantial and imposing mansion, built of red brick, with stone facings, and polished granite pillars. The whole of the ground floor was required for business purposes, besides a large portion of the cellarage. A side entrance as handsome as the other led up to the first floor, where the agent lived. On a higher story I had my bedroom and sitting-room; and I lived contentedly on the premises, finding plenty of

healthy amusement and variety in fishing, shooting, even occasionally riding after the hounds, when my uncle, Sir Gilbert, gave me a good mount, and various dinner and evening engagements in their season.

There was a beautiful little place belonging to my uncle, called 'The Cedars,' within a mile of the town. It was tenanted by a retired Indian officer, Colonel Gower, his wife, and daughter, Miss Eleanor Gower, a very handsome girl, but cold and stately in manner. Shortly after they took possession of the Cedars, about a twelvemonth before my story begins, Colonel Gower and his daughter drove into town, and stopped at the Bank, where they both alighted and entered, the Colonel bearing in his hand a large brown leather bag. I went with them to the manager's room, as Mr Seaton was out, and Colonel Gower opened his business to me without any hesitation.

'I have here,' he said, laying his hand on the bag, 'many thousands of pounds' worth of jewels. My daughter's godmother, Mrs Haseldine, a very wealthy and eccentric woman, died recently, and bequeathed all her jewels to Eleanor—more trinkets than a reasonably sane woman could wear in a lifetime. We have brought them to you for safe keeping.' He set down the bag on the table with a heavy thud.

I explained to them quietly the precautions we took for the defence of such valuables.

'I will give Miss Gower a written code or cipher that will be known only to her and me—and, of course, Mr Seaton. She must give an order in her own handwriting to any messenger—even you, Colonel Gower, bearing the half of this cipher on its face before any of the jewels are delivered. The key of the safe in which they are kept?'

'One moment, please,' interrupted Miss Gower. 'I will retain only one key—that of the leather jewel-case inside the iron box.'

'As you please,' I assented. 'If you let me see them now, I will catalogue them, and make a copy-inventory for you to retain.'

I looked into the front office to tell the clerks that no one was to be admitted to the manager's room except Mr Seaton if he returned; then I locked the door and sat down to my task. The Colonel opened the bag and disclosed a strong-box with iron clamps, marked with a large 'H,' in brass-headed nails, on the top. Miss Gower handed him a key, and he opened this also. Inside was a strong leather jewel-case, and of that, too, Miss Gower gave him the key.

We had many beautiful and valuable family jewels in trust; but anything like these now revealed I had never seen. Rubies of rich intoxicating lustre; flawless pearls, opals, emeralds; but the diamonds were the especial glory of the collection, filling the dull room with fairy sparkles of light, like the ripples on a sunlit bay. Starry clusters of diamonds for the breast, coronets of lesser stars for the hair, necklets, pendants, brooches, clasps, lockets, eardrops, without number! And besides all these in their rich settings, a little chamois bag under the lowest tray, lying beside a set of magnificent and very ugly cameos, held a number of unset and smaller diamonds. I worked rapidly, laying each article when catalogued on a velvet-lined tray. When the long

list was finished I read it over; the Colonel replacing each piece in the case as I named it; then, before taking a copy, I put my list carefully into a secret drawer of the desk and locked it.

'Now we will put this iron box away first, for it is not safe to leave the gems even for a moment. Come this way, please.'

I left the agent's room by a door that gave on the corridor, and they followed me to the strong-room, a separate building, burglar and fire proof, lit by electric light. This strong-room had been designed by a celebrated engineer; none but skilled artisans, with time and appliances, *and noise*, could break through from without or from below. The lock of the iron door was a special patent, opened by only one key, and that key never left Mr Seaton's possession, or, when he was absent, mine. I explained all this to Miss Gower as we entered the vault, where light burned day and night, and strong safes held priceless deposits.

'This will do—Safe No. 27,' I said, stopping before one. I opened it with the key on my bunch that bore the corresponding number, and placed the iron box inside, taking out the key of the box.

'Now,' I explained, 'I shall connect an alarm with this safe that will ring both in my room and Mr Seaton's if it is tampered with, so your treasures are quite secure, Miss Gower.'

After that day the jewels lay undisturbed for months, except that Miss Gower occasionally brought a friend to admire them, when John Seaton or I brought the iron-clamped box to the manager's room, and remained beside the gems until they were restored to their strong-hold.

The winter wore uneventfully away, the spring passed, and then a slight stir came even to Keppelwade, for the two or three hotels began to fill with summer visitors, who were finding out the beauty of our secluded hamlet and its sunny bay. Among others came a young Anglo-German, who brought letters of introduction to Colonel Gower from various old friends abroad and at home. He told us he needed rest and quiet, and Keppelwade had been recommended to him for its salubrious air and seclusion. He was a handsome man, of brilliant parts, with a wonderful fascination of manner. Colonel Gower did not invite him to stay at the Cedars; he took rooms at the *Windsor Hotel*, and made himself free of the whole town, captivating all and sundry by his good looks and his kindly affable manners.

A polished, widely-travelled man of the world was John Hessel, and he could converse with equal ease and brilliance on literature, science up to date, ethics, or metaphysics. In a week or two he was as much at home in Keppelwade as if he had been born amongst us, and his face became as familiar at the Bank as that of old John Seaton himself.

Mr Hessel was a profound believer in mesmerism, and told us some strange tales of 'subjects' he had seen abroad, in Paris and at the German seats of learning, where at that time 'metal baths' and mesmerism were the prevalent craze. He told us with a laugh one evening at Sir Gilbert's, that when all other means of living

failed him, he could become a Professor of Phrenology and a mesmerist. 'Few,' he said, 'could resist his influence.' Sir Gilbert proposed a 'mesmeric entertainment,' but Mr Hessel rather haughtily refused.

I dreaded the influence he might establish over Eleanor Gower; but when I saw no special preference on either side, I became content to wait, patiently and quietly as before, until time or circumstance favoured my own suit. I thought my case was not hopeless. I was heir-presumptive to Sir Gilbert Varcomb, and had a good allowance, besides my salary; and I had no expensive tastes; so I thought it was not unreasonable to hope that I might win Eleanor Gower for my wife some day. Meanwhile, the months passed; other visitors came and went—John Hessel remained.

One evening I was dining with him at the *Windsor*, and our conversation had turned, as it often did, upon mesmerism. He seemed to like to talk of his own powers, and he reiterated his often expressed belief that I was one who would fall a ready victim to his will-power. I knew he was mistaken, for many 'professors' to whom I had freely offered myself as a 'subject' had given me up as impracticable and quite unmanageable; but when Hessel still persisted in his opinion, I agreed carelessly to a trial of his skill. I could do no less when he—my host—was so evidently in earnest, and seemed even a little nettled at my unbelief.

I sat in an easy-chair, and fixed my eyes on his face. He made gentle passes before me with his hands—strange rhythmic movements that, but for fear of annoying him, would have made me laugh outright. Suddenly, with an inward laugh, I resolved to feign the mesmeric sleep; I thought of nothing beyond the passing fun of the moment, and I would turn the tables on him when he began to boast of his power, or gift as he called it. Again, I say, I thought of nothing beyond this. I allowed my eyes, under his steadfast gaze, to become narrower and milder, then the lids drooped slowly, and I fell back limply in the chair and breathed gently and regularly. There was perfect stillness for a few moments, and then I heard a muttered 'That's well!' uttered with an intensity that filled me with curiosity. About five minutes passed, and then he said gently: 'Varcomb, can you hear me?'

'Yes,' I replied, in a dull mechanical way.

'Where are Miss Gower's jewels kept?' he asked in a low eager tone.

It was a wonder I did not leap to my feet, in my great astonishment, and a good thing that I did not. I found voice enough to say in the same dull manner: 'Safe No. 27.'

'Can you obtain access to it—to them?'

'No.'

'Why not?'

'John Seaton holds the keys.'

'How is the vault protected?'

'Night-watchman, big dog, iron door, electric alarm.'

A very unorthodox execration broke from him; and there was a lengthy pause, during which I dared not move a single eyelid.

'How shall I obtain access to Safe No. 27?' he asked at last.

'You must have a written order from Miss Gower, headed by a code or cipher, known only to her and Mr Seaton.'

Again a baffled ejaculation, and he rose and walked about the room, muttering angrily.

I sat motionless, ruminating deeply on my idiotic answers. Some ready-witted men could have coined misleading answers to Hessel's questions without hesitation; I was not one of those who cannot be taken by surprise. I *had* been taken by surprise. How I longed to be alone, to think this well over. A few minutes more, and I felt that he was making rapid passes before my face again.

'Wake up,' he said sharply; and I started up quickly, rubbing my eyes, and looking, I dare say, dazed and stupid enough. He was looking at me earnestly.

'You don't make a very good subject, Varcomb,' he said lightly. 'Confess, now, that you have been half awake all the time, laughing at the ridiculous questions I asked.'

'You are quite mistaken,' I replied truthfully, and with a great yawn. 'I was not even half awake! That I should live to say it, who never believed in mesmerism, except among a parcel of weak nervous women!'

'Come out for a stroll along the shore,' he said quietly. 'It is a pleasant evening.'

We went out together. It was a gray, quiet evening; gray clouds cast leaden shadows on a slate-coloured sea.

We strolled along the breakwater, and met an officer of the coastguard, who gave us the interesting information that a bottle-nosed whale had been seen in the offing. We stood talking with the man—I was determined not to hurry—and then we turned back with him, discussing the probable capture of the doomed whale.

Hessel asked jestingly if I would not go out to cast a harpoon with the fishermen, and I replied with a laugh: 'Yes, if he would insure me against the fate of Jonah!'

I passed a sleepless night, thinking over the whole situation. It was impossible to avoid the conclusion that some danger menaced Miss Gower's jewels, yet it was at present so intangible, that I could not make up my mind to take any one into my confidence. I was not afraid of an attack upon the vault; it was too strongly guarded. I could only think of one plan by which I could insure the safety of the jewels, and to follow out that plan might place myself in an awkward predicament. I resolved upon it, however, and waited my opportunity. The first time old John Seaton went away for a few hours, leaving the keys with me, as usual, I went to the vault, straight to Safe No. 27. I took out the iron clamped box, opened it, and removed the leather jewel-case, of which Miss Gower alone held the key. I put a small letter-weight or two in the box, and filled it up with copies of old deeds, receipts, and such worthless documents. I replaced the box in safe 27, and locked it carefully. The leather case I took up to the second floor, to my own room, deposited it in a strong little box of my own, and *that* in the bottom of my wardrobe, which was always locked securely. The event proved that I was right; but I positively tremble still to think how easily I might have been arraigned as a

thief, had the jewels been found in my wardrobe.

About a week after I had transferred the leather case to my own keeping, John Hessel came into the Bank, fresh and smiling as usual. After his pleasant and courteous greetings, he presented to old John Seaton an order written in Miss Gower's firm handwriting, bearing on its face the half of the secret code, and requesting that the iron box containing Miss Gower's jewels be given to bearer—they would be returned next day. I saw Mr Seaton referring to his private ledger to verify the code, smiling the while at an amusing episode Hessel was relating in his gayest manner. I could scarcely contain my uneasiness. What if Hessel had the key of the leather case, and should wish to open it there? What if all were being done in good faith, and he should really convey the box safely to Miss Gower?

After a short absence, Mr Seaton returned, bearing the iron box, which he wrapped up in brown paper, passing a strap round it for easy carrying. He detached the key from his own ring and handed it also to Hessel.

'See you at Sir Gilbert's to-night, Varcomb,' called out Hessel gaily as he was passing out with his prize. I only nodded in response; in truth, I was almost incapable of speech without betraying my deep anxiety. The torture compressed into the next two hours was indescribable; kind old Mr Seaton told me to go up-stairs and rest—he was sure my head was aching badly. I only shook my head, and worked on desperately, for I must be on the spot when Colonel Gower and his daughter would come in to denounce the thief who had stolen the Haseldine jewels! I did not even go up to lunch, but made old Martha our housekeeper bring me some biscuits and cheese and a glass of milk. When three hours had passed without any alarm being given, I went to the other extreme of feeling, and could have capered like a madman in my joy and relief, for I was pretty sure then that my vague surmises had proved correct. When we put up our shutters for the day, the strain on my nerves had really brought on a violent headache, and, after partaking of some tea and a strip of toast, I was glad to lie down in my room and sleep, which I did soundly for two hours. I awoke refreshed and thankful, dressed for dinner, and set out for Sir Gilbert's with a light heart. I would allow the affair to develop naturally now when I knew the jewels were safe.

The kind old manager smiled and nodded to me as I was passing out, and told me to enjoy myself.

Colonel Gower and his daughter had arrived before me. I found both in my aunt's drawing-room when I entered.

'Have you seen Mr Hessel, Bert?' asked Lady Varcomb. 'We are waiting for him.'

'Not since morning,' I replied. 'He came to the Bank at eleven o'clock on business.'

I made my way to Miss Gower, as I generally contrived to do within five minutes of entering any room where she was present.

'Did you show Mr Hessel my jewels to-day?' she asked, after our greetings were over. 'He wished particularly to see those large ugly cameos, in their old-fashioned gold setting.'

'Mr Seaton gave him the iron box, after read-

ing your order, and he carried it off with all its contents,' I replied quickly.

She slightly raised her eyebrows, more in amused surprise than alarm. 'He had not my authority for such a proceeding,' she said quietly; 'nor had Mr Seaton.'

'In what terms did you couch your order, Miss Gower? Mr Seaton is rigidly exact.'

'Not quite in this case,' she pointedly persisted. 'I asked Mr Seaton to show Mr Hessel all my jewels; and I enclosed the key of the leather case, to be returned to me immediately. You showed them to my aunt, Mrs Gower of Hardwicke, a few months ago, when I could not go with her at the time, and you brought me back the key yourself, Mr Varcomb.'

'Very true; but I heard nothing of a key this morning; and Mr Seaton is so precise and correct that I am certain he has not exceeded his instructions, as he understood them. I assure you, Miss Gower, that'—

I was interrupted by a movement of the company towards the door; and after a confirmatory nod from Lady Varcomb, in response to my inquiring glance, I offered my arm to Miss Gower, and we joined the procession, of which Mr John Hessel did not form a part.

'How does this matter strike you, Mr Varcomb?' asked Miss Gower in a low tone, when we were surrounded by a subdued hum of voices at table.

'Well—I can scarcely offer an opinion as yet,' I answered; 'but I think it should be looked into, straight in the face, and at once, Miss Gower.'

We did not again allude to the subject; but when we were all once more in the drawing-room, I saw that she contrived to have a few moments' speech with her father, and I saw him glance towards me with a look of uneasy perplexity. He approached me a little later, and whispered under cover of a noisy duet on the pianoforte: 'Try to leave when we do, Varcomb; I must speak with you.'

Truly, the repose and self-control that 'stamp the caste of Vere de Vere' are beautiful and admirable in themselves! This father and daughter knew that the fate of a large fortune hung trembling in the balance, yet they smiled, conversed, enjoyed, with high-bred ease and unmoved composure. They left early, and I accompanied them. We drove straight to the Bank, and told John Seaton, who, in great surprise and consternation, sent me down to the cold empty offices for Miss Gower's order, which I found filed with others in the manager's room. He read it aloud, and then handed it without comment to Miss Gower, who looked astonished.

'It is my own handwriting,' she said; 'and yet I never wrote that! I never mentioned either "to-night" or "to-morrow" in my note.'

'You see that I acted only on what I believed to be your instructions, Miss Gower,' said John Seaton. 'I cannot yet believe that an actual robbery has been committed.—Varcomb, will you not go up to the *Windsor*—it is not quite eleven—and ask for Mr Hessel?'

'And I'll go to the Cedars,' cried Colonel Gower eagerly. 'He may have left the box at our house since we left there. I, too, feel unwilling to believe that John Hessel has really taken

the jewels—appropriated them—stolen them, in fact.'

I sped away to the *Windsor Hotel*, hoping Miss Gower would remain with John Seaton until my return—hoping, also, that the fretful invalid mother might not appear on the scene, to precipitate my confession with her jeremiads. As I expected, they had not seen Mr Hessel at the *Windsor* since the early forenoon, and he had paid his bill, as he did punctually every week, the evening before. I went back with this news to the Bank House. Miss Gower was still there; and within a few minutes of my return her father came in, triumphantly brandishing a letter. 'This came for you, Eleanor, by the evening post. I have no doubt Mr Hessel explains all satisfactorily.'

Eleanor took the letter with some eagerness, and read aloud:

DEAR MISS GOWER—I have at last attained the object to which I have devoted months of patient waiting—the Haseldine jewels. They are mine by right, not yours; for I am John Haseldine. I am sorry to deprive you of them, but they are certainly mine.

JOHN HASELDINE.

The others turned bewildered looks on each other; but I, with the knowledge of that leather jewel-case safe in my wardrobe up-stairs, pictured the cool scoundrel's collapse on opening and searching the iron box, and laughed aloud. John Seaton looked at me reproachfully; visions of Scotland Yard detectives on the trail, commotion among the Rawlin magnates in the City, possible reprimands and severities, were evidently passing before his mind.

Colonel Gower was intensely angry, and no wonder, at the cool manner in which we had all been hoodwinked.

Miss Gower looked coldly and proudly at me, as if my laugh had hurt her.

'What will he deserve at your hands, Colonel Gower,' I asked, 'who will restore all the jewels, without one amissing? Would you let him name his own reward?'

The Colonel looked at me grimly from under his shaggy eyebrows. 'Yes; I would let him name it,' he replied with emphasis.

'And if he named that which was promised to Schiller's Diver?' I persisted boldly, though my face had grown very hot.

He looked at me still more grimly, but with a twinkle in his eye, which I interpreted favourably. Miss Gower and John Seaton were talking together, and had not heard us. 'I should say,' he answered deliberately, 'that he had better ask the princess herself.'

'So he will,' I said gladly. 'Listen, then, to my small story, Mr Seaton.—Sit here, Miss Gower; I have something to tell you. We all know how John Hessel believed in himself as a mesmerist. His power was real, but his mistake was in being so sure that he could influence all and sundry. I knew he could not hypnotise me; but he was so eager to try, so determined to succeed, that, for fun, I feigned the coma, and made him think I was wholly overcome. All his questions related to Miss Gower's jewels. He had hoped to get them directly from me, and when he found how strongly they were guarded, he was

angry. I acted so well that he never found me out; and, Mr Seaton, the day you went to Harper Henge last week, I took the leather case out of the iron box, filled up the box with one or two paper-weights, and bundles of old balance-sheets and receipts.—Your jewels are quite safe, Miss Gower, in a box in the bottom of my wardrobe up-stairs.—Take my keys, Mr Seaton, and see for yourself.'

In a moment John Seaton and Colonel Gower were bounding up, three steps at a time. I stayed Miss Gower when she would have followed: 'Miss Gower—Eleanor, I am quite content to owe your father's consent to his gratitude, but—what do *you* owe me? *Not* gratitude, I hope. Love is worth love.'

I will not record her answer; it was satisfactory.

The lock of the leather case had to be forced, but the jewels were intact; not one was misplaced.

We have neither seen nor heard of John Haseldine since then; but Eleanor and I often say we *should* like to have seen his face when he examined the contents of the iron box so long and carefully kept in safe No. 27!

A NEW TASMANIAN TOWNSHIP.

ZEEHAN is a recently formed township and mining centre in the county of Montagu, on the west coast of Tasmania. When, in 1642, Abel Janszoon Tasman was despatched from Batavia by Anthony Van Diemen, the Governor-general, and the Council of Netherlands-India, on an expedition having for its object the discovery of the reported Great Southern Continent, the first land he sighted, after leaving the then Dutch colony of Mauritius, proved to be the west coast of Tasmania. This land, discovered on the 24th of November 1642, appeared to be mountainous and clothed with dark forest, and in these respects differed from the low sandy shores ascribed to the Great Southern Continent by previous navigators. Recognising it as a hitherto unknown territory, Tasman named it 'Anthony Van Diemen's Land;' and to the most prominent summits first visible he gave the names of the two ships *Heemskirk* and *Zeehan* ('Seahen') which comprised his expedition.

Mount Zeehan, thus discovered and christened two and a half centuries ago, remained until the last decade an absolute *terra incognita*. Though no more than ten miles distant from the western shores of the island, approach towards it, either from the sea-board or from lands lying north, east, or south, was, until lately, almost impracticable, by reason of the impassable nature of the country—alternating with hill and swamp, covered with dense forest and scrub, or equally impenetrable button grass.

In 1884, Frank H. Long and William Johnstone setting out from Mount Bischoff to prospect for tin or gold, entered the district around Mount Zeehan, and discovered silver-lead ore in great abundance; but the news of this discovery was disseminated slowly. In March 1885, two proprietary companies had established themselves on the Zeehan silver field.

In March 1888, an extent of country measuring north to south six to seven miles, and east to west two to three miles, had been proved to be silver-bearing; and at the close of that year twenty-five thousand acres had been let on lease by Government as mining claims of forty to eighty acres each. Owing to its inaccessibility, only seventy men were then at work on the field. The Colonial parliament at this time voted a preliminary sum for the survey of a railway to connect the field with the port of Strahan, on Macquarie Harbour, twenty-nine miles distant. This railway was practically completed at the close of 1891.

In March 1889, the population of the Zeehan field scarcely exceeded one hundred. In September 1890, it was estimated at two thousand; and at the close of 1891, at not fewer than seven thousand persons, ranking then as the third town in Tasmania.

The township of Zeehan was formally incorporated in 1891, and the erection of hotels and public buildings has proceeded with great rapidity. A tri-weekly newspaper was started in Zeehan in October 1890; and in October 1891 it became a morning daily, with a daily evening issue as well.

According to the Report of the Minister of Mines on 30th June 1891, the mining claims leased around Zeehan extend over a tract of country from Mount Zeehan north-eastwards for a distance of about twenty miles, with a breadth of about eight miles, and an area of eighty-seven thousand acres. The geological formation of the district proves it to be of Silurian age. In the northern part of the field, around Mount Dundas, carbonated ores of lead are principally found, while around Zeehan, galena is the predominating mineral. Both of these are very rich in silver. The first five hundred tons of galena ore from Zeehan, received in this country during 1891, contained sixty-six per cent. of lead and one hundred and ten ounces of silver per ton.

TO A SNOWDROP.

LOVELY little Snowdrop,
Lifting thy fair head,
Fearless of the rough winds
Sweeping o'er thy bed,
Thou art like a snowflake white
That hath blossomed in the night.

Precious little Snowdrop,
Sprung from Nature's breast,
Like a bright hope breaking
On a heart oppress;
As a star that shines on high
Through the dark waste of the sky,

Rising pale, yet steadfast,
With a cheering ray,
Just before the dawning
Of the Spring's bright day;
Then to fade and be forgot,
When the glad earth needs thee not.

M. A. C.

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OLD MAIDS.

By MRS LYNN LINTON.

THE changes which have taken place throughout all our social life have touched, *inter alia*, our estimate of Old Maids, and we are leading back to sentiments much older than ourselves. Until quite lately old maids were the recognised butt for all those smart wits who can say a sharp thing on a well-worn theme and send an arrow through a space already cleared. Like the traditional stepmother and the typical mother-in-law, the old maid was a kind of moral Aunt Sally against whom any one might have a shy—with the greatest applause given to him who most successfully battered the dishonoured old face. All the evil-speaking, lying, and slandering—all the malice and uncharitableness of society—was humped on to the shoulders of the old maid; and Utopia was nothing to the Arcadian peace that would abound were she out of the way.

As Miss Prue or Miss Tabitha she was credited with casting sheep's eyes at the curate on her own account, while she flounced out against Miss Julia or Miss Maria for attracting the attention she coveted. She was supposed to be an old maid by the mishap of fortune and the necessity of fate—not of her own deliberate will; and to be ever awearying for the husband who had evaded her clutches. All the respect paid to the Vestal Virgins of old time and to the Spouses of Christ in Catholic countries, was like so much water run into sand when dealing with the old maid of a generation or two back. A nuisance to her family, whose children she frightened by her severity, whose young wives she bullied and at whose young men she sniffed, with her nose in the air and her eyelids over her eyes—she was sure to be ill provided in this world's goods, and on the hands of the more generous, to be helped along the thorny path of impecuniosity. But she was also just as sure to tell her intimates queer tangled tales of 'undue influence,' if not darker things still, by which it came about

that the stream of the family Pactolus had been diverted from her holding in favour of those others, and that if all came to their rights, it is not she who would be the worse off! For this kind of old maid, as fancy painted her and shallow smartness repeated, had no more gratitude than she had charm; and it was one of her most striking characteristics to bite the hand that fed her and speak evil of those who did her most good.

An encumbrance to her family, she was a stumbling-block in society—a nuisance and a danger. She made up all manner of evil stories and then propagated them as 'reports.' She saw harm in the most innocent matters, and allowed no one to be beyond or above censure. But her enemies were even with her here. To them her propriety was pruriency, her modesties were pruderies; she made evil where none existed, because her own mind was always dwelling on undesirable things, and it was an insult to virtue to call her thoughts by that name. The fountain-head of all mischief, she not only slandered her own sex and vilified the other, but she was the originator of all the quarrels that divided society, as society always is divided in country places. To her, and to her malevolent gossip, could be traced the starting-point of the bitter stream that swelled and flowed till it parted kinsmen and friends never to be reunited. So at least they said who drew her portrait on the lines we have indicated, and who found that the old maid was the cause of all that went wrong—as surely as that Tenterden steeple is the cause of Goodwin sands! Nursing her cat, over whose sleeping back she every now and then caressingly bends her lean form and lank ringlets—knitting some gray or mustard-coloured abomination which would make an artist despair of her salvation—sitting by the little side-window whence she can see all that comes up and down the street, and taking note of all she sees with a view to future reproduction, she was the hateful being of literature and romance—the living representative of the wicked fairy of the nursery come back as an English-

woman in the twenties and thirties. Yet she was the direct descendant of the Vestal Virgins to whom men could not pay too great honour—the human presentment of the shield-bearing Pallas Athene, and of the silver-bowed huntress, to whom sweet young Athenian maids were wont to dedicate themselves till the day came when they made oblation and carried sacrifice to the still dearer altar of Anadyomene the Foam-born. This was the old maid of fifty or sixty years ago. And now the thaumatrope has spun round the contrary way, and for that picture we have this.

By the grace of Providence released from that close attendance on husband and children to which her duties bind the wife and mother, the unmarried woman—we do not call her old maid in these days—has all her time to devote to the good of mankind in general and the fit conduct of parochial affairs in particular. In these last indeed she is the clergyman's right hand, and simply invaluable, bearing the heavy end of all those sticks by which the spirit of evil is to be beaten out of bounds, and poverty and vice are to be fenced off from the lots. It is she who looks after the various clubs wherein women put their pence to draw out shillings in the shape of coals, boots, and blankets. It is she who takes the management of the 'baby's basket' which goes the round of the poorer sort of mothers as a loan for the first month's existence of the 'little stranger.' When the Christmas decorations of the church are on hand, she takes the most important parts, and works out the panels with as much taste as Nature has bestowed on her; and when the harvest-dress is needed, her flowers are the most lavish and her apples have the ruddiest cheeks. Probably, not what the world calls rich, she always secures a margin for benevolences, and on her modest pittance does more in bulk—how much more in proportion!—than those who count pounds to her shillings. How she manages these generousities is her own secret, for she never looks shabby, and in none of her surroundings is there the faintest mark of sordid poverty. To be sure, her scale is to the last degree circumscribed, but on the basis of that scale she does well. She lives in a small cottage like to that which the Squire's coachman and his wife have taken; but how different the one is from the other! Miss Anna's is neat as a new pin and as bright as silver all through; and what with the pretty trifles she has made with her own hands, the curtains she has embroidered, the dainty bits of fancy-work she has elaborated, her judicious admixture of colour, and here and there a more solidly valuable relic, preserved from the general dispersion of the family goods, her house has all that appearance of care and taste and neatness which goes to make 'a lady's house.' The coachman's, on the contrary, is just a working-man's cottage, no more; and no one would believe the two to have been built on identically the same plan.

The unmarried woman on a higher rung of the social ladder, and living in a wider world, is just as useful in her own way as her self-sacrificing but more circumscribed sister of the village. She is a kind of supplementary mother, always to be relied on by her friends when they have a cold, a headache, or are only lazy, and their daughters want to go to this ball or that theatre, and have no chaperon to take them. Then

that good-natured Miss Mater is only too happy to be of use; and, placidly renouncing her own fireside, bravely faces frost and fog, snow and wind, that her young friends may dance themselves tired and footsore, or cry their pretty eyes out over some fictitious sorrow on the stage, of which the heroine forgets the strain of her personation in a solid supper of beefsteak and porter.

Miss Mater, indeed, is a very godsend to her young friends all through. They will confide to her what they dare not tell their own mother; and she has the threads of more little dramas than one in her kind and capable hands. It was she who prevented young Frank from making a fool of himself about that silly Laura Fourstars, who was at the least ten years his senior and in no way his fit match. Past thirty, the standing toast and *passée* belle of a garrison-town, with not a single sixpence of dowry, and he a young fellow with all his life before him and his profession yet to choose—what kind of millstone was that which he wanted to tie round his neck, and would, but for the judicious conduct of Miss Mater?—far more judicious than his own mother's would have been! For she would have taken the thing too much 'on the cross;' and in all probability by her very efforts to detach her boy's affections would have riveted them all the closer to this very undesirable person, whom she would have vilified beyond reason. By this unreasonable vilification she would have set Master Frank's callow chivalry in arms, and made his folly a test of his high-mindedness. But Miss Mater went to work much more wisely as well as warily. She might have been a descendant of that 'Mitchell Wylie,' who in truth seemed less of a Scotchman in intellect than the Machiavelli of whom this was the perverted name. She made no overt opposition—though she demurred a little at Laura's age, which Frank averred to be only two years beyond his own, and that you know is a mere nothing—but which she brought irrefragable proof to show was ten years over his. She asked the two turtle-doves to dinner; but she asked at the same time that hideous little cad Brown Jones, who had more money than he knew what to do with, and less brains than falls to the lot of most on the outer side of Earlswood. Him she had already primed with artful praises of Miss Laura Fourstars—Miss Laura herself she had yet more artfully primed with assurances of Brown Jones's admiration. The bait was too tempting. Laura rose to it, and swam away with it in her mouth; and that poor deserted fish, Master Frank, was saved from what else might have been his ruin and would in any case have been his obstruction. He was quit of his millstone for a week's mooning and a violent headache; and Brown Jones deserved nothing better than what he got.

So with the girls. She sees all that goes on more clearly than the mother herself; and advises, encourages, or puts a stop to these nascent affairs—as she knows so well how to do and as she does so well! When under her wing nothing undesirable goes on, and the detrimentals, however fascinating, are firmly discouraged. She has no illusions for her own part, and she knows that those which the girls may have will wear themselves out by time and use, till only the coarse texture of the groundwork will be seen. Love

in a cottage appears to be more than delicious! The roses and honeysuckles and the nightingales in the trees all sound paradisaical. But when the real prose of the thing has to be reckoned with—the washing done at home—the scanty service—the anxious contrivances how to make the remains of that leg of mutton last yet another day—the calculations of whether this pudding costs more than that, and the tremendous importance given to an extra couple of eggs—and all that for a girl with carriages and horses and men-servants and maid-servants at command, and never the need of considering expense! No! the unmarried woman, clever, shrewd, and kindly Miss Mater discounts it all, and the detrimental with the bower of roses and the nightingales, is, as has been said, politely but firmly discouraged. Hence the mother proper has no need to fear when she confides her girls to the care of this mother vicarious; and no one comes to grief through her negligence or weakness.

As the unmarried sister of a family how ineffably useful is she whom it was once the fashion to sneer at as an old maid! Whenever she is wanted, there she is, and her married sisters and brothers often say they do not know what they would do without her. She is at the bedside of the sick, and she takes the place of the governess when this young lady goes home for her holidays. When the parents of any of these young broods wish to go abroad together, and thus renew their love-time by a second honeymoon, the unmarried sister goes down to their place to keep house and look after the children till they return. She passes her blameless life in active service now of one kind and now of another. Friend, helper, and adviser of so many others, she has no time to brood over the disappointments which may have desolated her own youth; and less inclination to find a bitter solace to her pain in ill-feeling and ill words against the more fortunate and the younger. She does not slander and she does not gossip; she invents no malevolent stories and propagates no cruel reports. Free from the bonds of duty, she is all the more tied to those of affection, and voluntarily gives what she is not bound to bestow. She is a grand and lovely feature in modern society and the home—and what, pray, would become of the aged father or mother without this old maiden daughter to care for them and watch over them?

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER X.—A MYSTERIOUS DISCOVERY.

On Monday morning the Unexpected happened. It came with more than common malignity. In fact, nothing more threatening to the persons chiefly concerned in the calamity could have happened, though at first they were happily spared the comprehension of its full significance.

There is a wide-spread superstition—so wide that it must be true—that at those rare moments when one feels foolishly happy, at peace with all

the world, at peace with one's own conscience, all injuries forgiven, the future stretched out before like a sunlit peaceful lake, some disaster, great or small, is certainly imminent. 'Don't feel too happy,' says Experience Universal. The Gods resent the happiness of man. Affect a little anxiety. Assume a certain sadness. Restrain that dancing leg. If you must shake it, do so as if by accident, or as if in terror—for choice, shake it over an open grave in the churchyard. Stop singing that song of joy; try the Lamentation of a Sinner instead. So will the Gods be deceived. Above all, never allow yourself to believe that the Devil is dead. He is not even asleep. By carefully observing these precautions, a great many misfortunes may be averted. If, for instance, George had gone home soberly on Sunday night instead of carrying on like a school-boy in playtime, obviously happy, and so inviting calamity, perhaps he would never have been connected—as he afterwards became—with this disaster.

You have heard that Mr Dering was a man of method. Every morning he arrived at his office at a quarter before ten: he hung up his coat and hat in a recess behind the door: he then opened his safe with his own hand. Checkley had already laid out the table with a clean blotting-pad, pens, and letter-paper: he had also placed the letters of the day upon the pad. The reading of the letters began the day's work. The lawyer read them, made notes upon them, rang for his shorthand clerk, and dictated answers. These despatched, he turned to the standing business. This morning, with the usual routine, he was plodding through the letters of the day, taking up one after the other and reading half mechanically. Presently he opened one and looked at the heading. 'Ellis and Northcote,' he said. 'What do they want?' Then he suddenly stopped short and started. Then he began the letter again, and again he stopped short. It was from his brokers in the City, and it recommended a certain advantageous investment. That was not in itself very extraordinary. But it contained the following remarkable passage: 'You have made such great transfers and so many sales during the last few months, that you have probably more profitable uses for money in your own business. But if you should have a few thousands available at the present moment, it is a most favourable opportunity'—

'Great transfers and many sales?' asked Mr Dering bewildered. 'What transfers? What sales does he mean?'

He turned over the pages of his Diary. He could find no transactions of the kind at all. Then he reflected again. 'I can remember no transfers,' he murmured. 'Is this another trick of memory?'

Finally, he touched the bell upon his table. 'Checkley,' said Mr Dering, on the appearance of the ancient clerk, 'I have got a letter that I don't understand at all. I told you that my memory was going. Now you see. Here is a letter about transfers and sales of stock. What transfers? I don't understand one word of it. My memory is not only going—it is gone.'

'Memory going? Nonsense,' the old man shook his head. 'No—no; your memory is all right. Mine is as clear as a bell. So's yours.'

* Copyright 1892 in the United States of America by Harper & Brothers.

You eat hearty. So do I. You sleep well. So do I. We're both as hale and hearty as ever.'

'No—no. My memory is not what it was. I've told you so a dozen times. I lose myself sometimes. Yesterday, when the clock struck twelve, I thought it was only ten. I had lost two hours. And sometimes when I walk home I lose recollection of the walk afterwards.'

'Tut, tut; nobody of your age is such a young man as you. Why, you walk like five-and-twenty. And you eat hearty—you eat very hearty.' His words were encouraging, but he looked anxiously at his master. Truly, there was no apparent decay in Mr Dering. He sat as upright: he looked as keen: he spoke as clearly, as ever.

'Well—about this letter. My friend Ellis, of Ellis and Northcote, writes to me about something or other, and speaks of my effecting great transfers and sales of stock lately. What does he mean?'

'You haven't bought or sold any stock lately, that I know of.'

'Well, you would have known.—Have we had to make any investments for clients of late? There was the Dalton-Smith estate.'

'That was eleven months ago.'

'I suppose he must mean that—he can't mean anything else. Yes, that is it. Well—I've got a Partner now, so that it matters less than it would have done—had my memory played me tricks with no other responsible man in the place.'

'You didn't want a partner,' said Checkley jealously. 'You had ME.'

'He must mean that,' Mr Dering repeated. 'He can't mean anything else. However—has my Bank book been made up lately?'

'Here it is. Made up last Friday. Nothing been in or out since.'

Mr Dering had not looked at his book for three or four months. He was well served: his people took care of his Bank book. Now he opened it and began to run his finger up and down the pages.

'Checkley,' he said, 'what has happened to Newcastle Corporation Stock? The dividends were due some weeks ago. They are not paid yet. Is the town gone bankrupt? And—eh? Where is Wolverhampton? And—and'— He turned over the paper quickly. 'Checkley, there is something wrong with the book. Not a single dividend of anything entered for the last four months. There ought to have been about six hundred pounds in that time.'

'Queer mistake,' said Checkley. 'I'll take the book round to the Bank and have it corrected.'

'A very gross and careless mistake, I call it. Tell the manager I said so. Let it be set right at once, Checkley—at once—and while you wait. And bring it back to me.'

The Bank was in Chancery Lane, close to the office. The old clerk went off on his errand.

'A very careless mistake,' the lawyer repeated; 'any clerk of mine who committed such a mistake should be dismissed at once.' In fact, the certainty of full and speedy justice kept Mr Dering's clerks always at a high level of efficiency.

He returned to the letters, apparently with no further uneasiness.

After ten minutes, Checkley taking longer than he expected, Mr Dering became aware that his attention was wandering. 'Great transfers and many sales,' he repeated. 'After all, he must mean the investment of that Dalton-Smith money. Yet that was only a single transaction. What can he mean? He must have made a mistake. He must be thinking of another client. It's his memory, not mine, that is confused. That's it—his memory.'

The large open safe in the corner was filled with stacks of paper tied up and endorsed. These papers contained, among other things, the securities for the whole of Mr Dering's private fortune, which was now very considerable. Even the greatest City magnate would feel for Mr Dering the respect due to wealth if he knew the amount represented by the contents of that safe. There they were, the leases, agreements, mortgages, deeds, bonds, conveyances, shares, all the legal documents by which the wicked man is prevented from seizing and appropriating the rich man's savings. Formerly the rich man kept his money in a box with iron bands. He locked up the box and put it in a recess in the cellar contrived in the stone wall. If he was only a bourgeois, it was but a little box, and he put it in a secret place (but everybody knew the secret) at the head of his bed. If he were a peasant, he tied his money up in a clout and put it under the hearthstone. In any case, thieves broke in and stole those riches. Now, grown wiser, he has no box of treasures at all: he lends it all in various directions and to various associations and companies. Every rich man is a money-lender: he is either Shylock the Great or Shylock the Less, according to the amount he lends. Thieves can steal nothing but paper which is no use to them. As we grow wiser still, we shall have nothing at all in any house that can be of any use to any thief, because everything in the least valuable will have its papers, without the production of which nothing of value will be bought or sold. And all the gold and silver, whether forks or mugs, will be lodged in the Bank. Then everybody will become honest, and the eighth commandment will be forgotten.

Among Mr Dering's papers were share certificates, bonds, and scrip of various kinds, amounting in all to a great many thousands. Of this money a sum of nearly thirteen thousand pounds belonged to Elsie, but was still in her guardian's name. This, of course, was the fortune which had fallen so unexpectedly into the girl's hands. The rest, amounting to about twenty-five thousand pounds, was his own money. It represented of course only a part, only a small part of his very respectable fortune.

Mr Dering, whose memory, if it was decaying, was certainly clear on some points, looked across the room at the open safe, and began to think of the papers representing their investments. He remembered perfectly all the different Corporation Stock. All the water, gas, railway shares, the Indian Stock and the Colonial Stock: the Debenture companies and the Trading companies. He was foolish, he thought, to be disturbed by a mere mistake of the broker: his recent lapses of memory had made him nervous: there could be nothing wrong: but that clerk at the Bank ought to be dismissed for carelessness. There

could be nothing wrong: for the sake of assurance he would turn out the papers: but there could be nothing wrong.

He knew very well where they were: everything in his office had its place: they were all tied up together in a bulky parcel, bestowed upon a certain shelf or compartment of the safe. He pushed back his chair, got up, and walked over to the safe.

Strange! The papers were not in their place. Again he felt the former irritation at having forgotten something. It was always returning: every day he seemed to be forgetting something. But the certificates must be in the safe. He stood irresolutely looking at the piles of papers, trying to think how they could have been displaced. While he was thus wondering and gazing, Checkley came back, Bank-book in hand.

'There is something wrong,' he said. 'No dividends at all have been paid to your account for the last three months. There is no mistake at the Bank. I've seen the manager, and he's looked into it, and says there can't be any mistake about the entries.'

'No dividends? What is the meaning of it, Checkley? No dividends? Why, there's thirty-eight thousand pounds worth of stock. The certificates are kept here in the safe; only, for some reason or other, I can't find them at the moment. They must be in the safe somewhere. Just help me to find them, will you?'

He began to search among the papers, at first a little anxiously, then nervously, then feverishly.

'Where are they?' he cried, tossing over the bundles. 'They must be here. They must be here. Let us turn out the whole contents of the safe. We must find them. They have never been kept in any other place. Nobody has touched them or seen them except myself.'

The old clerk pulled out all the papers in the safe and laid them in a great pile on the table. When there was nothing left in the safe, they began systematically to go through the whole. When they had finished, they looked at each other blankly.

Everything was there except the certificates and scrip representing the investment of thirty-eight thousand pounds. These alone could not be found. They examined every packet: they opened every bundle of papers: they looked into every folded sheet of parchment or foolscap. The certificates were not in the safe. 'Well,' said the clerk at last, 'they're not here, you see.—Now then!'

In the midst of their perplexity happened a thing almost as surprising and quite as unexpected as the loss of the certificates. Among the papers was a small round parcel tied up with red tape. Checkley opened it. 'Bank-notes,' he said, and laid it aside. They were not at the moment looking for bank-notes, but for certificates. When he was satisfied that these were not in the safe, and had thrown, so to speak, the responsibility of finding out the cause of their absence upon his master, he took up once more this bundle. It was, as he had said, a bundle of bank-notes rolled up and tied round. He untied the knot and laid them flat, turning up the corners and counting. 'Curious,' he said; 'they're all ten-pound notes—all ten-pound notes:

there must be more than fifty of them. And the outside one is covered with dust. What are they?'

'How should I know?' said Mr Dering, irritably. 'Give them to me. Bank-notes? There are no Bank-notes in my safe.'

'Forgotten!' the clerk murmured. 'Clients' money, perhaps. But the client would have asked for it. Five or six hundred pounds. How can five hundred pounds be forgotten? Even a Rothschild would remember five hundred pounds. Forgotten!' He glanced suspiciously at his master, and shook his head, fumbling among the papers.

Mr Dering snatched the bundle from his clerk. Truly, they were bank-notes—ten-pound bank-notes; and they had been forgotten. The clerk was right. There is no Firm in the world where a bundle worth five hundred pounds could be forgotten and no inquiry made after it. Mr Dering stared blankly at them. 'Notes!' he cried—'notes! Ten-pound notes. What notes?—Checkley, how did these notes come here?'

'If you don't know,' the clerk replied, 'nobody knows. You've got the key of the safe.'

'Good Heavens!' If Mr Dering had been twenty years younger, he would have jumped. Men of seventy-five are not allowed to jump. The dignity of age does not allow of jumping. 'This is most wonderful! Checkley, this is most mysterious!'

'What is it?'

'These notes—the Devil is in the safe to-day, I do believe. First the certificates are lost; that is, they can't be found—and next these notes turn up.'

'What notes are they, then?'

'They are nothing else than the Bank-notes paid across the counter for that forged cheque of eight years ago. Oh! there is no doubt of it—none whatever. I remember the numbers—the consecutive numbers—seventy-two of them—seven hundred and twenty pounds. How did they get here? Who put them in? Checkley, I say, how did these notes get here?'

He held the notes in his hand and asked these questions in pure bewilderment, and not in the expectation of receiving any reply.

'The notes paid to that young gentleman when he forged the cheque,' said Checkley, 'must have been put back in the safe by him. There's no other way to account for it. He was afraid to present them. He heard you say they were stopped, and he put them back. I think I see him doing it. While he was flaring out, he done it—I'm sure I see him doing it.'

Mr Dering received this suggestion without remark. He laid down the notes and stared at his clerk. The two old men stared blankly at each other. Perhaps Checkley's countenance, of the two, expressed the greater astonishment.

'How did those notes get into the safe?' the lawyer repeated. 'This is even a more wonderful thing than the mislaying of the certificates. You took them out. Show me exactly where they were lying.'

'They were behind these books. See! the outside note is covered with dust.'

'They must have been lying there all these years. In my safe! The very notes paid across the counter to the forger's messenger! In my,

safe! What does this mean? I feel as if I was going mad. I say—What does all this mean, Checkley?

The clerk made answer slowly, repeating his former suggestion.

'Since young Arundel forged the cheque, young Arundel got the notes. Since young Arundel got the notes, young Arundel must have put them back. No one else could. When young Arundel put them back, he done it because he was afraid of your finding out. He put them back unseen by you that day when you charged him with the crime.'

'I did not charge him. I have charged no one.'

'I charged him, then, and you did not contradict. I'd charge him again if he was here.'

'Any man may charge anything upon any other man. There was no proof whatever, and none has ever come to light.'

'You're always for proofs that will convict a man. I only said that nobody else could do the thing. As for putting the notes back again in the safe, now I come to think of it—his face became cunning and malignant—'I do remember—yes—oh! yes—I clearly remember—I quite clearly remember—I see it as plain as if it was before me. He got sidling nearer and nearer the safe while we were talking: he got quite close—so—he chucked a bundle in when he thought I wasn't looking. I think—I almost think—I could swear to it.'

'Nonsense,' said the lawyer. 'Your memory is too clear. Tie up the notes, Checkley, and put them back. They may help, perhaps, some time, to find out the man. Meantime, let us go back to our search. Let us find these certificates.'

They had now examined every packet in the safe: they had looked at every paper: they had opened every book and searched through all the leaves. There was no doubt left: the certificates were not there.

Checkley began to tie up the bundles again. His master sat down trying to remember something—everything—that could account for their disappearance.

(To be continued.)

PLATELAYERS AND LOCOMOTIVE SUPERINTENDENTS.

THE humbler the position of a man, the less able and less willing is he to attract the attention of the public to his troubles and grievances; and consequently he receives many acts of injustice that would not be tolerated by his brethren who are better off from a worldly point of view. It is the same with classes of men as with individuals; and platelayers (called 'surfacemen' in Scotland) belong to the class of workers whose means of livelihood are small, and whose employment may be considered precarious.

It is well known that positions on railways are not always paid according to the amount of work done, and this remark applies equally to officials of every corporate body. If work were

paid for on this basis, and the importance of doing it well was also taken into consideration, platelayers would fare better than they do at present. Men holding responsible positions should of course be well paid, whatever the nature of their work may be, and no one expects that agricultural and other labourers, whose work is not of a responsible nature, nor skilful, should receive wages equal to men who are skilled in some trade, or who have any responsibility attached to their work. On railways, every man who has anything to do with their working or with the permanent-way, is more or less a responsible official, and his negligence may at any time cause serious disaster. Engine-drivers, guards, and signalmen are recognised as holding positions of responsibility, and their wages are consequently considerably above those paid to the average labourer.

A platelayer holds the most humble position on a railway; he is looked upon as simply a labourer, and yet is hardly recognised as belonging to the service. He receives no crumbs of comfort in the shape of 'tips,' nor has he a yearly or half-yearly bonus for doing his work well. He is not eligible to join every Benefit Society; and in the matter of insurance against accidents, he is only accepted at a high premium, on account of the dangerous nature of his employment. He has no uniform supplied to him, not even a greatcoat in winter, to battle against rain, snow, or fog, which he has to do at all times of the day and often at night; and his chances of promotion are—nil. He has the privilege of a free pass once a year, and his wages are a trifle above those paid to a common labourer. Such may be said to be his position in connection with the railway service, and it is not a cheerful one.

Now, for these few earthly benefits, what does a platelayer do? He starts work at six A.M. in summer and seven A.M. in winter, unless he is called up earlier on account of fog or accident. The whole of every line throughout the country is divided out in lengths, varying in distance according to circumstances. Each length is in the charge of a foreman and a few men, who are responsible for the rails and ballast being kept in a safe condition. The foreman is of course directly responsible to his chief, but he in his turn looks to his men as sharing that responsibility.

The length of line is examined twice a day. Rails may require raising, nuts and keys may require fastening, and sleepers may be short of ballast; all points and switches will have to be kept clean and oiled, and the line generally free from litter and obstructions. The fences on each side of the line must also be kept in perfect repair, and culverts and bridges in times of heavy rain must have special attention. When the length includes a tunnel, the same if not more attention has to be paid to their duties, and considerably more has to be paid to their own safety

Their hours of duty are generally about twelve a day.

Platelayers can be appropriately called 'the guardians of the permanent-way.' Under a scorching sun in summer and a nipping frost in winter, they can be seen daily at work; and they are thankful if they and their families have sufficient to eat, and can appear as respectable as other people in their position.

Such is briefly their ordinary work; but in foggy weather their work is cold and dangerous, for then they have to stand sentinel for hours together at the different signal-posts along the line, guarding the trains from unseen danger. Their day's work is then a very long one; and when the fog hangs heavy for days together over the country, they are sadly overtaxed. It is impossible to relieve them at such times; and it is only when necessity compels that a railway company will employ men not belonging to the service to perform this work.

It is in foggy weather that this class of men should be thought of, not only by the public, but also by their more fortunate comrades in the service; for it is then that we come across the familiar paragraphs in the newspapers, headed, 'Another platelayer killed in the fog.' And as though these men did not run sufficient risk for their daily earnings, travellers by our trains have added considerably to it by throwing bottles and other articles out of the carriage windows when the train is running at a high rate of speed, and many a platelayer carries the mark caused by such thoughtlessness on the part of the public.

That these men do their work well is sufficiently proved by the small number of accidents to trains that can be traced to their negligence; and it must be admitted that their work is responsible; yet, with all the drawbacks attending their occupation, they are not much given to grumbling, and they work on till age renders them of little use to their foremen; and though they may have been faithful servants for the best part of their life, yet a grateful railway company has little pity for such humble individuals, and informs them that their services can be dispensed with; and they go—whither we know not, and no one seems to care; but in all probability the workhouse does for them that last office which we shall all require whether we can pay for it or not.

It is not their fault that they are born to assist in protecting the lives of the travelling public at a weekly wage which is sadly inadequate to meet the sickness and breaking-up of the constitution which their work in inclement weather is sure to bring on; but wealthy corporations have seldom compassion on their poorest servants, and it is generally left to the public to give a helping hand to those who, having done their duty in some lowly walk of life, find when it is too late that their employers have only looked upon them as labour-machines from which a certain amount of work can be obtained; and when they are worn out they must be replaced. This class of men, considering their service to the public, have not their fair share in the benefits of those institutions which the public so largely subscribe to for the sick and needy of railway servants generally; and it would be well if some of the subscribers were to insist on the

claims of this deserving class of men being more largely provided for in the future.

LOCOMOTIVE SUPERINTENDENT.

This official has entire control over all the engines, and is responsible for them doing their work satisfactorily. Our large railways make their own engines, and in this case the designing and constructing are done under the supervision of the locomotive engineer. Taking the engines of three such companies as the Midland, London and North-Western, and Great Northern Railways, a casual observer can see that they differ from one another in several points; this arises from the engineers having different ideas as to the building of these powerful machines. There are a great number of patents connected with the machinery, and most of them have been brought out by these officials, and they use their own judgment as to what improvements are to be added. In the case of small railways, the engines are generally made by private firms in Manchester, Leeds, or Glasgow. The weight of an engine loaded varies according to its size; many of them are over seventy tons; and though they are so massive, they have parts about them of wonderful delicacy. Stephenson, the father of locomotive building, would look with wonder upon one of our modern engines, yet to him the present generation owe a great debt of gratitude.

The Locomotive Superintendent keeps a record of the performances of every engine, and they can tell almost any time the number of miles any particular one has travelled. It is a fact that an engine on the Great Western Railway ran 569,232 miles before it required renewal. The right to ride on an engine at any time is a very limited one, being allowed only to the General Manager, the Superintendent of the line, and the Locomotive Superintendent. In special cases only have other officers the power to do so. That this department of a railway is well managed, and that the official at the head of it is invariably a man of marked ability, is proved by the very few cases in which an accident can be traced to any fault of the engine. It must be borne in mind, however, that in case of a serious accident, each department will endeavour to clear itself, and will do its best to put the burden on other shoulders. The most common accident to an engine is having a tube burst; the rush of steam will often scald the driver and fireman; but such accidents as these are not chronicled. It is very probable that, taking all sorts of engines into consideration and the work they have to do, fewer accidents happen to a railway locomotive than to any other sort of engine.

The head of this department has to find power for all trains—passenger, goods, and excursion; and in the summer season his work is by no means light. Engines are too expensive to be lying idle all the winter, so that in summer the maximum amount of work is got out of a minimum number of engines, and the superintendent has so to arrange the journeys that all the work can be done. The drivers of course have to work hard in the busy season, but they are paid well, and do not often grumble on that score.

On our large railways, district superintendents are appointed. They have a certain number of engines in their charge, and supply the power for the local traffic. They are of course under the control of the superintendent.

Carriage and wagon building is also carried on in this department; and in places like Crewe and Doncaster many thousand hands are employed.*

THUNDERBOLT'S MATE.

v.

THUNDERBOLT'S mate heard plainly enough the yell of rage that announced the discovery of his escape. At that moment, his crutches had carried him considerably less than two hundred yards from the homestead; but he smiled complacently as he hobbled on; he felt tolerably secure. The night was as black as pitch; the clouds had banked up for rain; so that, when Brown looked over his shoulder, the outline of the station was invisible.

'Even if it was bright moonlight,' muttered Brown, as he neared the home-paddock gate, 'even if he could see me, he daren't give chase! He knows that if he left that veranda for half a minute, they'd be into the store and armed to the teeth before he could get back. But I know what he'll do now: he'll do like he done up in Queensland, when he stuck up Evelyn Downs single-handed. He'll make Sammy fetch a rope; then he'll set on one or two to bind all the rest; and then one of those two'll have to bind the other; and then Thunderbolt'll bind *him*. Then he'll ransack the place, and away with an hour's start before the first man frees himself. That's what he'd have done at Evelyn Downs, if those poor coves hadn't had too much pluck and too little sense. That's what he's doing now, for that Ayrton's too cool to lose his head or to let the others try anything on either, unless they were cocksure.'

In point of fact, Brown was right. At that very moment, Sammy, the Chinaman, was cutting down the clothes lines from the pine-trees behind his kitchen!

It is difficult, at best, to make respectable speed upon crutches—impossible, when the only leg that may touch the ground has been out of use for weeks, and when the whole frame is weakened and reduced by a prolonged period of inactivity. Brown got over the first mile at a good rate, considering everything; but he paid for it before he was half-way through the second. Quite suddenly, his brain reeled, the crutches slipped from under his arm-pits, he fell forward upon his hands. Instead of stunning him, the slight shock galvanised his swimming senses and cleared his brain; but he was wise enough to slip right down for a minute's rest, in which to gather strength and review the situation. He had not come more than a mile and a half, or a quarter of the way to the wool-shed—of this he was

certain. A quarter of the way, and he had already collapsed once! The prospect of his reaching the shed at all seemed by no means certain. Even if he did succeed in getting there, could he be in time to be of any use? He would, indeed, be able to despatch prompt assistance to the prisoners at the homestead—but only to find, no doubt, that they were prisoners no longer, and that the bushranger had got a long safe start. On the other hand, there were two possibilities to consider. There was the chance of the prisoners being so securely bound that it might take them hours to release themselves; and the thought of Mrs Lees and little Pen—above all, of little Pen—being lacerated for hours by the binding ropes was intolerable to Brown. Then there was the chance of Thunderbolt's capture, if a hne and cry were started by the shearers, most of whom had horses in the horse-paddock out at the shed; and the thought of *that* made Brown tremble with excitement. Without knowing which incentive was the stronger, he set his teeth, dragged himself from the ground, and once more swung forward on his crutches.

It was a terrible task that he had set himself—indeed, an impossible one; but Brown had not time to find this out. For he had not proceeded a hundred yards from the spot where he had fallen, when a galloping horseman overtook him. At first he thought it was Thunderbolt, crouched behind a big blue-bush at one side of the track, set his teeth, clubbed a crutch, and thought bitterly of his buried pistols. But when the horse came up, there was just light enough to see that it was a gray; and Thunderbolt's mount was black as ink. Besides, the rider was sitting all of a heap, and an unsteady heap too, which put it beyond doubt that it was not even Thunderbolt on one of the station horses. So then Brown started up as smartly as he was able and let out a loud shout; whereupon the rider—a harmless shearer, on his way home from a convivial evening in the township—nearly fell from his saddle, but reined up awkwardly, and showed his presence of mind by an eloquent but indistinct set of curses.

'Don't stop, man!' cried Brown. 'Ride on to the wool-shed for your life! The homestead's stuck up, and every soul's in Thunderbolt's hands!'

'Thunderbolt?'

'Thunderbolt!'

In an instant, the festive shearer became quite painfully sober, by comparison. He rode up close to Brown. 'Why—great Scot! you're the cove with the broken leg!'

'Get on, man; there's not a moment to lose!'

'But how the mischief did you get here? Crutches and all, so help me!'

'Oh, ride on, can't you?' cried Brown angrily.

'Think of the women and the child!'

The shearer sat for some seconds longer like a statue in the saddle; then, with a forcible imprecation—but a most complimentary one to 'the cove with the broken leg'—he dug spurs into the gray and thundered on. And Brown sank down again behind his blue-bush, and realised, now that it was off his shoulders, the complete impossibility of the task he had set himself—to hobble six miles on his crutches.

* The above is the concluding paper of the series on Railway Stations, Station-masters, Booking-clerks, &c., which have from time to time appeared in the *Journal*, and which are now, with some additional matter, published in a volume entitled, *Railways and Railway Men* (London and Edinburgh: W. & R. Chambers, Limited).

He lay upon the ground, utterly feeble, and feeling as though a forceps had been at work drawing every nerve and sinew out of his body. Consciousness almost forsook him; he fell into a state of partial stupor.

He was roused—it must have been an hour later—by a stampede of horses sweeping down the track at a gallop. It was the shearers, with William Lees at their head. When they had passed, Brown struggled up and propped himself once more upon his crutches, and began retracing his steps to the homestead. But his pace was considerably slower than it had been before. He thought he was never going to reach the home-paddock gate. At last he knew that he was near it, by hearing the double gates clatter back upon the posts and a horse's hoofs thunder through.

What followed occupied a few moments only. A black horse was reined up within a yard of Brown; and when Brown addressed the rider, taking him for one of the pursuers, a low, cruel laugh was the answer; and then—a flash, a report, a horse's gallop dying away in the distance; and Thunderbolt's mate left lying in his blood, shot by Thunderbolt!

On tragic nights, such as this one, people are slow to go to bed, even when the danger is over. At midnight, William Lees, his wife and child, and the trembling maid-servant, sat in silence in the sitting-room, awaiting the return of the hue and cry, which seemed certain at last to capture the notorious Thunderbolt, but which in point of fact did no such thing. Lees at the moment was an embittered man: he, and he alone, was out of the chase: duty had tied him to the domestic apron strings, and the action of his young men—who had joined the pursuers without so much as asking leave—had tightened the knots.

All at once, but so silently that her parents hardly noticed it, little Pen stole out into the veranda. She fancied she had heard a faint cry: in the veranda, fancy became certainty, for the cry was repeated: 'Miss Pen!'

The voice was sadly feeble, but it was Brown's voice. Pen knew it instantly, and went swiftly but softly to the end of the veranda. The faint summons came yet again: 'Miss Pen!'

The child rushed out, groped for and found the picket-fence, followed it down to the wicket, went through, and almost fell over a man's prostrate form.

'Miss Pen! Is it really you?'

'Is that really *you*, Brown?' It was very, very dark, and fine rain was falling.

'Yes, miss, it's me—come back,' said Brown, very faintly. 'I'm glad you heard me, and came—in time. Water! My throat is on fire.'

She turned like lightning. He called her back.

'Miss Pen!' His voice terrified her; it was fainter than ever; and he was gasping. 'You didn't believe—Miss Pen—I was siding with *him*—to-night—did you?'

'No, Brown; really and truly, I didn't believe that!'

She gave him her little hand, and he pressed it to his cold, damp lips. 'Water!' he gasped again.

Pen ran away, a great lump in her throat, a vague terror in her heart. As she neared the veranda she thought she heard a long-drawn choking sigh. She burst into the room, and told her parents Brown was outside, just beyond the fence, lying down exhausted and begging for water. But before she had told them all, the child stopped, and uttered a shrill scream: the light of the lamp had revealed blood upon her hand! William Lees said nothing, but seized the water-bottle and rushed out. He was too late. Thunderbolt's mate was dead.

The reader may like to know that Thunderbolt himself never left that district alive; the police sergeant from the township near Bilbil shot him dead within forty-eight hours from that midnight. But it is needless to add that there was neither comfort nor consolation in this for little Penelope Lees.

A STRANGE SETTLEMENT IN PENNSYLVANIA.

It was on a beautiful summer morning in 1885 that I first visited Economy, a little German settlement on the right bank of the river Ohio; but not even the brightness of an August day could dispel the gloom which the strange quietness of the place cast over my spirits. In the midst of an earnest, active civilisation, and yet not of it, this unique community seemed to belong to some past age, and was a very Rip Van Winkle among the stirring, progressive villages of Western Pennsylvania. Unique I believe it to be; quaint it certainly is; and its story, from the day it was founded up to the present time, cannot but be fraught with intense interest to any one whose heart beats in sympathy with humanity in its struggles after an ideal human existence, though these struggles lead into errors which to many might seem unpardonable.

In the year 1803 a German named Rapp went out to America, accompanied by numbers of his fellow-countrymen whom he had won over to his own peculiar way of thinking, and he founded in Pennsylvania a little colony which he called Harmony. After twelve years, abandoning this settlement, he founded in Indiana a second settlement—New Harmony; but this he sold in 1824 to Robert Owen, and returned to Pennsylvania, where he founded the village of Economy, seventeen miles from Pittsburgh. Here those of his followers who still survive live a lonely isolated life, a life from which the average human heart, hungry for the sympathy and love which spring from the natural relationships of life, would shrink almost as from a living death.

Mr Rapp's mind was absorbed in the thought of the speedy coming of Christ to earth again, and all his energies were bent toward the one object of amassing great wealth, not for his own benefit, but that it might be placed at the disposal of Christ at His second coming. The idea that our Lord could ever need our silver and

gold, should He revisit the earth in bodily form, certainly seems to us a strange one; but we cannot for one moment doubt the sincerity of the founder of the Economites in trying to accomplish his self-imposed task.

Judging rightly that the strictest economy would be necessary to the fulfilling of his purpose, Mr Rapp drew up a code of rules which he thought well suited to the practice of economy, and his followers were required to abide by them. All things were to be in common: the money earned by their labour was to form one common fund; and one shop was opened from which all the bodily needs of these simple people could be supplied without money or price from them. The principal vow exacted from those joining this strange community was that of celibacy, and those members who were married before joining the Economites were required to live separately. This vow, however, was binding upon the members only while they remained in the society.

In cases of defection a forgiving spirit was manifested by the community, as is shown by the following incident. Shortly after the society was founded two of the members—a man and a woman—left, and were married. Many years afterwards the man died. His wife returned to Economy with her daughter, also a widow, and two small grandchildren; and she begged to be received with her family into the fold she had once despised. She was kindly re-admitted into the fellowship of the Economites, and she now lives among them as though she had never been a wandering sheep. Her grandchildren have a decided talent for music, and are provided with music masters at the expense of the community.

At the time the colony was founded, land in Pennsylvania was much cheaper than it is now, and the Economites acquired thousands of acres extending along the right bank of the Ohio. The greater portion of their land they set apart for ordinary agricultural purposes; the remainder they planted in vineyards, the wine of which is justly celebrated for its richness and delicate flavour.

Their houses are in the orthodox 'Deutsche' style, having all the doors and windows at the back, and presenting inhospitable-looking fronts to the passers-by. Behind each house is a little garden plot filled with flowers, brought from the Fatherland, and therefore dear to the German heart; and the front of each dwelling is ornamented by a hardy vine, which greatly relieves the monotony of red brick; though evidently the thought of utility alone led to the planting of the vines.

A church was built, in which, Sunday after Sunday, Mr Rapp proclaimed to his followers the Word of life. His daughter played the harmonium; while the men and women of the society, clad respectively in dark blue coats and dresses, and sitting on opposite sides of the building, sang praises to God.

For more than a score of years the Economites lived on under the leadership of their founder, following the same routine in their daily life, and at peace with God and man. When Mr Rapp died, Mr Henrici, his assistant in managing the affairs of the settlement, succeeded him in its leadership. As time passed by, many members

of the community were gathered to their fathers, while but few came to fill their vacant places. Six years ago, when I made my first visit to Economy, only forty old men and women, with backs bent by hard labour and heads silvered by age, were left in the colony. The manual labour necessary for farming their vast acres and managing their large dairies could not then be performed by the Economites themselves, as it once had been, and labourers, mostly Germans, from the outside world, had for some years past been employed by them.

By this time, as the result of their years of toil and self-denial, the Economites had acquired wealth surpassing their fondest hopes. They had millions of dollars invested in railway and bank shares; while their broad acres, each year increasing in value, had come to be worth many times the sum paid for them; and their immense wine-cellars were filled with sparkling liquors which might have tempted the palate of Bacchus himself.

Just before this, the only young member of the community, a man about thirty years of age, who was being trained to succeed Mr Henrici in his position of trust when the latter should die, committed suicide by taking prussic acid. He left a letter stating that the burden of the responsibility which he knew might at any time be thrust upon him, added to the unrest caused by the unnatural life he was leading, rendered his existence so miserable that he felt he must end it. I held in my hand the bottle which had contained the deadly drug; I saw the chair in which the poor victim sat when he took the fatal draught; and old Mr Henrici's eyes filled with tears as he spoke to my companions and myself of the young man and his tragic end.

Since then about thirty new members have joined the society of which Mr Henrici still lives to be head. When I last visited Economy, some few months ago, I saw and conversed with the young man who fills the place of the one who took his own life, and who, in the natural course of events, will soon have control of an estate which princes might well covet.

It is said that Miss Rapp in her youthful days had a lover among her father's followers, and that the two wished to marry and leave the community. However, a stern though well-meaning father interposed his authority, and the maiden was left to pine for three months behind a bolted door, while the disconsolate and faithful lover sought to cheer her loneliness by playing and singing under her window while her father slept.

When I saw Miss Rapp she had reached an age beyond the years allotted to humankind. Any traces of trouble and sorrow which once might have marred the serenity of her countenance had passed away, and her face spoke only of the deep abiding peace which comes from perfect heart-rest. The old German lady, with her dark blue silk gown, and a black silk square folded neatly over her breast, was a charming hostess, and she made sweet music for us on an old-fashioned piano which she had brought from her native land.

Before many years this quaint community will probably be a thing of the past; for any society founded upon principles so unnatural cannot be

permanent. But upon those who knew the Economites best, the memory of their pure unselfish lives will not be without its lasting influence for good.

NUNC DIMITTIS:

A PASTORAL.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark,
And may there be no sadness of farewell
When I embark.

THE vicar of Lewcombe passed through the gate of the churchyard, which swung squeakily round on its centre under the high-pitched roof of brown thatch, and entered the church by the door in the tower. He had paused on his way, as he always did, to speak with the wife of the sexton, whose cottage looked across at the rising ground on which the gravestones stood, with the church in their midst. Father and son, in a direct line for a hundred and forty years, the sextons of Lewcombe had made that cottage their home, and the sight of it was dear to the vicar's eyes. The old gray walls were rich in lichen, stonecrop, and moss; and the mullioned windows with their square heads were eloquent of the Tudor age. Up to the overhanging thatched eaves, myrtles and white jessamine climbed on either side of the porch; and the little slip of garden in front of the house was bright with hollyhocks and sunflowers. A large wicker bird-cage hung above the door, but for the present at anyrate it was empty. Five or six plump fowls waddled round the gateposts and out into the road; and in a corner of the garden the tame magpie was taking its afternoon walk in dignified solitude. As the vicar approached, a yellow-hammer, or 'gladdy,' as the sexton's children called it, spread its gay wings and fluttered aloft; and though it was past the middle of September, swallows and martins were still wheeling swiftly through the calm mild air.

The sexton's wife, who was always busied about something, had thrown open the hatch, or half-door, of the cottage, and was diligently bathing her youngest born, a little three-year-old girl, at the open doorway—'washing my lady on the dreskel,' as she explained to the vicar, 'to save the flossing'—or, in other words, to avoid splashing the floor of her one sitting-room. The vicar noticed that the child coughed once or twice while he stood by, and he mildly asked whether the exposure was prudent. 'Er's a bit hoozy,' the good woman admitted in her matter-of-fact way, plying the soap vigorously; 'and when er's made all vitty and clean, er shall zog a bit in the old arm-chair.' The great hooded seat in the chimney corner, which it was plain had been made out of the hinder part of an old-fashioned closed carriage, looked cosy and inviting, and the fire glowed cheerily on the ample hearth. So the vicar just smiled and nodded in his kindly way and went on, leaving the child to its mother's care.

Every week-day afternoon for ten years, with hardly any exceptions, he had shut himself up for two or three hours in the church. During all that time he had been working at a task which he had set himself for love of the place;

and apart from the associations gathering round thirty-five years of patient ministration, the church fully deserved all the affection and veneration which the old man bestowed upon it. Externally its pride was the unusually lofty Early English tower, up the sides of which, at this season of the year, the bright red creeper blazed in the warm sunlight, reaching up in flame-like peaks to the level of the long-necked gargoyles, whose facial expression had grown blank and meaningless from extreme old age; while, within, it gloried in a handsome rood-screen, almost perfect, and richly ornamented with a tracery of grapes, vine-foliage, and acorns, and an under-border of quatrefoils, in the elaborate and conscientious style of the thirteenth century. A few of the pew-heads had been decorated in a similar manner at the same time; but most of them had been left without ornament. Men to work upon them, or money to pay them with, had been wanting, and, unadorned, the simple curves of the old oak had acquired that plum-like bloom and softness which are so unmistakable to the sight and touch, and form so conclusive a proof of genuine antiquity. It was this defect which the vicar had set himself to remedy. He had a cunning hand, and a genuine love of the wood-carver's art; and ten years ago, as nearly as possible, his second son and only remaining child had gone away out into the world, and left him to end his days alone in the remote west-country village. So, patiently and lovingly, as a solace for his loneliness, he began to work on the old pew-heads, faithfully following in every minute turn of leaf and twig the models with which a bygone age had furnished him.

But to-day, no matter how slowly and carefully he wrought, or how long he paused to caress the smooth, shining curves of the dark wood, his task would be at an end. An hour's work at the most lay before him, and then the last pew-head would be complete in every detail. It was with a keen pang of regret that he thought of this, as he pushed open the heavy door in the tower and bared his white head. The years during which he had toiled so regularly and so zealously in that subdued light seemed to have passed by like some long and quiet dream, of which we find upon awaking that, while a vague impression of peacefulness is still left with us, the succession of shadowy incidents has wholly escaped our memory. There had of course been the usual round of duties—baptisms, marriages, and funerals, visiting the sick, organising coal clubs, superintending in the Sunday school, presiding at parish entertainments, and so forth, and these things had never been neglected; but the work in the old church had been, ever since it was begun, the centre round which all the vicar's other occupations revolved, the thought always uppermost in his mind, the pride and delight of each day that dawned. And now it was coming to a close! There was much that might still be done, he knew, if he dared to do it; but this duty—the simple duty of completing what others had left undone—was at length performed, and he shrank from attempting more than that. Good workman though he was, he had not the courage to do more than copy as accurately as he could what was already there. And if he limited

himself to that, his occupation would be gone that day.

He sat down and looked upon his own handiwork with eyes before which there swam a mist of swift memories. His thoughts, of their own motion and by no wish of his, went back at once to the happy past—the days of his courtship, his marriage, the infancy and boyhood of the two sons who had been born to him. The keen sweet scent of the cold stone and mellow oak, familiar though it was, called up before him to-day picture after picture, rising out of the uneventful years of peaceful toil and obscure faithfulness. At one moment he was looking down once more with a strange thrill of admiration on the face of the girl who was one day to become his wife, as she sat beneath the pulpit with wide blue eyes upturned, listening to the new vicar's sermon: at another, he held her in his arms for the first time and kissed her lips. Now, again, with a heart full of gratitude and joy, before the altar rails of this very church, he was making his marriage vows over again, as he had done more than thirty years ago. She was so young and slight at that time, he remembered—so girlish, indeed, that at first he had feared that, even if she was not too beautiful, she was at all events too young for a middle-aged country clergyman like him; and yet, in spite of her youth and beauty, she had been dead now more than sixteen years—sixteen long and lonely years.

A thousand trifles, too, of which it seemed that he had never thought before, flooded his memory, and kept a smile flickering about the corners of his mouth. Speeches, looks, tones, gestures, groups formed by chance in the rooms of the vicarage or in the garden, recurred to him vividly and persistently, though he was puzzled to know why such things should have lived in his memory at all. Now and again, a sigh escaped him: there had been difficulties and misunderstandings and cares even in his peaceful life, as in the lives of all men; but for the most part the past was pleasant to look back upon, and the present, in spite of the loneliness of his old age, was not all unkindly. His sons were prospering, and wrote cheerfully and hopefully of the future; and if they were kept apart from him, that, too, he knew, was all for their own good. There was nothing but thankfulness in his heart as he bowed his head for an instant with the movement of one who says, 'I am content.' And then he lifted the skilled right hand, which looked so incongruously young and strong in comparison with the worn face, and bent for the last time over the work which had kept him happy and busy for so many years. Even if it had not been work that he loved, there is enough pathos bound up with the last time of doing anything to have saddened a heart so gentle and so tender as his.

At the coming on of twilight the sexton's wife came to the door of her cottage and looked up towards the church, wondering why the vicar had not left it yet. The child, clad in its little nightdress and snugly wrapped up in a blanket, was fast asleep in the big hooded chair, and the mother stepped warily across the room from the other side of the fireplace and peered out. There was no one moving in the churchyard, and her

eyes passed through the misty gloaming in vain from one opening between the gravestones to another. The clock in the tower was just chiming the hour of seven, and between the quaint wooden figures of Moses and Aaron, perched upon the screen which separated the belfry from the rest of the church, only the faintest afterglow of the sunken sun was stealing in through the western window. Low down in the sky there still lingered a wide strip of the deepest crimson, which rose upwards through every shade of orange and rose-colour to those exquisite opal tints which weld the splendours of sunset to the pale green of an evening sky in autumn; but it was far too dark to work, and had it been as bright as noonday, the work which the vicar had to do was finished. Yet he sat there still, with a smile on his lips, and his hand still held the tool which under his guidance had made the last of the old pew-heads like unto its fellows. In the church which he had loved so long and adorned so reverently, at the stillest hour of that still September day, the vicar had learned all that is to be learned of the love of God for those who have loved and trusted Him.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE increasing number of collisions between ships at sea, which generally occur in the night-time and very often in clear weather, would indicate that under present conditions the captain of a ship has no means of judging the course which an approaching vessel is steering. As a matter of fact, he cannot tell which side the coming vessel intends to take until either its green or red light is shut out. The Patent Crescent Course Indicator has been invented by Mr J. F. Wiles to obviate this difficulty; and so far as we can see, it fulfils its purpose admirably. It consists of one lamp, which may be an oil lamp or an electric one, put in a lantern of peculiar construction, which is hung on deck in the forward part of the ship. The lantern in shape resembles a round tub with sloping sides set on edge, its bottom, which is quite opaque, pointing towards the bow of the ship. The sides only of the 'tub' are translucent, so that any one being in the exact line of the ship on which such a lantern is carried would see a luminous ring. If, however, the ship alters her course only by a little, one side of the ring is shut off, and the luminous patch takes the form of a crescent. It is obvious that the course steered by the vessel must be in the direction of the horns of that crescent. The plan is exquisitely simple, for the lantern is fixed, and has no mechanical movements. Its indications are perfectly clear, and are governed only by the direction in which the ship is moving. Particulars can be obtained of Mr Wiles, at Lloyds, London, E.C.

A flexible Metallic Tubing has lately been introduced, and will doubtless find employment in many trades. These tubes are made in various sizes, and will bear great internal pressure. They are produced from strips of metal which by a special machine are corrugated longitudinally with two grooves, a large and a small one, side by side. When such a strip is coiled round

a mandrel, the small corrugation interlocks with the larger one and makes what is known as a 'piston joint.' A tubing of somewhat similar character was made formerly with a strip of india-rubber inserted in the joint, to make it water-tight. In the present case this is dispensed with, and water and other liquids can be conveyed through the tubing without leakage, although they may have a pressure of some hundred pounds on the square inch. The offices of the company formed to work this industry are at 48 Parker Street, London.

Among the many proposed remedies to improve the atmosphere of London and other large cities is the use of anthracite, or steam-coal, as it is commonly called. A deputation recently waited upon the Lord Mayor to urge this innovation; and although there is a suspicion that such a proposal may have commercial enterprise at the back of it, there is no doubt that the use of such coal would be beneficial to the public at large. It would seem that there is a certain amount of prejudice against the domestic use of anthracite on account of the supposed difficulty of lighting it; but this is a difficulty which has not prevented its adoption in Paris, Berlin, and other continental cities. The deputation said nothing about price; but it is obvious that if they can bring coal to Londoners at a cheaper rate than the smoky variety commonly used, they will not have to wait long for customers. It remains to be proved, however, that the common type of open grate is suitable for burning anthracite.

In speaking of Sisal Grass, or 'Bahama Fibre,' as it is now called, Sir Ambrose Shed, the governor of the twenty islands which are grouped under the title of the Bahamas, is reported to have said that this valuable fibre was until recently destroyed as a noxious weed. Now, no fewer than one hundred thousand acres of it are grown on crown lands. This quantity will afford a yield of fifty thousand tons annually; and as it is marketable at from twenty to twenty-four pounds a ton, it will be seen that the 'noxious weed' has been turned to good account. The Bahama fibre is valuable for ropemaking, and more especially for ship cables owing to its power of resisting the action of sea-water (see *Chambers's Journal* for Dec. 21, 1889). It may be mentioned here that a cable is about to be laid to connect the Bahamas with the United States, and it is expected that when this is complete, many ships will call at the islands for orders. It is also supposed that when the Bahamas are thus brought within speaking distance of the American continent, tourists will flock there, to enjoy a climate which cannot be excelled, where winter is a meaningless word, and where frost is unknown.

A correspondent of the *Times* makes a valuable suggestion. He proposes that at railway stations there should be a window for 'exposed telegrams,' so that a traveller who is from any cause delayed on his journey may by such means communicate with friends who are waiting for him at the station. If such a traveller missed his train at a junction, a thing which too frequently happens, he would be able to hand a telegram to the authorities which would be displayed in the manner indicated at the station where he was ultimately expected. The plan would be rendered still more

serviceable to the public if the companies would give notice by its aid that such and such trains were delayed, and would not arrive until so many minutes after their appointed time. This system is already in use at a few stations on our trunk lines, but it should be universal.

Sunshine is recorded at the Meteorological Office by means of the Stokes-Campbell instrument, the essential feature of which is a spherical lens which acts as a burning-glass. As the sun accomplishes its apparent journey from east to west, it burns its autograph into a strip of card placed beneath the lens, but can only do so when it is unobscured. As the card is divided into hours, it is easy to calculate the amount of actual sunshine with which each day is favoured. A Report has recently been issued giving the results achieved by this instrument for the past ten years. From this we learn that our southern coasts are the most sunny ones, if we except the Channel Islands, as represented by Jersey, where alone one-half the possible amount of radiance was registered for May and August. The east coast of Britain is also decidedly sunny. In the summer and early autumn, Ireland shares with the west coast of Scotland the reputation of persistently clouded skies; but later on, towards November, the observatory in the Phoenix Park, Dublin, records the greatest average amount of sunshine for that month—namely, twenty-eight per cent. In the metropolis, as might be expected, the record is bad, the sun failing to leave any trace on the card for more than one entire month.

According to a recent Report made to the Foreign Office by the British consul at Buenos Ayres, a new industry has been founded in the Argentine Republic by the utilisation of the vast shallow lakes of salt, or *salinas*, which are situated there. These beds are mostly too far from the seaboard to be profitably worked; but an exception is found in the salinas of the Rio Negro Valley, which are only about twenty-two miles from the harbour of San Blas. These are estimated to contain twenty thousand acres of salt-bearing ground, which owes its supply of salt to miles of rock-salt at the foot of the Andes, two hundred and fifty leagues distant. Everything here conspires to the rapid production of the mineral, for the rainfall is small, while the sun and strong winds combine to evaporate the water, leaving beds of solid salt from two to four inches in thickness. A company has been formed, under concession from the Government, to develop this new industry, and they are already bringing into the market large supplies of salt for different trades as well as for household use. Hitherto, the import of English salt has amounted to about two thousand tons annually, bearing an *ad valorem* duty of twenty-five per cent.

The Platinotype Company of London have recently brought out a Lamp, the invention of Mr E. J. Humphery, which promises to be of great value to photographers, and may possibly find employment for signalling, and other purposes where brilliant illumination for short periods is required. The lamp consists of a hollow metallic vessel, which is charged with a spoonful of magnesium dust. Ordinary household gas is carried into the lamp by an attached rubber tube, while another tube feeds it with

oxygen. The tubes within the apparatus are so arranged that the hydrogen burns between two walls of oxygen, and the force of the former gas is sufficient to carry into the compound flame the metallic dust. The result is a light which is dazzling in its intensity, and which is so chemically active that it can not only be used for photographic portraiture but can be used advantageously for printing purposes. By a slight modification, a large quantity of the magnesium dust can be forced suddenly into the flame, so as to afford a 'flash' light suitable for instantaneous work at night. The lamp is portable, and can be used wherever gas is at hand.

There are so many novel applications of electricity nowadays that one is apt to think that the wonderful accounts sometimes published concerning them must be tempered with exaggeration. At first sight, for instance, it would seem impossible that the growth of seeds should be accelerated by planting them between zinc and copper plates buried in the ground. Such an effect, however, has been produced by Dr James Leicester of Bristol, who gives an account in the *Chemical News* of the method which he adopts in producing this extraordinary result, a method so simple and inexpensive that any amateur gardener can follow his example. A box about three feet long is filled with soil, and at one end of it is buried a copper plate about one foot square; and facing it, at the other end of the box, is a zinc plate of the same dimensions. The two plates are connected above the surface of the soil by a copper wire. Seeds grown between these plates spring up far more quickly than seeds planted under normal conditions. In the case of hemp-seed, it was fully an inch above the surface before other hemp seed planted at the same time in an ordinary vessel made any appearance at all.

In the grounds of the 'World's Fair' at Chicago there has been running for some time experimentally a tram car which is fireless, steamless, and noiseless, which its promoters hope will supersede the use of horses, cables, and electricity for street tramway purposes. It is fitted with a motor which owes its power to the expansion of ammonia from the liquid to the gaseous state. The pressure obtainable is nearly one hundred and fifty pounds on the square inch, and the ammonia, after having done its work, can be again condensed to its original state at the generating works, and can be used over again. With one charge of ammonia the car will run eighteen miles; and the operation of removing the spent gas, which is absorbed in a water tank, and recharging occupies only two minutes. The working expenses are wonderfully low, and it is believed that the system has a wide future before it.

It will be remembered that a year or two back the great railway companies whose lines connect London with Edinburgh competed with one another as to which should cover the distance in the shortest time, with the result that the Great Northern beat the record of the world's railroad speeds by running 393 miles in 414 minutes. This fine exploit has been beaten by the New York Central and Hudson River Railway, which has accomplished the unparalleled feat of running a heavy train from New York to East Buffalo, a distance of 436½ miles, in 439½

minutes, including all stoppages. This speed, it is said, will be quite eclipsed by an electric railway which is being constructed between Chicago and St Louis, upon which travellers will be hurried along at the rate of one hundred miles per hour. An important factor in this calculation is the wedge-form given to the foremost portion of the electric motor car, which will enable it to cleave the air, and thus reduce atmospheric resistance.

There seems to be little doubt that the influenza scourge is due, like so many other epidemics, to a bacillus; and two French scientists assert that they have discovered the organism, and have succeeded in cultivating it in bouillon, after Pasteur's method. The microscopic germ is fashioned like the figure 8, and it has been shown that rabbits and monkeys inoculated with the preparation in which it has been artificially cultivated speedily exhibit all the symptoms of influenza. These experiments have been confirmed by others; and it now remains to be seen whether some system of inoculation may not be devised which may be as efficacious in the case of influenza as Jenner's method has proved to be in the case of smallpox.

Now that our 'wooden walls' are not made of wood, but are represented by vast ships which are principally constructed of metal, it would naturally have been thought that teak, the wood upon which shipbuilders of old most depended, would have become as it were a drug in the market. But this is by no means the case. Architects and builders have discovered its wonderful durability, and the question has arisen whether the supply will not presently fall short of the demand. Central and South India, Burma, and Siam are the principal countries which send us teak; but in many cases the old fable of killing the goose for the sake of its golden eggs is exemplified by the native practice of cutting down all the old trees, without providing for future needs by the planting of fresh ones.

A new process of separating oxygen from the atmosphere for industrial purposes has recently been elaborated, and may be seen in action at the works of Parkinson's Condensed Gas Company, Stretford, Manchester. Briefly described, the process consists in passing air under pressure through specially prepared permanganate of potash heated in retorts. This chemical under such conditions will absorb the oxygen, while it rejects the other constituent of the atmosphere—nitrogen. The oxygen so absorbed is afterwards drawn off by vacuum pumps, and is stored in a gasholder, to be afterwards compressed in steel cylinders and distributed for use. The process is continuous, and so cheap that it is estimated that the actual cost of producing the gas is not more than eighteenpence per thousand feet.

Another process, for obtaining an illuminating gas of high power, also hails from Manchester. This is put forward by the Hydro-oxy Gas Company, who have forwarded us particulars of their operations. In the first place, they make gas from any cheap petroleum, creosote, or other heavy oil, afterwards purifying it, and increasing its illuminating power at the same time by the addition of a certain proportion of pure oxygen. The mixture so made may also be used for enrich-

ing ordinary coal-gas. The compound, it should be stated, is not an explosive one, for the proportion of oxygen added is far too small to reach the danger-point.

La Nature recently published a map showing the system of military pigeon-posts which has been established in continental kingdoms, a method of communication which in our own country has been quite neglected. Some interesting particulars are also given with regard to the birds and the method of training them, in which it is pointed out that the pigeon is one of the very few species which are capable of being domesticated. By this is not meant merely tamed, but rendered domestic in the sense of attaching itself to any particular domicile. The birds are guided in their return home simply by sight, and not by any particular instinct. For this reason they must be made familiar with the contour of the country surrounding their home, by many short essays, before they are trusted on a long journey. Many are lost during this apprenticeship, the fittest surviving. So many pigeon-flying societies are existent in Britain at the present time, and so much attention is devoted to training them, that a number could be soon available for military service if the authorities required them. Many cases suggest themselves where, in the case of the electric wires being cut by an enemy, this means of communication would be priceless in value. It certainly was found so in the case of the siege of Paris, where a regular post was established by means of these useful carriers.

In certain parts of the country, a plague of mice has recently been experienced, to the great loss of farmers, for by mice is understood not the little rodent which finds its way to our larders, but the field vole (*Arvicola agrestis*). At a recent meeting of the Edinburgh Field Naturalists' and Microscopical Society, Mr T. Speedy gave some interesting particulars concerning the way in which certain districts have been overrun with these little creatures, and expressed his doubts with regard to the reason commonly advanced to account for their numbers. It has been often affirmed that such a visitation is due to the wanton extermination of hawks and owls, whose natural prey are these voles. But Mr Speedy plainly showed that in parts of Selkirkshire where the Duke of Buccleuch had long prohibited the destruction of the birds, voles existed in great numbers. He had also found that in parts of Norway where all predaceous birds breed without restraint, hordes of lemmings, which are allied to the voles, periodically make their appearance.

There have been many discussions as to the heights attained by breaking waves, and an interesting light is thrown upon the matter by the terrible experience to which the keepers on Tillamook lighthouse were subjected during a storm which occurred last December, as described in a recent number of the *San Francisco Chronicle*. The waves broke over the lighthouse and shook it to its foundations, so much so, that the men in charge would far rather have been on ship-board. Streams of water poured through the ventilators at the top of the structure, which are one hundred and fifty-seven feet above sea-level. Landing platform, boats, and gear were all torn

away and destroyed. Professor Holden asserts that it is known to him personally that this lighthouse is sometimes buried in water and spray, and that the glass in the lantern has been frequently broken by impact of the waves.

SOME INSURANCE FRAUDS.

THE large insurance companies seldom dispute claims unless they have grounds of suspicion amounting to moral certainty. Even in this event they sometimes pay over the insurance money rather than go to law, because, however good their case may be, a contest excites suspicion against them in the minds of the public, and has often an appreciable effect on their business. Now and again, however, it is absolutely necessary if they are, and know they are, dealing with a clever rogue, to trot the gentleman through the law-courts to save themselves and not be swindled outright.

There is one company in London whose boast it is that it has never been driven to this extreme but once. The facts were these: A man named Innes had effected a policy for one thousand pounds on the life of his step-daughter. She died under rather tragical circumstances; and Innes produced a will, which appeared on the face of it to have been duly executed by her, declaring him executor and legatee. Its validity was contested; and Innes produced two attesting witnesses, who swore boldly to all the required formalities. They would have won the case for the legatee had the latter not insisted on calling a third witness. This man's courage failed him, or a feeling of compunction overmastered him. Wan and ghastly he entered the witness-box, where his first words were: 'My lord, my name is Borthwick; I am brother to the witness of the same name who has been examined. The will was not made on the Bridge Gate at Glasgow; it was forged by a schoolmaster in the Maze in the borough.'

For his share in this attempted swindle, Innes was hanged; and his two confederates were sentenced each to five years' imprisonment.

The first notorious insurance fraud occurred a century and a half ago. A man and woman of the semi-genteel class, the woman about twenty, and the man old enough to be her father, were the actors. Scene the first was the seeming death-bed of the lady, round which the neighbours were hastily summoned in the middle of the night by her male companion, who called her his daughter, and said she had been suddenly seized with pains in the heart. Before the doctor could arrive, she was to all appearance a corpse; and after feeling her pulse, he solemnly pronounced that all was over. Her remains were enclosed in a coffin and buried. The man claimed the amount insured on her life, and disappeared from the vicinity of St Giles'.

Not long afterwards, a couple, strangely like the two actors in the foregoing scene, came to reside in Queen Square, then a rather fashionable

quarter. They kept a pleasant house, entertained their neighbours, and made themselves thoroughly popular. This was kept up for some months, and then there was a repetition of the catastrophe—a heart complaint, a short sharp death-struggle, a desponding doctor, and a funeral. For a second time the insurance companies, individual and associated, were bled to the tune of several thousands.

A year or two later the pair reappeared in Liverpool in the shape of a merchant and his niece who kept house for him. On this new arena the man came out in the grave, decorous, and eminently respectable line, subscribing to charities, going regularly to church, and yielding to mundane vanities and indulgences only so far as to give good dinners. After a time he adopted the tone of one who had sustained unexpected reverses, which compelled him to borrow money on the security of property depending on his niece's life. He effected policies accordingly; and the old game was played over again for the third time with similar success.

After a decent delay, he left Liverpool 'because of the saddening reminiscences,' he said, and was not suspected for some time. He was probably meditating a fourth coup, when the three adventures and the circumstances attending them became known to the victims, and compelled him to lie low again. He never reappeared; but as he had made over twenty thousand pounds by the game, he could afford to live in retirement. The most mysterious part of the affair is the 'niece.' Had she the power of simulating death? Or had she discovered the secret of the draught compounded by Friar Laurence for Juliet? But it is possible that the medical men and the undertakers were bribed.

Four gentlemanly-looking individuals hired a boat one wild autumn evening at Blackfriars Bridge, and rowed up the river. After going some distance, the boat suddenly overturned, and its occupants were seen struggling for their lives in the water. Three of them were rescued, but nothing could be seen of the fourth. Grappling-irons were procured, and the river dragged, but to no purpose: the man had evidently been drowned, and carried away by the tide. It was noble to see the efforts of the survivors to rescue their ill-fated companion, and it was pitiable to witness their grief when the attempt had to be given up.

Some hours later, three men in a second boat made their way up stream towards the scene of the overturning, and deposited by the river side, at a place where the tide might have left the drowned man's body, a corpse specially procured. Then they rowed down stream towards Greenwich. In the morning they were on the spot again; heard that a body had been picked up, and recognised it, amid many tears, as that of their friend. An inquest was held, a verdict of 'accidental death' returned, and a large sum in the way of insurance money was drawn. The missing man had not been drowned: he had swum under the water to the opposite bank; the tears were only crocodile's; and the body placed on the bank had been obtained from a hospital.

With his share the 'dead' man went to Paris, where he quickly spent it. Having a disinclination for honest labour, he thought he would 'do'

the companies a second time. He got to Liverpool, and there made an application to a London office for an insurance of two thousand pounds on the life of a gentleman, a commercial traveller, on whose behalf permission was sought to extend the privilege of travelling to America. The life was found to be a good average one, and the permission was given. Only a few months afterwards, application was made for the money: the insured gentleman had been drowned in one of the American lakes. Death and identity seemed clearly established, and the office signified its willingness to pay the money at the end of the usual three months. It transpired afterwards that this was all a cleverly worked swindle; the 'traveller' had not been out of England; and the American part of the business had been done by another rascal.

A man whose initials are given as C—D—insured his life for sums amounting to ten thousand pounds. A year afterwards, his death was represented as having occurred at one of our fashionable watering-places; and after a very full investigation, with the depositions of ten witnesses, who swore to their belief of his having been drowned, and of four additional, who proved his identity, the companies paid the sum on his policies. Two years after his supposed death, he turned up at his native place.

Very similar to this fraud was that of the landed proprietor who insured his life for fourteen thousand pounds, who was thought to have been drowned, his clothes being found on the banks of a deep river, and who really died five years later in America.

FULFILMENT.

ALL things fulfil their purpose, low or high;
There is no failure; Death can never mar
The least or greatest of the things that are;
Until our work is done, we cannot die;
When it is done, it matters not how nigh
May be the night-time that is never far,
That long ere sunset lights the evening star,
Throws its still shadow up into the sky.

To-day shall end what yesterday begun;
What we are planning others yet may build;
The leaves may wither, but the tree shall grow;
And though, at last, we leave our work undone,
Our life will not the less be all fulfilled,
Our work will all be even finished so.

A. ST J. ADCOCK.

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THE HOUSE OF COMMONS LOBBY.

BY A LOBBYIST.

THE Lobby of the House of Commons to-day is a very different place from what it was, say, ten years since, or even less than that. At the present time the Inner Lobby—or Members' Lobby, as it is sometimes called, in order to distinguish it from the Central Hall—is reserved for members of the two Houses of Parliament and ex-members of the Commons. In addition to these there are a certain number of persons who may perhaps be called without offence professional politicians. They include the chief organisers and wire-pullers of the various political parties; journalists representing the chief London and provincial papers and the Press Agencies; a few Parliamentary agents; and others interested in the promotion of Private Bills; and the Private Secretaries of Ministers and ex-Ministers of the Crown, though not those of private members of Parliament. The names of these selected few are placed upon the lobby list which the Sergeant-at-arms controls, and which he can, and does, revise from time to time as may be thought fit.

But before the scare, or, as some prefer to call it, the alleged scare, that followed the dynamite outrages at Westminster and elsewhere in the last decade, the *entrée* to the Members' Lobby of the House of Commons was by no means a special or an exceptional privilege. Even to this day, indeed, when the exclusion of all 'strangers,' and persons having 'no right there,' is carried out almost to the point of fastidiousness by the officials, who certainly do not shrink from their duties in this matter—even to this day intelligent people may be found who will tell that they have a perfect right to enter the lobby because they were in the habit of doing so a few years since without any special license or order from Mr Sergeant-at-arms or Mr Speaker. The editor of a daily journal recently told me that he meant to go down to Lobbyland one day and look up some of his old friends in the House. I

assured him that to carry out such a project successfully he would have to procure an order from a member to see the precincts of the House. A ticket for the Speaker's Gallery, or for one of the choice seats 'under the Gallery,' would carry him through the lobby; but he would not be suffered to stand or walk about there for more than a minute or two. But my friend scoffed lightly at the idea of going to all this trouble for nothing. A few years ago, he declared, he was wont to come and go as he desired whilst the House was sitting. Lobby lists and lobby privileges he declined to believe in. Nobody used to stop him then; nobody was at all likely to stop him now. And yet I feel sure that that incredulous one has as good a chance of 'lobbying' under such conditions as he has of walking into the House itself, past Mr Jarratt, Mr Jennings, and past, in short, every watchful official, taking Mr Speaker's chair and putting the question on the night of a great party debate. Why, to win the narrow way leading from the Central Hall to the Members' Lobby, he would have to exert a strength at least equal to that of Sandow or Samson. Half-a-dozen stalwart constables and other officials would be on his track in a moment. He would be seized and ignominiously lugged back over the magic line. Even were he, by much guile and by deep-laid plots, to find his way through the swing-door of the lobby, his presence would be instantly noticed, and he would be chivied off in a trice.

The precise reason for this rigid exclusion of strangers from the Members' Lobby may not at first sight appear quite clear or quite reasonable; for people are, it may be argued, admitted to the Central Hall and elsewhere within the precincts of the House. After a very mild examination, they have merely to declare that they have come to look after a member, and to show that their bag—if they happen to have one—contains harmless matter. The dynamite scare, despite the alleged Walsall revival, can scarcely be said to exist at the present time; and even if it did, the accredited and recognised private secretaries of

members of Parliament would scarcely be excluded as possible members of a physical force brotherhood. But then, on the other hand, it may be admitted that the line must be drawn somewhere. If the public at the present time were to be admitted indiscriminately, the unfortunate member of Parliament would—especially if he represented a metropolitan constituency—be pestered out of his wits by clients on every conceivable errand and mission. There would be scarcely standing-room in the small Members' Lobby. The Sergeant-at-arms is therefore strongly backed up by the whole House in the strict manner in which he keeps the lobby clear of 'strangers.'

What, it may be asked by those who are comparatively unversed in the arts of party politics, and who never can make out how 'things get into the newspapers'—what is the precise use and object of this lobby which it is such a privilege for anybody save a member to enter? Well, the lobby has various uses and usages. It can still boast a neat little bar—a bar where good sound liquor is to be obtained at a moderate charge, together with various nutritious edibles, such as hard-boiled eggs, sandwiches, and light confections. At this bar, it is but fair to say, there has never been much drinking or 'standing' of drinks. Occasionally a wearied legislator would in the intervals of debate, or after letting off a speech, rush out thither, bolt a few morsels of food and dash off a glass of dry sherry or a small brandy-and-soda. Mr Balfour himself was in past sessions a familiar figure almost every day at the bar. The Chief Secretary would glide out of the chamber after the storm and stress of question-time, and restore the inner man with a glass of wine and a biscuit or a cup of the beverage 'that cheers but not inebriates.' In these, his biscuit and sherry moments he had a kind word and a welcome recognition for those of his colleagues who might desire a few moments' chat with him. It is related, indeed, that the bar was in special requisition during the debates upon the ill-starred Publicans' Compensation Clause in Mr Goschen's Bill of 1890. The weather was sultry at that period, it may be recollected, and the discussion often quite fiery. But we are going to change all this. The lobby bar, with its alcoholic liquors, its rice puddings—those puddings are said to be particularly good—and its light confectionery, is to be swept away. Local Option in the Commons will relegate it to a more secluded spot within the walls of Westminster.

The House of Commons lobby is a kind of recreation ground where members of Parliament may take a little mild exercise. The air here is perhaps purer and fresher in hot summer days than in the chamber itself, and there is room to stretch the limbs and take a small 'constitutional.' The party whips, notably Sir Herbert Maxwell, may be seen on most days when an important division is impending walking up and down the tessellated pavement; and one or two well-known members, such as Sir Henry Fletcher and Mr Broadhurst, clearly affect the lobby for purposes of health and gentle exercise. The terrace is more adapted for the latter purpose; but lately it has become somewhat unpopular, owing to the supposed prevalence of the dreaded influenza microbe on the river side of the House!

Then the lobby appears to possess a kind of pacifying and softening influence. Partisans who in the chamber itself seem to be on the most strained terms, and who often hurl defiance at one another across the narrow space which separates the two hostile armies, meet in the lobby and enter into amicable conversation. It is here that the 'black Tory' meets the 'New Radical,' and as likely as not accosts him with a friendly smile. Men seem glad to lay aside the garment of partisanship for a few minutes in the lobby and the tea and smoking rooms of the Lower House. See! there is Mr Labouchere conversing with Sir John Gorst. Both are chatty and affable. Mr Tim Healy has just come up and joined them; and presently Mr Walter Long, like Sir John a member of the Government, comes up and joins the trio for a few moments. Yet in the House, likely enough, the Liberal or the Nationalist member has just been fiercely attacking the Ministry; whilst it is almost certain that the member for Northampton will in his next platform speech describe the action of Her Majesty's Government as detestable. Party politics is clearly a game, and not an over-serious one either!

The lobby, needless to say, is the land of much light Parliamentary gossip. What course the Ministry or the leaders of the Opposition are going to take with regard to such and such a Bill, Motion, or Committee, is here discussed, and criticised by the private member with great zest. The lines of the Chancellor's next Budget are foreshadowed by the political prophets; and the latest rumour about a 'Cave' or revolt finds currency here if anywhere. A certain amount of this gossip is well founded; though the greater part is commonly described by Ministers (who do not love their programmes and policies to be forestalled) as 'totally unfounded,' or 'quite inaccurate,' or 'entirely misleading.' Few Ministers or members of the Government, with the exception of the whips, who are of course there in order to prevent members slipping away from divisions, are habitués of the lobby. They occasionally pass through it, looking quite bowed down and oppressed with national cares and responsibilities, always walking very fast, and usually having an armful of blue-books and Parliamentary papers. Occasionally they are called out thither to consult with one of their supporters from the Upper Chamber; and more frequently you may see them hurrying to and fro between the chamber and the little room sacred to the chief whip. But there is little opportunity of button-holing a Cabinet Minister in the lobby and drawing him into an explanation of the Ministerial policy. Nor do the ex-ministers affect the lobby greatly. The writer can only recollect having seen Mr Gladstone lobbying on one occasion during the present Parliament. Earl Spencer may be seen here occasionally; Sir William Harcourt a little more frequently; and from time to time Mr John Morley, Sir George Trevelyan, and Mr Bryce. Of Ministers, the figure of the Premier is the least familiar of all in the territory of the House of Commons. Perhaps he has seen enough of it in past times. The stalwart forms of Mr Whitbread, Sir William Barttelot, and Sir Charles Milner—all well above six feet in height—are

familiar here, as is the remarkable figure of Sir Richard Temple, whom *Punch* so loves to portray. The blind member for Ossory, led about by his little son, is rarely absent for a week together. He now remains, since the deaths of Mr Fawcett, once Postmaster-general, and Mr Robertson, the late member for Brighton, the single sightless legislator in the Lower House.

A few hours in lobbyland, when some important party question is expected to 'come on' in the course of the day, will give, indeed, a good idea of the personal side of the House of Commons. It has inspired the pen of many a journalist; for the lobby of the Commons is sometimes far more interesting, and far fuller of life and animation, as well as of members, than the House itself, with its fast-emptying benches, its bored and drowsy occupants, and its halt and hesitating speakers.

In conclusion. The Members' Lobby is seen to advantage in the earlier hours of the Parliamentary day, especially at about half-past four or five o'clock, immediately after Ministers have gone through the ordeal of question-time. The last question on the list disposed of, a goodly crowd of members come trooping out of the House for a short breathing-space, and the buzz of many voices sounds in the ear. But it is seen at its very best at the conclusion of some great party contest; or when a pre-eminent debater, such as Mr Gladstone, Mr Chamberlain, or Mr Balfour, having resumed his seat after a rattling speech, one of the regular brigade of 'bores' vainly strives to obtain a hearing from a satiated and fast-emptying House.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XI.—A MYSTERIOUS DISCOVERY.

THE safe disposed of, there remained a cupboard, two tables full of drawers, twenty or thirty tin boxes. Checkley examined every one of these receptacles. In vain. There was not anywhere any trace of the certificates.

'Yet,' said Mr Dering, 'they must be somewhere. We have been hunting all the morning, and we have not found them. They are not in this room. Yet they must be somewhere. Certificates and such things don't fly away. They are of no use to any one. People don't steal certificates. I must have done something with them.'

'Did you take them home with you?'

'Why should I do that? I have no safe or strong-room at home.'

'Did you send them to the Bank for greater safety? To be sure, they would be no more safe there than here.'

'Go and ask. See the manager. Ask him if he holds any certificates of mine.'

The clerk turned to obey.

'No.' Mr Dering stopped him. 'What's the

good? If he held the things, there would have been dividends. Yet what can I do?' For the first time in his life the lawyer felt the emotion that he had often observed in clients at times of real disaster. He felt as if there was nothing certain: not even Property: as if the Law itself, actually the Law—was of no use. His brain reeled: the ground was slipping under his feet, and he was falling forward through the table, and the floor and the foundation—forward and down—down—down. 'What can I do?' he repeated. 'Checkley, go. See the manager. There may be something to find out. I can't think properly. Go.'

When the clerk left him, he laid his head upon his hands and tried to put things quite clearly before himself. 'Where can the certificates be?' he asked himself, repeating this question twenty times. He was quite conscious that if he had been consulted on such a point by a client, he would have replied with the greatest readiness, suggesting the one really practical thing to do. For himself he could advise nothing. 'Where can the certificates be? Nobody steals corporation stock and gas companies' shares. They are no good if you do steal them. They can't be sold without the authority of the owner: he has got to sign transfer papers: if they were stolen, the dividends would go on being paid to the owner just the same. Besides'—Somewhere about this point he bethought him of the Bank book. If the stock had been sold, the money would appear to his credit. He snatched the book and looked at it. No; there was no entry which could possibly represent the sale of stock. He knew what every entry meant, and when the amount was paid in: his memory was perfectly clear upon this point.

Checkley's suggestion occurred to him. Had he taken the certificates home with him? He might have done for some reason which he had now forgotten. Yes; that was the one possible explanation. He must have done. For a moment he breathed again—only for a moment, because he immediately reflected that he could not possibly do such a thing as take those securities to a house where he never transacted any business at all. Then he returned to his former bewilderment and terror. What had become of them? Why had he taken them out of the safe? Where had he bestowed them?

And why were there no dividends paid to him on these stocks? Why? He turned white with terror when he realised that if he got no more dividends, he could have no more stocks.

During a long professional career of fifty years, Mr Dering had never made a mistake—at least he thought so. If he had not always invested his money to the greatest profit, he had invested it safely. He did not get the interest that some City men expect, but he made no losses. He looked upon himself, therefore, as a man of great sagacity, whereas in such matters he was only a man of great prudence. Also, during this long period he was always in the enjoyment of a considerable income. Therefore, he had never known the least anxiety about money. Yet all his life he had been counselling other people in

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their anxieties. It was exactly as if a specialist in some mortal disease should be himself attacked by it. Or it was as if the bo'sun, whose duty it is to superintend the flogging, should be himself tied up.

Nothing came to him: no glimmer of light: not the least recollection of anything. Then he thought desperately, that perhaps if he were to imagine how it would be if somebody else, not himself at all, were to come to himself and lay the story before him as a solicitor, for advice. Or how it would be if he himself were to go to himself as a solicitor and put the case.

When Checkley came back, he found his master leaning back in his chair, his eyes wide open and staring at him as he opened the door—yet they saw nothing. Checkley stood under the gaze of those eyes, which saw him not. 'Good Lord!' he murmured. 'Is the time come? Is he going to die?'

His face was white. He seemed to be listening anxiously: his lips were parted. 'He's in a fit of some kind,' thought the old clerk.

He stood watching. He ought, perhaps, to have called for assistance. He did not think of it. He stood and watched, his face as pale as his master's. Was it the end? If so—we all think of ourselves first—what about his berth and salary?

Suddenly his master's eyes closed: he dropped his head: he heaved a deep sigh: he moved his head and opened his eyes. He was restored to himself. The fit, whatever it was, had passed.

'Checkley,' he said, 'I've been trying to put the thing to myself as if some other man—a client—was putting his case to me. I began very well. The other man came—that is, I myself called upon myself. I sat and heard my own story. I forget, somehow, what the story was'—he shook his head impatiently. 'Forget—forget—I always forget. But I remember that it wasn't the story I wanted him to tell. It was another story altogether. He didn't tell me what I wanted to know. That is—what has become of the certificates. I'm no nearer than I was. He made out that I was actually selling the certificates myself.'

'You're wandering a bit,' said Checkley, anxiously watching him. 'That's all. You'll be all right presently. You've bin shook up a bit, with the certificates and the notes and all. If I were you, I'd have a glass of something stiff.'

'No—no; I shall come round presently. Yes—that's it. I'm a good deal upset by this business. Somehow, I don't seem able to think clearly about it. Let me see'—he sighed heavily—'I think you went somewhere—somewhere—for me, before—before the other man came.'

'For Lord's sake, don't talk about the other man. There's no such person. Yes—I did go for you; I went to ask the manager of the Bank whether he held any stock for you.'

'The manager of the Bank. True. Well, and does he hold anything?'

'Not a scrap. Never had any.'

'Then Checkley'—Mr Dering dropped his hands helplessly—'what is to be done?'

'I don't know, I'm sure,' the clerk replied with equal helplessness. 'I never heard of such a thing before in all my life. Thirty-eight

thousand pounds! It can't be. Nobody ever heard of such a thing before. Perhaps they are about the place somewhere. Let's have another search.'

'No—no. It is useless. Why—I have had no dividends. The shares were all transferred, and nothing has been paid for them. The shares have been stolen. Checkley, I can't think. For the first time in my life, I can't think—I want some one to advise me. I must put the case in somebody's hands.'

'There's your young partner—a chance for him to show that he's worth his pay. Why don't you consult him, and then come back to the old plan of you and me? We're knocked a bit silly just at first; but the case'll come to us in the long run. You would have a partner—nothing would do but a partner. The boy's in his own room now, I suppose, with a crown upon his head and the clerks kneelin' around—as grand as you please. Send for him.'

Mr Dering nodded.

The partner, when he arrived a few minutes later, found the Chief walking about the room in uncontrollable agitation. On the table lay piled the whole contents of the safe. In front of it stood the ancient clerk, trembling and shaking—head, hands, knees, and shoulders—following the movements of his master with eyes full of anxiety and terror. This strange fit, this forgetfulness, this rambling talk about another man, this new restlessness, frightened him.

'You are come at last.' Mr Dering stopped and threw himself into his chair. 'Now, my partner, hear the case and resolve the difficulty for us, if you can.—Tell him, Checkley—or—stay; no. I will tell it myself. Either I have lost my reason and my memory, or I have been robbed.'

George stood at the table and listened. Something of the utmost gravity had happened. Never before had he seen his Chief in the least degree shaken out of his accustomed frugidity of calm. Now he was excited; his eyes were restless; he talked fast, he talked badly. He made half-a-dozen attempts to begin: he marshalled his facts in a slovenly and disorderly manner, quite unlike his usual clear arrangement: for fifty years he had been marshalling facts and drawing up cases, and at his own he broke down.

'I think I understand the whole,' said George, when his Chief paused and Checkley ceased to correct and to add. 'You had certificates representing investments to the amount of £38,000: these are gone, unaccountably gone: no dividends have been paid for some months, and your broker speaks of large transfers.'

'That's not all,' said Checkley. 'Tell him about the notes.'

'Yes. The fact may have some bearing upon the case. While we were looking for the certificates, and in order, I suppose, to complicate things and to bewilder me the more, we found in the safe the very notes—give me the bundle, Checkley—there they are—that were paid over the Bank counter to the man who forged my name eight years ago.'

'What? The case in which Athelstan Arundel was accused?'

'The same. There they are—you hold them in your hand—the very notes! Strange! on the

very day when I am threatened with another and a worse robbery! Yes—yes; the very notes!—the very notes! This is wonderful. Who put them there?

'How can I know?'

'Well—but in any case one thing is certain. Athelstan's name is cleared at last. You will tell his mother that.'

'Not at all,' said Checkley. 'Why shouldn't he put 'em in himself? I saw him edging up towards the safe'—

'Saw him edging—stuff and nonsense! His name is cleared. This will be joyful news to his mother and sisters.'

'Austin, get me back my certificates,' said Mr Dering; 'never mind those notes now. Never mind the joyful news. Never mind Athelstan's name; that can wait. The thought of him and the old forgery only bewilders my brain at this juncture. I cannot act. I cannot think. I feel as if I was blinded and stupefied. Act for me—think for me—work for me. Be my solicitor, George, as well as my partner.'

'I will do my best. It is difficult at first to understand—for what has happened? You cannot find—you have mislaid—certain papers. Certain dividends which were due do not appear to have been paid: and your brokers, Ellis and Northcote, have used a phrase in a letter which you do not understand. Would it not be well to get them here; or shall I go into the City and ask them exactly what they meant and what has been done?'

'If I could remember any transactions with them during the last six months. But I cannot, except a small purchase of Corporation stock last month—a few hundreds! And here are the papers belonging to that.'

'Which of the partners do you deal with?'

'The old man, Ellis—he's always acted for me. He has been my friend for close on fifty years.'

'Well, I will send for him, and tell him to come as soon as possible, and to bring along with him all the letters and papers he has.'

'Good, good,' said Mr Dering, more cheerfully. 'That is practical. I ought to have thought of that at the very outset. Now we shall get along. The first thing is to arrive at the facts—then we can act. If it was another man's case, I should have known what to do. But when it is your own—and to lose the certificates, and when a sum of nearly forty thousand pounds is at stake—it looks like losing the money itself—and the feeling of uncertainty'—

'All taken together, becomes rather overwhelming. Of course I should like to see the letter-book, and we must run through the letters to see if they throw any light upon the business. Perhaps the papers themselves may be found among them.'

The presence of this young man, cheerful, decided, taking practical measures at once, cheered up the lawyer, and steadied his shattered nerves. But Checkley the clerk looked on gloomily. He replaced the papers in the safe, and stood beside it, as if to guard it; he followed the movements of the new partner with watchful, suspicious eyes; and he muttered sullenly between his teeth.

First George sent a telegram to the City for the broker. Then, while the old clerk still stood

beside the safe, and Mr Dering continued to show signs of agitation uncontrollable, sometimes walking about the room and sometimes sitting at his table, sometimes looking into the empty shelves of the safe, he began to look through the copied letters, those, that is, which had gone out of Mr Dering's office. He searched for six months, working backwards.

'Nothing for six months,' he said.—'Checkley, give me the letters.' He went through these. They were the letters received at the office, all filed, endorsed, and dated. There was not one during the letters of six months which he examined which had anything to do with the sales of stocks and shares.

'If,' he said, 'you had written to Ellis and Northcote, a copy of your letter would be here in this book. If they had written to you, these letters would be among these bundles. Very well. Since no such letters are here, it is clear that no such letters were written. Therefore, no sales.'

'Then,' said Mr Dering, 'where are my certificates? Where are my dividends?'

'That we shall see. At present, we are only getting at the facts.'

Then Mr Ellis, senior partner of Ellis and Northcote, arrived, bearing a small packet of papers. Everybody knew Mr Ellis, of Ellis and Northcote, one of the most respectable stock-brokers in London—citizen and Loriner. He belongs eminently to the class called worthy: an old gentleman, carefully dressed, of smooth and polished appearance, pleasing manners, and great integrity. Nobody could look more truly *integer* *valie* than Mr Ellis. Nor does his private practice belie his reputation and his appearance. His chin and lips looked as if they could not possibly endure the burden of beard or moustache: his sentiments, one observed at a glance, would certainly be such as one expects from a citizen of his respectability.

'Here I am, dear sir,' he said cheerfully—'here I am, in immediate obedience to your summons. I hope that there is nothing wrong; though your request that I would bring with me certain papers certainly made me a little apprehensive.'

'There is, I fear, a good deal wrong,' said Mr Dering. 'Sit down, my old friend.—Give Mr Ellis a chair, Checkley.—Austin, you will tell him what he wants to know.'

'You wrote to Mr Dering yesterday recommending a certain investment'—

'I certainly did. A very favourable opportunity it is, and a capital thing it will prove.'

'You mentioned in your letter certain transfers and sales which, according to your letter, he had recently effected.'

'Certainly.'

'What sales were they?'

Mr Ellis looked at his papers. 'February last—Sale of various stock, all duly enumerated here, to the value of £6500. March last, sale of various stock, also all duly enumerated, to the value of £12,000 odd. April last, sale of stock to the value of £20,000—more or less—realising'—

'You note the dates and amounts, Austin?'

said Mr Dering. 'Certainly. We will, however, get the dates and the amounts more exactly in a moment.—Now, Mr Ellis, of course you received instruc-

tions with the papers themselves. Were they in writing or by word of mouth?

'In writing. By letters written by Mr Dering himself.'

'Have you got these letters with you?'

A FADED PALACE.

THERE are in some suburbs of London neighbourhoods where one may meet with terraces, streets, and squares whose houses bear the palpable symptoms of having fallen from a high estate to baser uses. An air of faded gentility hangs over all, inducing a feeling of sadness, even though the spectator be the least reflective of his kind. Such a sentiment is intensified a hundredfold when in place of a row of shabby-genteel dwellings, whose former inhabitants never rose above mediocrity, one contemplates a building within whose walls history has been made, and great ones of the earth have gathered together, given over to silence and desolation, if not actual decay. Even in busy London many such might be discovered; but nowhere probably in England could a more striking example be found than at that elysium of Bank-holiday Cockneyism on the banks of 'Thames' silver flood'—Hampton Court. It is but an hour's journey from the bustling Strand; yet one may pass through its echoing saloons with no further company than the smirking 'beauties' and stolid cavaliers who gaze from the canvas of Lely, Holbein, or Zuccherò. Sundays, however, must be excepted, for does not the youthful son of toil then come with his Dulcinea to feast the sight on works of bygone art, and, perchance, to snatch the fearful pleasure of a moment's courting in sly corners which have listened to the sentiments of be-furrowed courtiers and the rustle of fluted fans!

These lofty rooms, on whose panelled walls the festoons look as fresh as the day they left the carver of Gibbons, whose majestic mantel-pieces still stand brilliant in their statuary marble, and whose old Delft ware and Dutch stove-backs recall the monarch who left a 'glorious, pious, and immortal memory' to the natives of London-derry, are full to overflowing with recollections of a stately and brilliant past. As one passes from the 'King's Guardroom' to the 'King's Drawing-room' and the 'King's Bedchamber,' and so on through apparently interminable apartments, there appear before the mind's eye crowds of men much bewigged and belaced; of women in satin and diamonds, stately, courteous, and severe, trying, as it were, to sink the memory of the profligate following of 'Old Rowley;' and the miserably bigoted one of Queen Mary's unhappy father in the pleasing decorousness of William of Orange's court. Poor man! Did he really have to sleep in that dreadful bed beneath the ceiling resplendent with the 'sprawling saints' of Verrio and Laguerre? How very uncomfortable must have been his slumber in that gigantic structure with its lavender brocade and plumes of feathers! It stands now in curious company for so decent a liver as the victor of the Boyne. By some strange anomaly, they have hung Charles's fair ones round the walls, those simpering, attitudinising frailties, whose portraits make one wonder, not that the court of England was then so wild

and base, but rather how it managed to keep even as decent as it did.

And Queen Mary, she, too, was doomed to repose in a bedstead of almost equally terrifying proportions, which recalls that graceful little anecdote of Dutch William's first introduction to his cousin, how the young Prince stood bowing to the juvenile lady as she lay in her bed—perhaps just such another as this one—to the amusement of the parents concealed behind the curtain. It is a little gleam of romance shed on a life not much associated with aught but stern realities. It was to Hampton Court the king was riding when his horse made that fatal stumble which gave us 'Good Queen Anne;' and he was first carried to his apartment there, though insisting to be removed the same night to Kensington, despite the danger—why, one cannot say, unless that ceiling was too much for his nerves.

A great charm of these desolate rooms is the odd and unexpected manner in which one comes upon stray ornaments or pieces of furniture in all sorts of dark and out-of-the-way corners. An armoire, a cabinet, or a folding-table, it may be, looking as though never disturbed for these two hundred years; while in one dark corridor a clock—without hands—seems in its monotonous ticking to be a very echo of the past, and may not improbably have been going there through all its existence without winding up.

After all, though, it is the pictures one comes to Hampton Court to see. A few there are very good, some atrociously bad, and many indifferent. There is one portrait of Henry VIII., which is perhaps the most interesting of the whole collection. The king is seated beneath a canopy whose decorations show Holbein in every curve. One hand rests on the shoulder of his puny son; Jane Seymour sits stolidly near; while to right and left stand Elizabeth and Mary, the latter's placid countenance showing few of those characteristics which earned for her as queen so unenviable an adjective. Through an opening to the right we see Henry's court fool, Will Somers, with a monkey on his back; while to the left the mountebank's spouse completes the septette. It is altogether a stilted and stiff production; but what a portrait of the king! One may fairly assume it to be an accurate likeness; and if so, what a wretch he must have been. Sensuality and cruelty appear to struggle for the mastery in this visage, which the German painter has left on canvas for us to study and be warned by.

Near to this is Elizabeth 'in a fancy dress,' from the brush of Zuccherò. If the Virgin Queen were anything like this angular auburn virago, her poets and courtiers must indeed have been, to put it in vulgar nineteenth-century English, humbugs of the first water.

Raphael is here, limned by his own hand, a picture which acts as a shock to those who have imaged the divine painter of Urbino as a handsome man. Of the Carolian ladies, the best known and least respected of the painted assembly at Hampton Court, one can but fancy that the painter has certainly not erred on the side of fidelity in his endeavours to please their royal patron. They *cannot* have been so very much alike; though, doubtless, the taste for scanty clothing was not peculiar to one. Very different in

this respect are those spick-and-span portraits by Lawrence and Romney which fill one room. Here is 'Farmer George' as a field-marshal on a prancing charger; while his scapegrace son waves a sabre with an arm very much out of drawing. Queen Charlotte, too, looks complacently down, as though to say: 'See! I am in my Sunday clothes, and the artist has made the most of them.' But what does this lady here who looks so pleasantly at you out of a graceful oval frame? 'Madame de Pompadour, by Greuze.' This delightful bit of painting evokes memories more splendid, and yet almost more painful, than is the case with any other in the whole gallery, unless it be that magnificent full-length of Louis Seize which faces his father's 'belle amie.' She looks a fitting sample of the careless, graceful folly of her time, as she sits at tambour-work in a flowered silk gown; but how this favourite of Louis le Bien Aimé came to find a home in this solemn prosaic palace is a mystery. Was this delightful Greuze a spoil of war, or was it a New-year's gift to Madame de Walmoden? Certain she looks sadly out of place in an apartment where perchance Caroline of Anspach played cards on that evening when her ill-fated daughter-in-law was dragged off by 'Fred, who was alive and is dead,' to give birth to a child an hour or two afterwards at Kensington.

Lord Hervey fluttered through these rooms and filled them with small-talk; hither Walpole brought the latest politics; while 'Son Horace's' letters were doubtless read and admired by Mary Bellenden and her companion maids of honour; and all in these small, uncomfortable apartments, where now the dust accumulates and the holiday lounge drops crumbs from his sandwiches. Portraits, indeed, of past and gone notables surround one: Pale-faced Philip of Spain, by Velasquez; Charles the Unfortunate of England, very regal on his charger, yet with a far-away, sorrowful expression, as though he partly foresaw that chilly morning at Whitehall. It is a noble picture. Who but Van Dyck could have painted it? Then there is that equally unfortunate and poetical nobleman, the Earl of Surrey, who, if he ever appeared before the fair Geraldine in the startling red costume in which the artist has depicted him, must have made that lady's eyes blink again. He hangs alone in a gallery whose walls are else covered with 'worm-eaten tapestry.'

If the visitor have a taste for 'fancy subjects,' he may feast to surfeiting: Venuses with redundant charms, Diana and the hunted Actæon, nymphs, graces (and disgraces), and a whole progeny of classical, semi-classical, and pseudo-classical beings cover the walls, some languishing from the graceful pencil of Correggio, others with an amplitude of proportion and ruddiness of hue traceable only to the brush and palette of Rubens. And so one wanders on through a succession of little chambers, each darker and dingier than its predecessor, mere closets, whose gloom suits best the canvases hung there, although a few charming Lancrets are cruelly stowed away 'out of sight' and probably 'out of mind.'

From the windows there is a view of a quadrangle so quiet and so deserted that one can hardly realise the time when laughter echoed

through the arcades, and gay scarfs fluttered in what little sunshine could creep to the fountain in the centre. The circular frescoes which are over the windows have long since faded into one nondescript tint, and modern hands are carving fresh heads on the entablatures of the arches, grotesque masks which in their whiteness stand out startlingly, the only modern handiwork on this old forsaken spot.

What is left of the Tudor portions of the palace is picturesque enough; yet one regards it more as an architectural curiosity than a place where men and women have lived, loved, and suffered. The time is so distant, and we know really so little of it, whereas that other and newer age is to some extent still in touch with our own. We can feel with its people and appreciate their doings, which is the reason why William's Hampton Court is more interesting to us than Wolsey's.

Below the old square tower with its quaint clock, and we are on Hampton green again. The busy bridge and boat-covered river recall us from the hour spent with the past, and we leave the faded palace to those residents who, themselves being living remembrances of former splendour, are possibly the most suitable inhabitants for such a place.

A BOYCOTTED BABY.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.

By P. L. McDERMOTT, Author of 'Julius Vernon,' &c.

CHAP. I.—THE MARRIAGE.

TWENTY-FIVE years ago Matthew Bulbous had forsaken the plough in his native parish and come up to London to make his fortune. His education consisted of a good knowledge of the value of land, and of little more; but the deficiency was supplied by a hard head and a determination to make all the money he could at the expense of others; for he had no capital to start with beyond a couple of hundreds which he borrowed to open an office and advertise it.

He made his fortune. When he commenced business as an 'estate agent, auctioneer, and valuer,' money was being made in the nation at a rate almost unprecedented, and the 'new men' wanted country estates to give them position and social consequence. Hence there was great buying on the side of the rich, and selling on the side of the embarrassed; and there was correspondingly great business on the part of the agents. To avail himself of this tide of business prosperity Matthew Bulbous worked hard, and his energy and determination had their reward. Then came a turn in the tide, when business grew depressed, and rents could no longer be paid as of old, and estates, old and new, came crashing into the market. Matthew Bulbous found this state of ruin as profitable as the former spell of prosperity. Estates had to be sold, instead of bought; and before they left his hands, Matthew Bulbous wrung from them the last guinea he could extract for surveys, valuations, reports, expenses, and commissions; and many a hapless seller turned pale when Bulbous and Bore's account was presented to him, with the amount already deducted from the 'deposit'

which it is customary for the agent to receive from the purchaser. As for the partner Bore, Matthew Bulbous had devoured him years ago.

Matthew was a rich man now, and—in his spare hours—a man of great local standing at Blackheath—churchwarden, chairman of meetings, a tower of eminence in the locality. He kept a fine house, had a wife and daughter, and a son who resided in chambers in London and was reading for the bar. This son was his great hope, and in him all his ambition was centred. He had been foolish enough once to take a house in town for the 'season,' with the desire of making a position in society. In such a case a man is made or marred by his wife. Matthew Bulbous did not spare money in this matter. But Mrs Bulbous failed. She was not worthy of him. She was shy and timid, incapable of rising to the position provided for her. Her daughter was formed of the same abject material. Mr Bulbous thenceforth despised them both, and centred all his hopes in his son. Matthew Bulbous had a great deal to do with gentlemen in the way of business, and was a good judge of one. Being uneducated himself, he strenuously held that a gentleman was not made by education but by 'blood.' When his son James left the university, Matthew perceived that he was undoubtedly a gentleman as well as a scholar, and the fact furnished him with food for a good deal of thought.

'If I have failed myself,' was his frequent reflection, 'through his mother's incapacity, Jem shall make up for it. I will take care that he marries blood!' Which meant that the son should not be matrimonially handicapped, as the father had been.

Fortune—which, in the case of such men as Matthew Bulbous, means the quick and resolute seizure of opportunities—favoured his aspirations. Whilst the young man was reading law, his father, all unknown to him, was arranging for him a matrimonial alliance with the daughter and only child of an Earl. To be sure, from another point of view, the match might not be thought brilliant; but an Earl's daughter is not to be had every day. Lord Polonius was a man of shady reputation, who found himself obliged to bring his burdened patrimony into the market. The estate was mortgaged for more than it was now worth, and little likely to attract a purchaser. After lying on his hands for some time, an idea gleamed upon Matthew Bulbous of buying the estate himself and giving it to his son. Jem was a gentleman and would fit the position. The position, too, would give him an added advantage. Now, in his own line, quite unsuspected by Matthew Bulbous, Earl Polonius was quite a match for that sharp man of business. He penetrated the man's ambition, and astutely turned it to his own advantage. To the last day of his life Matthew Bulbous will never be able to recollect clearly what it was that first suggested to him the idea of starting his son in life as the husband of Lady Jessalinda St George, or how it was that he and Lord Polonius first understood each other's views on the subject. It was probably due to the superiority of the Earl's genius; but this does not matter. Matthew Bulbous bought the estate of Kirby St George, and was obliged, under the special circumstances, to give Lord Polonius ten

thousand pounds over and above the amount of the mortgages. This transaction ratified the agreement between them that, subject to the concurrence of the parties, Lady Jessalinda and Mr James Bulbous should be married—the latter assuming, by the generous condescension of the Earl, the family name and arms of St George.

Matthew Bulbous was a very proud man one morning to find on his breakfast table a polite note from the Earl asking him to dine at Hanover Square to be introduced to Lady Jessalinda. This meant that Lady Jessalinda had given her consent, which Matthew had quite expected, of course, knowing Lady Jessalinda's age and prospects.

'I'm going—ahem—to dine with Earl Polonius, and his daughter, Lady Jessalinda St George, this evening,' he observed to his wife and daughter with a bad assumption of nonchalance.

Mrs Bulbous, a gentle and very sweet-faced lady, and her daughter started with a faint 'Oh!' and looked at the master in some anxious doubt as to what was expected of them in the way of reply.

'I just mentioned it,' he said carelessly, 'because I shall ask them to dinner here one day next week, and I expect you to be prepared.'

'Shall there be any others, Matt?' the wife timidly asked.

'No, except Jem. It will be quite a private family affair. You needn't be nervous about it, because—— But that's enough for the present.'

He left the room, but soon came back, which showed that the great matter was more in his mind than he desired them to suppose.

'Of course,' he remarked, 'you are not so familiar with the higher ranks as I am—meeting them every day in business, and all that—so that you must not be fussy or nervous. Put on some dignity, and be at your ease, as if you were used to it. I'll bring home a book for you both to study up. I won't have them think,' he added firmly, 'that we are overwhelmed with the honour. I'll—I'll have my eye upon both of you, remember. Lord Polonius and Lady Jessalinda are getting the best of the bargain, as you shall see in good time. That's all,' he said, turning to go away. 'Except this, Mary: you are not to call me "Matt" when they are here—it isn't the thing. Call me "Mr Bulbous," or—or,' he added, somewhat doubtfully, 'or "Mr Bulbous, my love," if you like; and I will do the same. Of course Agnes will not speak unless she is spoken to.'

Leaving the two ladies a little pink in the face, he went away to his business. It was mysterious to them, but they had to await his pleasure to explain what it meant. Bulbous was cross and impatient when he came home in the evening to dress, because he was conscious of being nervous and of betraying it. He had never before been an invited guest at a lord's house. He was to be the only guest, too, which, to begin with, was not giving him what he considered a fair start. Matthew Bulbous was thinking less of Lord Polonius and Lady Jessalinda than of the terrible, silent, observant menials.

When he returned at half-past eleven, it was plain to be seen that the dinner had gone off

well; perhaps Matthew Bulbous had discovered hitherto unknown powers of rising to the occasion. He had dropped into a club on his way home, and casually mentioned to several men he knew that he had been dining with Earl Polonius and Lady Jessalinda; he had even hinted at more. He was therefore in good humour when he got home.

'Mary,' he said to his wife, as he flung himself in an easy-chair and stretched out his legs, 'did you ever know me to fail in anything that I undertook?'

'No, Matt,' was the gentle reply.

'I never yet,' he continued reflectively, 'got my eye on a property that was doomed for the market that I didn't in the end have the selling of it and all the business the thing was worth—ay, though I waited for years, never losing sight of it for a day. That's the way to succeed: be patient, keeping steady on the track, and you'll run down your game in the end. Well, I have succeeded again. It's a big thing, but I have succeeded.'

'I am sure you have, Matt, whatever it is.'

'But you don't dream what it is. What's the good of being rich if you can't stand high? If it hadn't been for— Well, there; I won't talk about it now,' he said generously, noticing the look of pain in his wife's face. 'That was a failure; but if you are not capable yourself of succeeding, why shouldn't your children rise? Isn't Agnes there, with a bit of money, good enough for any swell in the Guards, I'd like to know, if she only had the ability to work herself up? But she hasn't, and we'll have her wanting to marry an attorney or something of that sort, one fine day. That's how they treat us.'

Mother and daughter exchanged a glance and inwardly trembled; for they had a dread secret between them relating to a curate, which it was terrible to think of Mr Bulbous discovering.

'What do you suppose, now, is going to happen?' he said, after a pause. 'Jem is going to marry Lady Jessalinda St George, Earl Polonius's only daughter and—and heiress,' he thought it as well to add, to round off the description. 'What do you think of that, now?'

Matthew Bulbous had a very large and deep mouth, ordinarily concealed underneath a heavy moustache. Now, as he lay back enjoying the effect of this announcement upon his wife and daughter, that feature extended itself in a smile which lent a startling expression to his face.

'And there's another thing,' he continued at breakfast next morning, 'only I don't want it talked about just yet. I never thought of doing such a thing before, but I'll do it now: I'll do my part to act up to the new position. If I don't succeed in this thing,' he added, with a confident smile, 'it will be the first failure of my life.'

'You could not fail, Matt,' said the meek wife deferentially.

'I'll hardly fail. I'm going in for Parliament, then; that's what it is. The member for this division is going to be made a judge. I mainly helped to carry his election; and it will be odd if I can't carry my own. I've promised Polonius,' he said familiarly, 'and he will get

me the official support of the Party. Jem, of course, goes in for his county the first vacancy.'

These matters being above the understanding of the ladies, were put out of their thoughts the moment he left the house. The absorbing subject of Jem's marriage engrossed them.

'Lady—Jessalinda—St George!' said Agnes Bulbous, below her breath.

Mrs Bulbous said nothing, being engaged with her thoughts. Perhaps she would have better liked her son to find a wife lower down in rank; perhaps she had a mother's misgivings as to the happiness likely to result from this kind of marriage, but of one thing she was certain: her son Jem was worthy of a princess.

Meanwhile Agnes had brought in a large gilt book from her father's room, and was turning eagerly over the pages. 'Here it is, mamma. "Claudius Hector D'Erebus Henry Maximilian, fourth Earl and Baron"—let me see; oh, yes—"married 13th March 1852 the Honourable Georgiana Lucia Louise Tremendus (who died August 1854), and by her had issue, Lady Jessalinda Hesperia Gwendolen Alice Georgiana"—good gracious, mamma!' Agnes looked pale.

Leaving the ladies immersed in the interesting discovery that Lady Jessalinda had reached the mature age of thirty-five, let us follow Mr Bulbous to London.

When a man rises to a higher sphere, he owes to it the duty of lopping off all connections which are not calculated to adorn that elevated plane. One such Matthew Bulbous had in his mind this morning to be rid of at once. This was a brother, who in several ways had been useful to him in his business for a number of years; but who, on his usefulness ceasing with the fuller growth of the house, had taken to dissipation on an allowance made to him for that purpose. Joseph Bulbous proved of tough vitality; but Matthew would not now have him about London any longer.

Matthew found this brother in a lodging in Chelsea, sitting over a fire after a late breakfast.

'I don't think this life is doing well with you, Joe,' he said, sitting down and looking curiously at the dissipated face of his brother. 'You asked me, once, to send you to Canada. Perhaps I ought to have done so—I hardly know.'

The colour rose for an instant to the other's forehead, and faded again. 'If you had sent me then,' he replied, without looking up, 'it might have been different. I don't think it matters now. I am hardly fit to make a new start; though, if it comes to that,' he added bitterly, 'I have never made one.'

'No, you never have. It wasn't in you, Joe.'

'Wasn't in me?' answered Joe, with a flash. 'Have I ever had the chance? If you had left me at home on the farm, I might have done well enough. But you wanted me for your own purposes; and after making use of me all those years, and allowing me no chance of doing anything for myself, you say—it wasn't in me! No one knows better than you, Matt, whether I've ever had a chance or not. It didn't suit your interests to let me find one; and like a fool, I did your work, until you used up the best part of my life.'

'Well, I am going to give you a chance now,' replied Matthew, not in the least moved. 'You

are of no use to yourself or anybody else in England. I will send you to one of the colonies.'

'It is not from any interest in me that you propose doing so,' said the other, who knew his brother well. 'Suppose I refuse to go?'

'Then you may starve. I daresay they would pitch you out of here in a week,' observed Matthew quietly. He knew his power over the broken-down man, and so did the latter.

Joseph Bulbous turned pale, and gave his brother a look which indicated more hate than fear. He made one or two efforts to speak, but evidently the quiet masterful presence of his brother was terrible to him. Then he turned quickly to a cupboard where there was brandy, and with shaking hand swallowed a draught of the liquor.

Matthew smiled under his heavy moustache; he saw how beaten the poor creature was.

'If I swallowed half of that stuff in the morning, Joe,' he observed good-humouredly, 'I should be fit for nothing all day. Joe, what an inside you must have!'

'Never mind,' said Joe, grown calmer. 'I don't mind saying I am quite ready to go. But why? At anyrate, I have never betrayed your confidence.'

There was no particular reason why Matthew Bulbous should make known to his brother the great family matter. But it gratified him to unbend a little, contrasting his own splendid success with the broken brother's abject failure.

'I am giving Kirby St George to Jem. He is going to marry Lady Jessalinda St George, and to assume the family name and arms. I am going into Parliament myself, and Jem will be in the first time there's a vacancy in his county. What will they think of all that, now, down in Bullworth?'

Bullworth was their native place. Matthew smiled widely as he spoke. Joseph ran his fingers through his thin unbrushed hair and for a minute looked dazed. He saw now why Matthew wanted to be rid of him. He was an undesirable connection. Yet he was naturally a cleverer man than his brother, and felt very bitterly that he had helped largely—in ways Matthew could not follow—to make that fortune, of which this was his share.

Now, as Joseph Bulbous realised the position, a gleam of quick intelligence shot from his rheumy eyes. Whilst Matthew was gazing at the ceiling, full of ambitious thoughts, his brother quietly flung a bombshell at his feet which blew the strong man in pieces through the roof. 'Matt,' he said, 'Jem is already married!'

Matthew Bulbous was blown very high indeed—into the very clouds—and it took him a considerable time to collect himself and return to the scene of the explosion. Then it struck him that the whole thing must have been merely a half-tipsy joke. 'It was the brandy, I suppose,' he remarked, wiping his forehead, 'that suggested that to you, Joseph. But it wasn't a very nice trick. Don't do it again. I'll let it pass for once; but you know I'm not a man to appreciate practical jokes.'

Joseph Bulbous knew of old how easy it was to frighten the tyrant of the family, though it was a dangerous thing to do. But at present he was on strong ground. James Bulbous was

married—had been six months married—as the father would have learned had he deemed it necessary to consult the son regarding the new matrimonial arrangement.

His face darkened. He rose and reached his brother with a stride, and grasping him by the collar, jerked him to his feet and shook him fiercely.

'Hands off!' cried Joseph Bulbous quickly, in a suppressed voice which sounded dangerous. Matthew at once dropped his hands by his side. 'Go and ask him.'

'Married—Jem married!' the elder brother exclaimed. He paused, for time to realise the possibility of so daring an act. He walked to the end of the room and back again, and then asked, in an ominously collected voice: 'Where does she live?'

'They have a small house—— No; I don't think I'll tell you just at present,' he answered, attentively regarding the other's eye. 'Go and see Jem, and let him give you the address, if he likes.'

Matthew Bulbous laughed. 'You ass! do you fancy that I would attempt her life?'

Whatever he thought, he gave no direct reply to this; but after thinking a minute, observed, with a grin: 'I think you had better, Matt, for your own sake, not seek to see Mrs Jem. She's a terror.'

'A—what?'

'A terror, Matt,' was the grave reply, 'especially when she is under certain influences. She'd tear you. Poor Jem; it is always the best sort of fellows they catch; but she was (and is still) good-looking—there's no denying that. No, no; take my advice, and give Mrs Jem a wide berth.'

Matthew Bulbous asked no more information. Joseph stood at the window watching the cab with a smile of malicious satisfaction as his brother drove away. 'That's one for you, Matt,' he remarked. 'I hope it will do you good.'

The revelation of his son being married, which he did not for a moment doubt, was a tremendous blow to Matthew Bulbous. Such defiance of his authority he had never thought of as possible. He was not a man to look for gratitude; but in return for all he had done for his son, he did claim unquestioning submission to his will and pleasure in all things. It was his undoubted right, he argued; and consequently he had looked for his son's acquiescence in the marriage scheme as a matter of course.

'Where should he be now,' said Matthew to himself, 'if it wasn't for me? Why, at the tail of a Bullworth plough!'

And to think of a young man who by rights ought to be ploughing the fields, defying his father by marrying a music-hall actress, and thereby frustrating his father's design of making him a country gentleman and the husband of an Earl's daughter—it was too much to bear thinking of.

Yet when he reached his son's chambers he looked cool and quiet. There was not a sign of disturbance in his large steady eyes. Jem was a handsome young man, very like his mother and sister, and rose quickly when his father entered the room. The latter, however, did not sit down or remove his hat.

'I have just heard something that has surprised me,' he said very quietly. 'Is it a fact that you are married?'

James Bulbous started, changed colour, and dropped his eyes for a moment. Then he looked frankly in his father's face. 'I ought to have told you, father. I am ashamed both before Gertrude and you not to have done so. Yes, sir; I am married.'

Matthew examined the pattern of the carpet for a few seconds. 'Have your mother and sister been aware of this?'

'No, sir.'

'Very well. You have taken your course. You have no further claim upon me.'

That was all. The young man reddened and inclined his head. Matthew Bulbous walked from the room, pausing to inspect an engraving on the wall, and drove away to his office.

It was over, as far as the son was concerned. But the blow struck Matthew Bulbous harder in another quarter. Lord Polonius would have to be informed of the downfall of the marriage project. His lordship would doubtless be disappointed; but Matthew realised with bitterness of heart the polite equanimity with which Polonius would bear it. He had ten thousand pounds of Matthew's money to console him, and the ten thousand maledictions now accompanying the money would disturb his lordship very little. This was the keenest agony of it; the wily old Earl had beaten him.

Jem was married. The curses, deep and silent, breathed by Matthew Bulbous on their wedded life, were tempered only by the vindictive satisfaction with which he reflected on what the woman was. The more reason the son had daily to repent of the marriage the greater would be the father's gratification. Matthew knew the kind of creature she was—knew the life she would lead her husband now that the liberal money supplies were cut off. He laughed aloud, thinking of it. It was his only comfort.

A GLIMPSE OF LIFE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

So much has been said and written about this favoured district on the Pacific coast, that there is little fear on hearing its name to-day that any one will say, as happened a few years ago: 'Oh, let me see—that is in South America, is it not?' Still, I think, unless one has had some personal experience of the place, it is difficult to realise how much, and yet how little, life in British Columbia resembles that in England. As it fell to my lot to spend some months on a ranch, many of the points of dissimilarity were perhaps made more noticeable at first than the likeness between this colony and the mother-country.

My husband and I sailed from Liverpool on the 11th of May, and after an easy and comfortable journey of sixteen days' duration, we arrived at our destination, New Westminster, where it was necessary to stay a few days before proceeding to our own home. Here we found my brother waiting to meet us, and with him we went at once to the lodgings he had taken for us, in a quaint but

pretty wooden house, built, as is so much the custom in this country, with the dining-room opening out of the kitchen, and acting as a sort of passage-room—an uncomfortable arrangement in many ways, but useful in saving footsteps in a place where it is almost impossible to obtain domestic help. After a luncheon of Fraser River sturgeon, which was fried like veal cutlets, and tasted delicious, I was taken to see the beauties of the place. New Westminster on that occasion looked charming, for all the fruit-trees were in full blossom, the sky of a deep intense blue, while the snow-clad summits of the Cascade Range were reflected in the depths of the Fraser River, at this point nearly a mile broad.

We passed a pleasant afternoon laying in stores, and buying some chairs and other necessary pieces of furniture; but were both only too glad to feel ourselves sleeping again in beds which were stationary, and to know there was no likelihood of being disturbed at intervals by requests to show our tickets, as had been the case for the last seven nights. The remaining few days we spent in seeing everything of possible interest in the neighbourhood, including a salmon 'cannery,' though just then but little work was being done, for the great salmon 'run' does not come until some weeks later, when from each cannery are packed up and sent away thousands of tins of fish, to be distributed all over the world. During the busy season, both Indians and Chinese are in great request, the former being principally employed as fishermen, and the latter boiling and packing up the salmon.

Having come to the end of all our business, we started about seven o'clock one morning on the steamer *William Irving* to make the best of our way to our home. The trip up the river was very lovely, still the same bright clear atmosphere and wonderful freshness in the air which I noticed on the first day of our arrival. A great drawback to the beauty of the scenery, however, were the blackened fir stumps, which stood up in all directions, and showed only too plainly the ravages of many large forest fires. When we reached Langley, a genuine bush settlement, and originally a fort of the Hudson Bay traders, Jack (my husband), Will, and I set off to see if we could find a conveyance to take us up to Alder Grove. After more than one unsuccessful attempt, we were told it was possible we might get a 'buggy' at the minister's, rather farther along the road. So we toiled on, almost grilled, for it was tremendously hot, and were very fortunate in finding Mrs T— at home. She welcomed us kindly and hospitably, but, sad to say, did not think their horse a safe one for strangers to drive over such a bad country. Off the boys started again on another search expedition, this time coming back with better luck, for a lady from Alder Grove was spending the day in Langley, and would be returning almost immediately. She had a tiny baby with her, and a man to drive; but if I would not mind a seat on a box at the back of her 'buckboard,' she would be very pleased. Needless to say I was only too glad to accept her offer; and we were soon ready to start.

No one who has not been over partially cleared roads through a Western forest can have any conception of that drive. Jolt up, jolt down; now the right wheel in mud up to the axle, and

now the left going tilt over a stump a foot high. Every moment I thought I should be thrown off my insecure perch, and had no time to look at what scenery we might be passing through. At last, going down a steep hill, the horse grew so nervous he crouched like a camel, and the whole 'rig' was straining over until I expected to see the shafts snap. Mrs R— began to cry, 'Oh baby, baby!' passed the child to me, and got out instantly, when I handed it to her; and then, in spite of oft-repeated advice about not jumping out of a carriage in danger, I took a good spring, and alighted safely on the ground with no worse damage than yards of torn drapery at my back.

'Oh, Mrs Long,' said Mrs R— reproachfully, 'you would have been all right if you had stayed.'

Perhaps so; but the prospect of sitting behind a plunging horse with a precipice in front and another on the right-hand side hardly seemed to me a sensible idea.

The remaining three miles and a half I did not enjoy much more, as we were mainly occupied in pulling through the great mud-holes, which are often a foot deep and ten feet long, and are caused by the uprooting of enormous tree stumps and roots when the roads are first constructed. Heartily glad was I when we were safely under the shelter of Mrs R—'s hospitable roof, and could comfort ourselves with the thought that no more driving was necessary.

About nine o'clock the next morning we said 'Good-bye' to our hostess, and then set off across a trail to Will's shanty and real bush-life. The trail was such a novel experience, it deserves description. As the roads are at present in a most unfinished condition and few in number, some other communication is necessary between the various settlers' houses; and for this purpose a trail answers admirably. A narrow pathway is trodden out in as direct a line as possible, and the principal large trees notched with an axe—or 'blazed,' as it is called—so that no confusion may arise later on. Often we found it necessary to walk along the huge fallen fir and cedar trunks which lie stretched on the ground in every direction. They are of enormous size, from two to three hundred feet in length, and proportionately broad. Occasionally, we came to a piece of swampy ground, which was made passable by a 'corduroy' bridge, formed of logs laid side by side on the damp earth, and fastened together by cross-pieces, so that in case of high water the bridge can rise or fall like a raft.

Arrived at Will's shanty, we found a little house built of the native cedar of the country, and inside an awful muddle, and chaos reigning, owing to his absence of a fortnight in New Westminster. He showed me some of his land and improvements, and much I sympathised with the difficulties to be met with in clearing land of this description. At noon I was met with a request to prepare dinner as soon as possible; but what to cook and how to cook it, I had not the least idea.

'Bacon and slap-jacks will do well,' said Will; 'and after dinner, I will set some bread.'

So, on a cooking stove, which was standing exposed to the elements at the back of the house, I made my first essay at bush-cookery; and with some assistance and many suggestions, a fairly respectable meal was produced—slap-jacks

proving to be pancakes of flour, water, and baking powder, fried in hot fat. The bachelors, or boys, as all unmarried ranchers are called, are many of them clever cooks and housekeepers, and often I have been able to get hints from them which have proved decidedly useful.

One night we were honoured by a 'chivaree' in our own home, a most doubtful sort of compliment paid to newly-married people on their wedding night. At about eleven o'clock, a procession of young fellows from the different shanties found their way across the trail—anything but an easy matter in the dim light—and came outside the door, calling out and making a great noise. Jack knew what it was directly; and we hastened to let them in and give them whatever provisions we had cooked, with some hot coffee. And after staying two or three hours without making more than half-a-dozen spasmodic remarks apiece, 'they guessed they'd better be quittin',' and returned to their homes to bed. Another pair were less fortunate than ourselves; for, resenting what they considered the impertinence of the intruders, they kept their door shut until three o'clock, when the besieging party broke in, and seating themselves, there and then started to drink some whisky they had with them. The natural consequence was that they were soon in such an uproarious condition that they refused to eat the buns the poor bride had hurriedly baked, declaring them bullets only fit to throw about, and suited the action to the word.

Our house consisted of three good-sized rooms, each of which opened out of the other, so that we were obliged to use the outer one for a kitchen, the middle for a dining-room, and the remaining one as a bedroom. Like nearly all the other shanties, it was made of undressed native cedar planks, taken from the trees by means of a long 'fro,' and built up by the boys themselves. The walls were of course rough and uneven; but, covered with pictures and bric-à-brac, looked pretty and home-like; though the floor defied all efforts to keep it clean by peeling off into long splinters whenever a brush was passed over it. Scrubbing was absolutely out of the question, owing to the porous nature of the wood, which absorbed the water almost like a sponge.

For a fortnight our time was fully occupied in 'packing' our various possessions across the bush. As the house was more than a mile from a road, it necessitated carrying the contents of twenty-three boxes over the trail, anything but an easy or pleasant task. Fortunately, however, no mishaps occurred, in spite of all the difficulties in the way; and we were able to congratulate ourselves on the safe arrival of china and glass with only the breakage of a single tumbler after a journey of six thousand miles.

Having settled our various Lares and Penates, our next care was to make the house 'mosquito-proof,' and to do this it was necessary to cover every hole, crack, and cranny in wall, floor, or ceiling by pasting them over with paper where possible, and by filling in the larger gaps with wads of rag and paper. This process unfortunately took away much from the picturesque effect of the interior, but was the only alternative to being almost consumed by the horrible little pests, which gave us no peace either night or day.

They are certainly one of the drawbacks of colonial life, and do not receive sufficient attention in any pamphlet addressed to 'intending settlers' which I have yet seen. After all our efforts to keep the creatures out, it was certainly mortifying, one evening on going into my room, to find them buzzing about quite cheerily and in large numbers. I at once set to work to kill as many as I could; and after a while, as a matter of interest, thought I would count the number that had penetrated in such a mysterious manner into our stronghold. But after counting two hundred and eleven, and finding apparently as many more buzzing about as when I had begun, I went on killing, regardless of numbers, though I could never discover in what way they came. We converted the bed into a four-poster, and hung it all over with netting, until it resembled nothing so much as a monstrous meat-safe, and by these means only could we get any rest at all.

Our settlement was twenty-five miles from a town, and boasted two stores and a post-office, where the letters were posted and received once a week. Unless, however, one of the settlers killed a sheep or an ox, we had absolutely no fresh meat at all, and even butter and eggs were difficult to obtain. So we were naturally reduced to living on bacon and tinned meats, with whatever our land produced in the way of potatoes and vegetables. A more decided change from the life one lives in England could hardly be imagined, for, naturally, no servants were to be had, as all the families lived on their own ranches, and the girls were needed at home to help either in the house or on the land. So the family wash took the place of tennis, and all other spare time was filled up with blacking stoves, sweeping, dusting, and cooking meals for the boys, all of which duties I could have done more easily if I had but had a little real practical experience of housekeeping before leaving England. Under these circumstances it will be readily imagined that social visits are few and far between, the consequent loneliness proving one of the greatest trials of my ranching experience.

As Alder Grove had no church, a service was held monthly in a large barn-like building called by courtesy the Hall; but whenever it happened to be an 'off-day,' we had to fill up the time to the best of our abilities; and very tedious in consequence were many of the Sundays, when the heat indoors was almost unbearable, and the mosquitoes too fierce to let one think for a minute of sitting down outside.

Our ranch, like all the others in this district, consisted of one hundred and sixty acres of forest-land, with a heavy undergrowth of fir-trees and balsams, which have sprung up since 1835, when a terrific bush-fire spread its ravages far and wide. Thousands of bare and blackened logs lying in all directions bore witness to the fierceness of the flames; while they, together with the numbers which were still standing, added much to the difficulty and labour of clearing this part of the country and rendering it available for farming purposes. After the smaller green timber had been chopped down and burnt—a comparatively easy matter—these great logs or 'stubs' still remained to be disposed of, which was generally done by

sawing them into lengths and piling the fir into great heaps, ready for burning, while the cedar was reserved for fence-rails or any other building purposes. Frequently, during the later summer months, weeks would go by with hardly a glimpse of the sun, the air being filled with smoke from the various ranches, which spread in every direction for many miles.

Although as a rule we were little troubled with seeing wild animals, of which there were many all round us, yet it fell to our lot one night to receive a visit from a skunk. The little creature, not so large as a full-grown rabbit, had discovered a small hole in the side of the kitchen wall, and with its sharp claws had enlarged it sufficiently to make an entrance, after which it set to work to test the quality of our stores. Unfortunately, the kitten imagined she could banish the intruder as she would do a rat, with the painful result that a quantity of the noxious fluid which makes the skunk so disagreeable an animal was squirted over her, and the whole house rendered almost uninhabitable in consequence. But what was to us of far more importance was the fact that the barrel of flour standing in the kitchen was so tainted that we were obliged to throw it away; while the sugar had also suffered, though in a less degree.

LOVE AT THE 'SHIP.'

THERE had been a fog in the early morning, but the sun gathering strength, burst suddenly from behind a black and indigo cloud and streaked the sea with a copperish hue. Then a lamp on the pier flashed like a diamond in a pin, and out popped the tops of the buoys. Far down the beach were two men and a boat. They were stalwart men, and the eldest was busy shaking from the meshes of a draw-net entangled tufts of maroon and brown seaweed. When all the seaweed was shaken out, the net was piled on a barrow and carried to the boat.

'Poor draughts, Shelah,' said the net-shaker, looking philosophically into the basket that held the fish.

'Poor enough, Master Reeks.—Is it home now?'

'Ay, lad, home it is. Get in the boat, Shelah.'

The young man jumped into the boat and took the oars; the other shoved off, and when he was knee-deep in salt water, clambered in after him. The oarsman gave a lusty pull or two, and they were fairly afloat. Reeks lighted his pipe and began meditatively to smoke. The searching brown eyes of his companion were fixed upon the foreshore of Herringbourne. He was watching it over Reeks' shoulder, as it came out bit by bit from the fog. When his gaze altered, it was to look at the sea, where, under the direct rays of the sun, it had become a huge pot of molten silver, overflowing and running towards the shore.

'Shelah,' said Reeks, speaking of a sudden, 'when are you going to marry my Jen?'

There came a little extra colour into Shelah's smooth tanned cheeks, and before he answered he shifted one of the oars from the tholes and wetted the leather. 'I don't know, master,' he said.

'Ah,' said Reeks, with a sigh, 'I wish her mother was alive.'

'Why, old Tom?' asked Shelah.

'Why? To steer her, lad. I'm afeerd my hand is a bit too heavy on the tiller for a dainty craft like my Jen. She wants a woman at her helm—or a husband.'

'What makes you say that?' asked Shelah, resting on his oars.

Tom Reeks deliberately knocked out the ashes of his pipe on the gunnel. 'I'll tell ye, lad,' he said slowly; 'it's been on my mind a long time, an' now I'll tell ye. I don't like the comin's an goin's of that young brewer o' oun, Mr Cyril Rivington.'

Shelah bent his head, and his foot shifted uneasily with the stretcher.

'Now, in my father's time an' in my time the old "Ship" might ha' tumbled about our ears for all the brewer cared or troubled. But since this here young chap ha' come from abroad, an' his father ha' taken him into partnership, things ha' altered. Nigh on every day he's aridin' up to know if we want anything done. Is the beer all right? Are there any repairs needed? An' all that. I shouldn't care how many times he come, Shelah, if it warn't for Jen. I'm afeerd that his fine hoss an' his velvet coat an' his leggins an' his watch-chain may dazzle her, lad. I'm pretty sartin it ain't to see me that he come; an', though I'd lay my life on Jenny's goodness, this young chap ha' got a silvery tongue, an' there's no tellin' what he may whisper in her ears. It's precious little company we see at the "Ship," an' it may make her dissatisfied with the life she's aleadin'.'

'Jen is all right,' said Shelah firmly.

'So she is, my lad; but she'd be a lot better married. It would steady a pretty little craft like my gal wonderfully. It would give her what she wants, Shelah—ballast. An' so, between man an' man, my lad, I want to know when you are agoin' to marry her?'

'I'd marry her to-morrow,' said Shelah wistfully, 'if she'd ha' me, master.'

Reeks looked at him steadily for a moment. 'Shelah Baxter,' he said solemnly, 'you put me in mind of that song the Scotch packman was singin' in the "Ship" the tother night. You sit on a stule an' look like a fule with your hold jaws newly shaven. You ain't got the pluck of a mouse.'

Shelah looked dreamily at the purple-feathered arrows and silvery spear-tipped shafts of cloud over the sea, but gave no contradiction.

'Wi' women, I mean,' pursued Reeks. 'There ain't a man in the whole village, Shelah, that could put you on your back. But wi' women!' He snorted. 'Why, man alive, the bolder you are wi' a woman the better she likes ye. See how they run arter a soger's coat! Now I ha' got a bit, an' you ha' got a boat of your own, an' what's to purvent you two a-settlin' down to-gether?—Pluck up, Shelah, say I; ha' no more shilly-shallyin'.'

'I'll think on it,' said Shelah slowly.

'Do,' said Reeks, refilling his pipe. 'But to act on it would be better.'

Shelah's suspended oars fell splash upon the sea, and for a moment the boat seemed to rise up and fly bodily over the top of a wave, so hard did

he pull. Then he stopped rowing, and drawing the oars towards him through the tholes, he held them with one hand, and began to search his duffels with the other.

'Master,' he said deliberately, 'can you read writin'?'

'No,' said Reeks; 'I can't. Why?'

'Because, if you could, I wanted you to read this.' He held out a sheet of pink note-paper. It was soiled with fish-scales and tobacco dust, but even now retained a sweet and subtle perfume.

Reeks took it gingerly, held it three different ways and narrowly scanned it. 'All I can make out, lad,' he said, 'is these here.'

'What are they?' cried Shelah eagerly.

'Kisses!' said Reeks solemnly—'ten on 'em.'

'Kisses!' repeated Shelah vacantly. In sudden fury he snatched the paper, and doubling it in a ball, threw it far over the waves. Then he bent steadily to the oars. The fog had swept off the land; and beyond the sugary yellow sands and gray sea-stones, stretched the wild desolate denes with their furze and marram grass. In a break between the sandhills there rose up, like a kite with a white tail, the Waister lookout. Lower down, a bending black thread extended across the sky and vanished in the sea. It was the lifeboat warp. On the beach stood the boat itself. Opposite the lookout, Shelah rowed ashore.

'Now,' said Reeks, as he jumped out, 'I'll stow away, lad. Go you up to the "Ship." It's about time you an' Jen came to an onderstandin'. Pluck up, Shelah, an' remember there's allus ways an' means o' winnin' a woman.' He winked and nodded.

Shelah drew his feet out of the wet sand, and with a sad smile moved up the beach. As he strode between the lifeboat and the yawl, his face settled into gloom. There was a big sandhill on his left; he turned aside and mounted it. 'Ten kisses,' he groaned, and looked vacantly around him.

Behind him was Herringbourne; on his right, the German Ocean; on his left, the salt, sandy marshes and fir-hedged dykes of the Waister Road. Below him lay the hammer-shaped village. From here he could just see the swinging sign of the 'Ship'; and with his eyes fixed upon this talisman, he slowly descended the mound and walked towards the inn. The 'Ship's' sign could be seen long before the inn. The house stood back, in the bend of a lane. Within a few paces of the sign Shelah halted. He could hear a horse's hoofs pawing the ground. He was soon regaled with a little whistling, then the softly-hummed verse of a song. The words came to his ears with aggravating clearness:

You've all heard of Larry O'Toole,
Of the beautiful town of Drumgoole;
He had but one eye
To ogle ye by;
Och, murther, but that was a jew'l!
A fool
He made of the girls, this O'Toole.

There next sounded some loud laughter, a step on the tiled path of the inn, then the singer spoke. 'I drink your health, my charmer,' he said, 'in the Rivington brew.' After that he spoke lower, but the words reached Shelah's ears: 'You got my note, Jenny, but you never came. Why was that?'

'I was afraid! And oh, what would father say if he knew that you sent me that note with all those—those?'—The musical voice ended suddenly.

'Kisses, Jenny,' finished the horseman. 'Well, I don't know. I don't particularly care. Love is altogether reckless. And for you, my gipsy, I would risk anything.—Now tell me, Jenny, when can you meet me alone? It is a small favour for a lover to ask. When shall it be?'

Jenny was silent.

'Jenny,' said the rider seriously, 'do you love me?'

Holding his breath, Shelah waited for the answer. It was inaudible.

'Come a little closer, Jenny,' said the horseman gaily; 'kisses on paper are nothing to kisses in'—

'Hush!' cried Jenny; 'some one is coming!'

It was Shelah. He rounded the corner in time to see Mr Cyril Rivington riding away.

With his head bowed, Shelah crossed the threshold of the inn door. He was met inside by a pretty brown-cheeked girl, whose face had a heightened and rather unusual bloom. At the sight of Shelah she looked disconcerted. His requirements were so well known that they needed no inquiry, and presently she set before him a pint mug. Shelah slid it on one side.

'Jen, lass,' he said, 'I want to speak to you; I want to ask you somethin'.'

Jenny started, and there was a sensible diminution of the colour in her cheeks. 'Not now, Shelah,' she said nervously; 'I'm busy just now. Wait till father comes in.'

'No,' said Shelah; 'I can't wait. If I don't speak now, I shall never speak. I won't stop you long.'

'Well then,' said Jenny, 'say it quick. What is it?' She seated herself with her face to the window and her foot nervously tapping the sanded floor.

'It's this,' said Shelah, and his voice shook a little; 'we ha' been sweetheartin' for a long time, and I want to know when we are going to get married, Jen?'

'Never,' she said softly.

'Never,' he repeated huskily.

'I should only make you wretched. I want you to give me up, to forget me, Shelah.'

'Give you up, Jen! Give you up, lass! Give up my life—ask me for that, Jen, but don't ask me to give you up, sweetheart, for I do so love you, my dear.'

Jenny's lips quivered, and her eyes began to fill with tears, but she still kept her face to the window. 'It would break my heart to marry you,' she said, 'for I love some one else.'

'You love some one else,' said Shelah mechanically.

'Yes; and he is going to marry me. So you see, Shelah, it would be wrong for me to marry you. I should be always miserable and wretched, and I should make you miserable and wretched too; so please, dear Shelah, let me go, and—forget me.' She ended with a sob.

White and still sat Shelah; then heavily and wearily he rose. Jenny uncovered her face for a moment. At the sight of his she hid it again. 'Forget you, lass,' he said, 'I never can.' He looked at her wistfully, as if he was committing

to heart every little ringlet of her hair. Moved, perhaps, by the thought of what might have been, he leant down and gently pressed his lips to her forehead. 'But if giving you up, lass,' he proceeded huskily, 'will make you happy, why, Jen'—there was an agonising ring in his voice—'why, I give you up.'

She heard his heavy, slouching steps moving towards the door. When she looked round again, he was gone.

All that night it froze hard, and the calm sea lay moaning like a dog on its chain. Shelah heard it as he stood in the lonely sentry-box of the lifeboat lookout. In the morning, the frost-bowed blades of the sea-grass had changed the denes into a great glistening bed of white coral. As usual, Shelah called at the 'Ship' for Tom Reeks. He had barely entered when he heard a horse's hoofs on the hard road. A horseman reined up at the inn, and Shelah drew back into the shadow. 'Shelah!' It was Jenny who spoke. She stood white and trembling on the cellar steps. 'Will—will you take him this?'

Strangely fascinated at being called upon for such an act, Shelah took from her the measure of sparkling ale, and, like a man in a dream, carried it to the door. With his head down he walked up to the rider. A loud 'Hem!' caused him to start and look up. Instead of the young brewer, he was facing the old one. The elder Rivington looked at the ale as a doctor might look at his own medicine. 'No, my man,' he said; 'I don't care for anything so early as this. If you'll have the goodness to hold my horse, while I dismount. Thank 'ee. Tether him there, will you? I want to see the landlord; is he in?'

Before Shelah could answer, Reeks gave evidence of his bodily presence by appearing at the doorway. The brewer walked in, followed by Shelah. Rivington, senior, was a pleasant, chatty old gentleman, and he soon disclosed the object of his visit. A ball was going to be held at Herringbourne Town Hall, and he was distributing invitations to such of his tenants as chose to attend. As he was passing—quite by accident, he assured them—he felt he ought not to miss the landlord of the 'Ship.' There were the tickets, and he hoped that Reeks and his daughter would attend.

'I forgot to mention,' he said blandly, as Reeks, after expressing his thanks, took them up, 'that this ball is to be held in honour of my son Cyril's marriage. He is to be married this week to the daughter of a very old friend of mine—a man of Kent.'

As he finished, a low sobbing cry startled all but Shelah. A beer-warmer had rattled to the floor, and Jenny stood vacantly staring into a little lake of the spilt liquid at her feet.

'Why, what's the matter, lass?' said Reeks; 'you look as white as a ghost.'

'Nothing, father,' she answered faintly—'nothing; only the heat of the fire.'

'That is what it was,' said old Rivington; 'the heat of the fire, no doubt. I have experienced the same sensation myself.—Well, good-day, Reeks; I hope you'll find it convenient to attend.'

He nodded pleasantly, untethered his horse from the palings, and mounted it. As he rode away he smiled softly, and patted his horse's

mane. When horse and rider had passed the green fir-trees on the road, Shelah Baxter came out of the 'Ship' and walked aimlessly down to his boat. The surf was boiling on the Scroby, and great rollers with foaming crests were racing in, and tumbling upon the sun-lighted beach. He stood awhile absently watching the little salt fountains which their recoil left bubbling in the sand, then mounted the tall hillock to look for Reeks. On the top he started, and his tanned cheeks grew pale. At the base of the mound by a dwarfed clump of furze sat a girl, sobbing violently. It was Jenny Reeks. He descended the side she was on and gently touched her shoulder. 'You'll catch cold, lass,' he said sadly, 'if you set here.'

Through her tear-brimmed eyes she looked into his face. Not a word of reproach. Only in his eyes was the love that had been so constant and true. With a little catching of her breath, Jenny rose and drew back; then, with a convulsive cry, she flung her arms wildly round his neck, and there she sobbed till she could sob no more. When they went back to the 'Ship,' Reeks met them at the door. Something in their attitude made him softly whistle. A nearer view of their faces made him chuckle. It seemed as if Shelah had taken his advice, and plucked up at last!

AUSTRALIA'S FIRST FLEET.

THE arrangement whereby Australia has become possessed of a navy is the first of its kind recorded in history. It is hard to say whether commercial keenness or martial ambition is the leading feature of the transaction. Australia, like other places, suffers from war scares. Russia and China take turn about at playing bogie man, and at these times affrighted colonists turn their eyes wistfully to the blue Pacific. A couple of fast cruisers could pillage the capitals in a day and a night. Yet, as scare after scare subsided, there was nothing done. A hazy idea of England's protecting presence survived. It was readily enough felt that an attack upon Australia would be made only when England would be herself at war, and that, as a consequence, the amount of protection available would be a risky quantity. Still, where was a way out?

To build and maintain a fleet was too expensive. To go on as a dependent upon the arms of England was beneath the dignity of a country of large ambitions. Under this latter aspect leading colonists were in the habit of conjuring up visions of the toilworn, poverty-stricken people of Britain paying taxes to support a British squadron in Australian waters for the protection of the interests of comparatively opulent cities; this was the point around which the late Sir Alexander Stuart and Mr Dalley constructed Imperialistic theories. They desired Australia to pay for the use of the British squadron. The opposing theory was that Australia should obtain on terms a fleet of her own.

After many years of discussion and some very close bargaining, this latter theory has been reduced to fact, and a fleet of seven warships are now moored in the waters of Port Jackson.

The terms redound to the credit of the com-

mercial aptitude of the colonies. The Admiralty spent over nine hundred thousand pounds on building and equipment. The colonies had agreed to pay five per cent. per annum on the initial outlay, but set the limit at an estimate of seven hundred thousand pounds. As is usual with estimates, the actual cost turned out almost a third more, so that Australia receives the advantage of an extra two hundred thousand pounds without having to pay any interest. There was a general understanding that the cost of manning and maintenance would be borne wholly by the colonies. In the signed agreement this understanding is reserved. It is there provided that in time of emergency or actual war the cost of commissioning three of the vessels shall be borne by Great Britain. Australia's contribution to the Admiralty will be thirty-five thousand pounds a year for ten years, at the end of which time the Admiralty may take the vessels back. As, at the present rate of scientific progress, the ships of war of 1901 will be in all likelihood very different from what they are to-day, the provision returning the fleet to the Admiralty is cheerfully acquiesced in by the colonies.

Throughout the negotiations, the Admiralty showed a disposition to give the colonies everything they wanted. When monetary matters were determined, the naming of the ships came up. The Admiralty proposed to call one the *Pandora*. The colonies objected, and at their suggestion she was called the *Katoomba*. Similarly, the Admiralty-given names of *Peloris*, *Persian*, *Phoenix*, *Wizard*, and *Whiting* were changed to *Mildura*, *Wallaroo*, *Tauranga*, *Karralatta*, and *Boomerang*. All these are the native names of Australian places, or of articles and implements known to the aborigines.

Thus has Australia possessed herself of a necessary part of her national outfit. It is the first instance on record of a colony and a parent country entering upon an alliance in such terms.

BROKEN.

WILL it ever come back, the old sweet thought,
That never a whisper of sorrow brought?
The old dear love that no cloud could dim?
The tender warmth of a fire within?
The light from no sun or earth lamp lent?
The music born of no instrument?
Will it ever come back the dear lost thing?
Can nobody patch up this broken string?

There are chords once broken no hand can mend;
Strong chords that snap where they cannot bend.
We may patch the rent with our heart's last creed;
'Twill answer no longer our spirits' need;
No longer vibrate as at love's own touch,
Love answering love with a swift glad rush
Of joy, that no fate could spoil or crush.
Yet a word may break what not death could sever,
And trust once broken is broken for ever.

L. HARVEY.

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HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF.

IF History, specially so called—the lives of kings and queens, of governors and warriors and statesmen—repeats itself, as he who runs may read that it does, how much more, in the story of their lives from year to year, does the history of those about us repeat itself generation after generation. It is not the exclusive appanage of a royal race to be unfortunate; characteristics fraught with ill appear and reappear in families, and are not confined to the highest or, indeed, to any particular stratum of society.

Bonaparte's fatalism, which led him again and again, on his disastrous march on Moscow, to point out to his attendants as 'the sun of Austerlitz' the very rays that were lighting him to his destruction—that fatalism reappeared in his nephew, and led him as surely to Sedan; just as Jones's 'ill-luck,' as he calls it, clings to Jones's son; and in both cases, it is not unfair to suppose that it is the family characteristic that causes their history to repeat itself. Buckingham, on his way to execution, speaking of his father's death on the scaffold, says, 'We are one in fortunes,' as though it ran in the family of the Bohuns to suffer, and in that of the Tudors to condemn to execution as a necessary complement.

Disappointments of the heart 'ran' in Colonel Newcome's family; and when he sees Clive suffering the same pangs of disprized love which he himself had overlived, he tries to console his son by saying it is their fate; but the reader of *The Newcomes* may fairly conclude that a similarity of character has had at least as much share as fate in bringing about the repetition.

An ingenious speculative philosopher once promulgated the theory, that as myriads of planets have been continually going through processes of development similar to our own, so there rolls at this moment through space an orb in all likelihood synchronous with our own; and that, given the same component parts and the same laws ruling them, the results must

be not merely similar but identical. So this postulated sphere has passed through its various periods, glacial, &c.; has produced its Homer and its Shakespeare, its Bacon and its Scott, 'yea, all which we inherit.' This is to make history repeat itself indeed; but unless we should learn some day to interpret the twinkling of the stars—supposed, by another learned Theban, to be attempts to communicate with us by a code of signalling not as yet understood by our scientific electricians—we must for the present remain content to observe the repetitions in our own 'particular star;' to note that even yet there are people so little willing to be guided by what has already happened, so loth to believe that in their lives history will repeat itself, that they will buy their knowledge of life at famine price, rather than trust to the teachings of experience.

To give an instance of this. All agree in the truth of the axiom that high interest is another name for bad security. Does this prevent bubble schemes, airy companies, from puffing their impossible proposals? By no means. Half mankind forget what the other half never knew; and thus, like children, men are still the dupes of to-morrow, every day beguiled by expectation. And so in all ages men and women have clung to omens, portents, and vaticination for the unravelling of their future fortunes, rather than to look calmly into the past, to frame thence a probable conjecture which time may turn into a prophecy.

Beside this incapacity to profit by experience, there is ingrained in human nature a feeling of the vicissitude of things, as apparent to-day as a thousand years ago. Anything however distantly resembling a vaunt is instinctively avoided. Acknowledging good health, for example, a man will add, 'But I mustn't boast,' as though conscious of some power—like the ancient Nemesis—lurking in the background to avenge the boast. Not to awaken envy—the real Nemesis, perhaps, of the fortunate—the wise man will ascribe his success in life to fortune rather than to himself, and so disarm and baffle

the usual vicissitudes of existence. But so difficult is this of accomplishment, that Disraeli's paradox, that it is only the unforeseen, or, as one version has it, the impossible, that is sure to happen, meets with universal approbation.

Still men gather together, like the Athenians of old, to hear and to tell some new thing, even while they repeat the proverb, that there is nothing new under the sun, and that all knowledge is but remembrance.

Century after century, as we regard things attentively, we perceive to be guided by what has been called the Spirit of the Age—a Protean spirit, as powerful to-day as when, through the preaching of Peter the Hermit, it stirred up the population of these Isles to go crusading to the arid plains of Palestine; or, entering the brain of Cervantes, taught mankind to mock at chivalry. Now, the spirit of the age reproves the people into Puritanism; anon the same spirit gives the cue to make motley our only wear, and is constant only in this, to be 'to one thing constant never.' If an Act of Parliament has been passed in conformity with the spirit of a past age, the strongest argument for its repeal is its unsuitability to the requirements of the age in which we live. In short, be the case what it may, a hospital's management, a charity's abuse, a monument's erection, a law's enactment, a million to be spent or a million to be saved, an invention to be boldly tried or rashly rejected, let but the patron succeed in proving it to be worthy, or the critic expose its unworthiness of this same eternal spirit, and half his work is done. But until a decade or so has passed, we see and hear and feel the spirit ruling our own age, but we cannot name him. Whether ours will be characterised as an age of education, of over-pressure, of materialism, of hypnotism—which is only mesmerism revived—a mechanical age, a philanthropic age, or a literary age—none of us who live in it can tell. The Americans, we observe, speak of the 'drift of the age' being scientific, so it may obtain its name from the famous Professors which it has certainly produced. But whatever title it obtains, we may be sure that its echo will be found somewhere in history.

In conclusion, we would call the attention of the observer of every-day life to a something outside the ordinary repetitions to which we have alluded. More things are hereditary in families than corns or cancer or consumption. Glass eyes are not on the face of them likely to be an inheritance, and yet, by a strange and unlooked-for accident, or string of accidents rather, we have known them in three generations of the same family. Again, a lady losing her hand by the sudden breaking of a window-cord precipitating the sash on to the limb, does not seem an accident likely of recurrence, and yet, twenty years after the accident, the lady's daughter lost her hand in a precisely similar manner. In these cases it would seem that there was a fate in the family to be reckoned with, beyond the repetitions and resemblances which have made and justified the proverb, 'Like father, like son'—a something resembling that Fate

whose scales Jove himself could only adjust, not turn; which gives a colour to the assertion that this man is born with a silver spoon in his mouth, and that one with a wooden ladle, and to the confident but ominous prediction, that he that is born to be hanged can never be drowned.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XII.—A MYSTERIOUS DISCOVERY.

'EVERYTHING is here, and in proper order.' He laid his hand upon the papers. 'Here, for instance, is the first letter, dated February 14th, relating to these transactions.—You will no doubt remember it, Mr Dering.' He took up a letter, and read it aloud. "MY DEAR ELLIS—I enclose a bundle of certificates and shares. They amount to somewhere about £6500 at current price. Will you have these transferred to the name of Edmund Gray, gentleman, of 22 South Square, Gray's Inn? Mr Edmund Gray is a client, and I will have the amount paid to my account by him. Send me, therefore, the transfer papers and the account showing the amount due to me by him together with your commission.—Very sincerely yours, EDWARD DERING." That is the letter. The proceeding is not usual, yet not irregular. If, for instance, we had been instructed to buy stock for Mr Dering— But of course you know.'

'Pardon me,' said George. 'I am not so much accustomed to buy stock as my partner. Will you go on?'

'We should have done so, and sent our client the bill for the amount with our commission. If we had been instructed to sell, we should have paid in to Mr Dering's Bank the amount realised less our commission. A transfer is another kind of work. Mr Dering transferred this stock to Edmund Gray, his client. It was therefore for him to settle with his client the charges for the transfer and the value of the stock. We therefore sent a bill for these charges. It was sent by hand, and a cheque was received by return of the messenger.'

George received the letter from him, examined it, and laid it before his partner.

Mr Dering read the letter, held it to the light, examined it very carefully, and then tossed it to Checkley.

'If anybody knows my handwriting,' he said, 'it ought to be you. Whose writing is that?'

'It looks like yours. But there is a trembling in the letters. It is not so firm as the most of your work. I should call it yours; but I see by your face that it is not.'

'No; it is not my writing. I did not write that letter. This is the first I have heard of the contents of that letter.—Look at the signature, Checkley. Two dots are wanting after the word Dering, and the flourish after the last "n" is curtailed of half its usual dimensions. Did you ever know me to alter my signature by a single curve?'

'Never,' Checkley replied. 'Two dots want—'

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ing and half a flourish.—Go on, sir; I've just thought of something. But go on.'

'You don't mean to say that this letter is a forgery?' asked Mr Ellis. 'Why—then—Oh! it is impossible. It must then be the beginning of a whole series of forgeries. It's quite impossible to credit it. The letter came from this office: the postmark shows it was posted in this district: the answer was sent here. The transfers—consider—the transfers were posted to this office. They came back duly signed and witnessed—from this office. I forwarded the certificate made out in the name of Edmund Gray—to this office: and I got an acknowledgment—from this office. I sent the account of the transaction with my commission charges—to this office, and got a cheque for the latter—from this office. How can such a complicated business as this—only the first of these transactions—be a forgery? Why, you want a dozen confederates at least for such a job as this.'

'I do not quite understand yet,' said George, inexperienced in the transfer of stocks and shares.

'Well, I cannot sell stock without the owner's authority; he must sign a transfer. But if I receive a commission from a lawyer to transfer his stock to a client, it is not my business to ask whether he receives the money or not.'

'Yes—yes.—And is there nothing to show for the sale of this £6000 worth of paper?' George asked Mr Dering.

'Nothing at all. The letters and everything are a forgery.'

'And you, Mr Ellis, received a cheque for your commission?'

'Certainly.'

'Get me the old cheques and the cheque book,' said Mr Dering. The cheque was drawn, as the letter was written, in Mr Dering's handwriting, but with the slight difference he had pointed out in the signature.

'You are quite sure,' asked George, 'that you did not sign that cheque?'

'I am perfectly certain that I did not.'

'Then as for this Edmund Gray of 22 South Square, Gray's Inn—what do you know about him?'

'Nothing at all—absolutely nothing.'

'I know something,' said Checkley. 'But go on—go on.'

'He may be a non-existent person, for what you know.'

'Certainly. I know nothing about any Edmund Gray.'

'Wait a bit,' murmured Checkley.

'Well, but'—Mr Ellis went on—'this was only a beginning. In March you wrote to me again; that is to say I received a letter purporting to be from you. In this letter—here it is—you instructed me to transfer certain stock—the papers of which you enclosed—amounting to about £12,000—to Edmund Gray aforesaid. In the same way as before the transfer papers were sent to you for signature: in the same way as before they were signed and returned: and in the same way as before the commission was charged to you and paid by you. It was exactly the same transaction as before—only for double the sum involved in the February business.'

Mr Dering took the second letter and looked at it with a kind of patient resignation. 'I know nothing about it,' he said—'nothing at all.'

'There was a third and last transaction,' said the broker. 'This time in April. Here is the letter written by you with instructions exactly the same as in the previous cases, but dealing with stock to the amount of £19,000, which we duly carried out, and for which we received your cheque—for commission.'

'Every one of these letters—every signature of mine to transfer-papers and to cheques—was a forgery,' said Mr Dering slowly. 'I have no client named Edmund Gray: I know no one of the name: I never received any money from the transfers: these investments are stolen.'

'Let me look at the letters again,' said George. He examined them carefully, comparing them with each other. 'They are so wonderfully forged that they would deceive the most careful. I should not hesitate, myself, to swear to the handwriting.'

It has already been explained that Mr Dering's handwriting was of a kind which is not uncommon with those who write a great deal. The unimportant words were conveyed by a curve, with or without a tail, while the really important words were clearly written. The signature, however, was large, distinct, and florid—the signature of the House, which had been flourishing for a hundred years and more, a signature which had never varied.

'Look at it,' said George again. 'Who would not swear to this writing?'

'I would for one,' said Mr Ellis. 'And I have known it for forty years and more.—If that is not your own writing, Dering, it is the very finest imitation ever made.'

'I don't think my memory can be quite gone.—Checkley, have we ever had a client named Edmund Gray?'

'No—never. But you've forgotten one thing. That forgery eight years ago—the cheque of £720—was payable to the order of Edmund Gray.'

'Ah! So it was. This seems important.'

'Most important,' said George. 'The forger could not possibly by accident choose the same name. This cannot be coincidence. Have you the forged cheque?'

'I have always kept it,' Mr Dering replied, 'on the chance of using it to prove the crime and convict the criminal.—You will find it, Checkley, in the right-hand drawer of the safe.—Thank you. Here it is. "Pay to the order of Edmund Gray;" and here is his endorsement. So we have his handwriting at any rate.'

George took it. 'Strange,' he said. 'I should without any hesitation swear to your handwriting here as well. And look—the signature to the cheque is exactly the same as that of these letters. The two dots missing after the name, and the flourish after the last "n" curtailed.'

It was so. The handwriting of the cheque and of the letters was the same: the signatures were slightly, but systematically, altered in exactly the same way in both letters and cheque.

'This again,' said George, 'can hardly be coincidence. It seems to me that the man who wrote that cheque also wrote those letters.'

The endorsement was in a hand which might

also be taken for Mr Dering's own. Nothing to be got out of the endorsement.

'But about the transfer papers,' said George. 'They would have to be witnessed as well as signed.'

'They were witnessed,' said the broker, 'by a clerk named Lorry.'

'Yes, we have such a man in our office.—Checkley, send for Lorry.'

Lorry was a clerk employed in Mr Dering's outer office. Being interrogated, he said that he had no recollection of witnessing a signature for a transfer paper. He had witnessed many signatures, but was not informed what the papers were. Asked if he remembered especially witnessing any signature in February, March, or April, he replied that he could not remember any, but that he had witnessed a great many signatures: that sometimes Mr Dering wanted him to witness his own signature, sometimes those of clients. If he were shown his signature he might remember. Lorry, therefore, was allowed to depart to his own place.

'There can be no longer any doubt,' said George, 'that an attempt has been made at a robbery on a very large scale.'

'An attempt only?' Mr Dering asked. 'Where are my certificates?'

'I say attempt, because you can't really steal stock. Dividends are only paid to those who lawfully possess it. This Edmund Gray we can find, if he exists. I take it, however, that he does not. It is probably a name assumed by the forger. And I suppose that he has made haste to sell his stock. Whether or no, you will certainly recover your property. People may as well steal a field as steal stocks and shares.'

'We can easily find out for you,' said Mr Ellis, 'what has become of your paper.'

'If the thieves have kept it,' George went on, 'all they could make would be the dividends for five months. That, however, is only because the Bank book was not examined for so long. They could not reckon upon such an unusual stroke of luck. It seems almost certain that they must get rid of the stock as quickly as they could. Suppose that they have realised the whole amount. It is an immense sum of money. It would have to be paid by cheque into a bank: the holder could only draw out the money gradually: he might, to be sure, go to America and have the whole amount transferred, but that would not help him much unless he could draw it out in small sums payable to confederates. In fact, the robbery seems to me hedged about with difficulties almost impossible.'

'It is the most extraordinary attempt at robbery that ever was,' said Mr Ellis. 'Thirty-eight thousand pounds in shares. Well, I will find out for you if they have been sold and to whom. Meantime, my old friend, don't you be down-hearted about it. As Mr Austin says, you will certainly get your property back again. What? We live in a civilised country. We cannot have large sums like £40,000 stolen bodily. Property isn't kept any longer in bags of gold. Bank-notes, banks, investments, all tend to make great robberies impossible.—Courage; you will get back your property.'

Mr Dering shook his head doubtfully.

'There is another chance,' George suggested. 'One has heard of robberies effected with the view of blackmail afterwards. Suppose we were to get a letter offering the whole to be returned for a certain sum.'

'No—no. It is now four months since the thing was done. They have sold out the stock and disappeared—gone to America, as you suggested. Why, the things may have been sold a dozen times over in the interval. That is the danger. Suppose they *have* been sold a dozen times over. Consider. Here is a share in the Great Western. I transfer it from A to B. Very good. The share now belongs to B, and stands in the name whether honestly come by or not. B sends it to another broker, who sells it to C. He, again, to D. Every transaction is right and in form except the first. You can trace the share from owner to owner. B has vanished. A says to C: "You bought that share of a thief." C says: "Very sorry. How was I to know? D has got it now." D says that it is his, and he will stick to it. We go to law about the share. What is going to happen? Upon my word, I don't know.—Well—but this is only conjecture. Let me first find out what has become of the shares. Of course there is a record, I have only to refer. I will let you know by to-morrow morning, if I can.'

When Mr Ellis was gone, George began to sum up, for the clearing of his own mind, the ascertained facts of the case, so far as they had got.

'First,' he said, 'the letters to Ellis and Northcote were written on our headed paper. Clearly, therefore, the writer must have had access to the office. Next, he knew and could copy your handwriting. Third, he was able to intercept the delivery of letters, and to prevent your getting any he wished to stop, because the correspondence was conducted openly through the post. That seems to be a very important point. Fourth, the letters were all, apparently, in your handwriting, very skilfully imitated, instead of being dictated and then signed. Fifth, he must at least have known of the last forgery, or how did he arrive at the name of Edmund Gray? And was it out of devilry and mockery because that forgery escaped detection, that he used the name again? Sixth, he must have had access to the safe where the cheque book (as well as the certificates) was kept. Seventh, he must have known the office pretty well, or how did he find out the names of your broker? Eighth, the handwriting appeared to be exactly the same as that of the former forgery.'

'It is the same as last time,' said Checkley. 'That forgery was done in the office, if ever a thing was done here. Same with this—same with this. Well—time will show. Same with this.' He glared from under his great eyebrows at the young partner, as if he suspected that the young gentleman could throw some light upon that mystery if he wished.

'We have given Time long enough to discover the author of the last business,' said Mr Dering; 'but he has not chosen to do so as yet. The loss of property,' he groaned—'the loss of close on forty thousand pounds.'

'I don't believe it is lost,' said George. 'It can't be lost. It is a bit of a railway—part of a reservoir—a corner of the gas-works—you can't

lose these things—unless, indeed, the difficulty suggested by Mr Ellis occurs.

Here Mr Dering pushed back his chair and began again to walk about the room in restless agitation. He was no longer the grave and serious lawyer; he became one of his own clients, lamenting, as they had so often lamented in that room, the greatness of his misfortune. He uttered the actual commonplaces of men in distress—there is a dreadful sameness about the Lamentation of Ill Luck. We all know them—the hardness of the thing: the injustice of it: the impossibility of warding it off: his own sagacity in taking every precaution: the dreadfulness of being singled out of a whole generation for exceptional misfortune. Mr Dering himself, the grave, calm, reserved, old lawyer, who seemed made of granite, broke down under the blow and became an ordinary human creature. In the lower walks, they weep. Checkley would have wept. Mr Dering became eloquent, wrathful, sarcastic. No retired General who has ruined himself by gambling in stocks could so bemoan his luck. George listened, saying nothing. It was an experience. No man so strong but has his weak point. No man is completely armoured against the arrows of fate.

Presently he grew a little more calm and sat down. 'Forgive me, George,' he said gently—'forgive this outbreak. There is more in the business than you know of. I feel as if I know something about it, but can't bring it out. I am growing so forgetful—I forget whole days—I am filled with the feeling that I ought to know about it. As for the loss, what I have said is true. You do not yet feel as I do about Property. You are too young: you have not got any Property yet. Wait a few years—then you will be able to agree with me that there is nothing in the world so hard as to lose your property—the property that you have made—by your own exertions—for yourself.'

'Now you talk like yourself,' said Checkley. 'That's sense. Nothing so dreadful as to lose property. It's enough to kill people. It has killed many people.'

'Property means everything. You understand that the more the older you get.'

'You do,' said Checkley. 'There's nothing in the world worth considering except property.'

'It means—remember—all the virtues—prudence—courage—quick sight—self-restraint, tenacity, all the fighting qualities. We do well to honour rich men. I hoped to receive honour myself as a rich man. When you have put together a few thousands—by the exercise of these finer qualities, so that the thought of this gives you dignity.'

'Ah!' cried Checkley, straightening himself.

'To feel that they are gone—gone—gone—it is cruel.—George, you don't understand it. You are young: as yet you have no money.—Checkley, you have saved'

'A trifle, a trifle.' But he covered his mouth with his hand to conceal the smile of satisfaction.

'You are reputed rich.'

'No—no—no. Not rich. My chances have been few. I have not let them go. But rich? No—no.'

'How would you regard the loss—the robbery of your property—Checkley?'

The old clerk shook his head. He had no words adequate to the question.

'Apart from the loss,' Mr Dering went on, 'there is the sense of insecurity. I felt it once before when the other forgery took place. There seems no safety anywhere. Papers that I keep in my private safe, to which no one has a key but myself, which I never leave open if I leave the room even to go into another room, are taken. Cheque books which I keep there are taken out and cheques stolen. Finally, things are put in—the bundle of notes—for instance. I say that I feel a sense of helplessness, as if everything might be taken from me, and I should be powerless to resist.'

'Let us first get back the certificates,' said George, 'and we will find out and defeat this gang, if it is a gang, of confederates. Yes—it is as you say—the ground itself seems sinking beneath one's feet—when one's own investments are sold for nothing by a letter so like your own writing that it would deceive anybody.'

'Done in the office,' Checkley murmured—'in the office. Same as last time. Well—we shall find him—we shall find him.' He began to bundle the papers back into the safe, murmuring: 'Same as last time—done in the office—we shall find him—we shall find him. We found him before, and we'll find him now.'

CHAPTER XIII.—THE FIRST FIND.

'Yes,' said George, thoughtfully, 'a day or two ought to unravel this matter. We must first, however, before going to the Police, find out as much as we can ourselves. Let me take up the case by myself for a bit.'

'No—no,' Checkley grumbled. 'Police first. Catch the man first.'

'Put aside everything,' said the Chief, 'everything, George. Forget everything until you have found out the mystery of the conspiracy.'

'It looks to me like a Long Firm,' George went on—'a Long Firm with a sham name and a respectable address. Of course there is no such person, really, as Edmund Gray.'

'It is not only the loss—perhaps, let us hope'—Mr Dering sighed—'only a temporary loss; if a real loss, then a most terrible blow—not only that, but it is the sense of insecurity. No one ever found out about that cheque—and here are the notes in the safe all the time.'

'He put 'em in,' said Checkley.

'This is the second time—and the same name still—Edmund Gray. It fills me with uneasiness—I am terrified, George. I know not what may be the next blow—what may be taken from me—my mortgages—my houses—my land—everything. Go. I can do the work of the office—all the work—by myself. But this work I cannot do. I am not able to think about it. These thoughts overpower me and cloud my reason.'

'Well,' said George, 'I will do what I can. I don't suppose there is any Edmund Gray at all: but one must try to find out. There can be no harm in paying a visit to Gray's Inn. If the thing had been done yesterday, it would be necessary to strike at once with a warrant for the arrest of the said Edmund Gray. As it is four months since the last robbery, there

can be small harm in the delay of a day or two. I will go and inquire a little.'

Nothing easier than to inquire. There was the man's address: everybody knows Gray's Inn: everybody knows South Square. The place is only ten minutes' walk from Lincoln's Inn. George took his hat, walked over and proceeded straight to No. 22, expecting to find no such name on the door-posts. On the contrary, there it was. '2d Floor, Mr Edmund Gray,' among the other occupants of the staircase. He mounted the stairs. On the second floor right was the name over the door, Mr Edmund Gray. But the outer door was closed. That is a sign that the tenant of the Chambers is either not at home or not visible. On the first floor were the offices of a Firm of Solicitors. He sent in his card. The name of Dering & Son commands the respectful attention of every solicitor in London. One of the partners received him. The firm of Dering & Son was anxious to see Mr Edmund Gray, who had the Chambers overhead. At what hours was Mr Edmund Gray generally in his rooms? Nobody knew: not either of the partners, not any of the clerks. He might have been met going up and down the stairs, but nobody knew him by sight, or anything about him. This, at first sight, seemed suspicious; afterwards George reflected that men may live for years on the same staircase and never know anything about each other. Men who live in Gray's Inn do not visit each other: there is little neighbourly spirit among men in Chambers, but rather an unspoken distrust.

'But,' said the partner, 'I can tell you who is his landlord. He does not take the rooms of the Inn direct, but as we do, from one who has several sets on a long lease, and sublets the rooms. They may know something about the man at the Steward's office across the Square. If not, the landlord will certainly know.'

George asked if Edmund Gray was newly arrived. No. It appeared that he had been in the Inn for a long time. 'But then,' his informant added, 'he may have been here a hundred years for all we know: we never think of our neighbours in Chambers. Opposite is a man whose name has been over the door as long as I can remember anything. I don't know who he is or what is his business. I don't even know him by sight. So with Mr Edmund Gray. If I were to meet him on the stairs, I should not be any the wiser. You see I am only here in the daytime. Now, the other man on the second floor I do know something about, because he is a coach and was a Fellow of my College. And the man in the garrets I hear about occasionally because he is an old barrister who sometimes defends a prisoner.'

At the Steward's office George put the same question. 'I am a solicitor,' he said. 'Here is my card. I am most anxious to see Mr Edmund Gray of No. 22. Could you save me time by letting me know at what hour he is in his Chambers?'

They could tell him nothing. Mr Gray was not a tenant of the Inn. Very likely he was a residential tenant who came home in the evenings after business.

Everything learned is a step gained. Whether Edmund Gray was a man or a Long Firm, the

name had been on the door for many years. But—many years?—could a confederacy of swindlers go on for many years, especially if they undertook such mighty schemes for plunder as this business?

Next, he went to the address of the landlord. He was a house agent in Bloomsbury, and apparently a person of respectability.

'If you could tell me,' George began with the same question, 'at what hours I could find your tenant in his Chambers; or if you could give me his business address, we should be very greatly obliged. We want to find him at once—to-day—if possible, on very important business.'

'Well, I am sorry, very sorry—but—in fact, I don't know anything about my tenant's hours, nor can I give you his place of business. I believe he has no business.'

'Oh! But you took him as a tenant. You must have had some references.'

'Certainly. And upon that I can satisfy you, very shortly.' He opened a great book and turned over the pages. 'Here it is—to No. 22, South Square, Gray's Inn, Second floor, north side—Edmund Gray, gentleman. Rent £40 a year. Date of taking the rooms, February 1882, at the half-quarter. Reference, Messrs Dering & Son, Solicitors, New Square, Lincoln's Inn.'

'Why—you mean that he referred to us—to Messrs Dering & Son—in the year 1882!'

'That is so. Would you like to see the letter which we received on application? Wait a moment.' He rang the bell, and a clerk appeared, to whom he gave instructions. 'I am bound to say,' the landlord went on, 'that a more satisfactory tenant than Mr Gray does not exist. He pays his rent regularly by Post-office order every quarter on the day before quarter-day.'

'Oh! I wonder'—But he stopped, because to begin wondering is always futile, especially at so early a stage. When there are already accumulated facts to go upon, and not till then, wondering becomes the putting together of the puzzle.

'Well, here is the letter. "Gentlemen"—the house agent read the letter received on application to the reference—"In reply to your letter of the 13th, we beg to inform you that Mr Edmund Gray is a client of ours, a gentleman of independent means, and that he is quite able to pay any reasonable rent for residence or Chambers.—Your obedient servants, DERING & SON."—I suppose,' he added, 'that a man doesn't want a better reference than your own?'

'No; certainly not.' George looked at the letter. It presented as to handwriting exactly the same points of likeness and of difference as all the other letters in this strange case: the body of the letter apparently written in the hand of Mr Dering; that is, so as to deceive everybody: the signature with one or two small omissions. 'Certainly not,' he repeated. 'With such a reference, of course you did not hesitate. Did you ever see Mr Gray?'

'Certainly. I have seen him often. First, when he was getting his rooms furnished, and afterwards on various occasions.'

'What kind of a man is he, to look at?'

'Elderly. Not exactly the kind of man you'd expect to have Chambers. Mostly, they're young

ones who like the freedom. An elderly gentleman: pleasant in his manners: smiling and affable: gray-haired.'

'Oh!' Then there was a real Edmund Gray of ten years' standing in the Inn, who lived or had Chambers at the number stated in the forged letters.

'I suppose,' said the house agent, 'that my respectable tenant has not done anything bad.'

'N-no—not to my knowledge. His name occurs in rather a disagreeable case. Would you be so very kind as to let him know, in case you should meet him—but of course we shall write to him—that we are most anxious to see him?'

This the landlord readily promised. 'There is another person,' he said, 'who can tell you a great deal more than anybody else. That is his laundress. I don't know who looks after him, but you can find out at the Inn. The policeman will know. Go and ask him.'

In the game of battledore and shuttlecock, the latter has no chance except to take the thing coolly, without temper. George was the shuttlecock. He was hit back into Gray's Inn—this time into the arms of the policeman.

'Well, sir,' said the guardian of the peace, 'I do not know anything about the gentleman myself. If he was one of the noisy ones, I should know him. But he isn't, and therefore I have never heard of him. But if he lives at No. 22, I can tell you who does his rooms; and it's old Mrs Cripps, and she lives in Leather Lane.'

This street, which is now, comparatively speaking, purged and cleansed, is not yet quite the ideal spot for one who would have pure air and cleanliness combined with godliness of conversation. However, individual liberty is nowhere more absolutely free and uncontrolled than in Leather Lane.

Mrs Cripps lived on the top floor, nearest to Heaven, of which she ought to be thinking, because she was now old and near her end. She was so old that she was quite past her work, and only kept on Mr Gray's rooms because he never slept there, and they gave her no trouble except to go to them in the morning with a duster and to drop asleep for an hour or so. What her one gentleman gave her, moreover, was all she had to live upon.

Though the morning was warm, she was sitting over the fire watching a small pan, in which she was stewing a savoury mess, consisting of an ornamental block with onions, carrots, and turnips. Perhaps she was thinking—the poor old soul—of the days gone by—gone by for fifty years—when she was young and wore a feather in her hat. Old ladies of her class do not think much about vanished beauty, but they think a good deal about vanished feathers and vanished hats: they remember the old free carriage in the streets with the young friends and the careless laugh and the ready jest. It is the ancient gentlewoman who remembers the vanished beauty and thinks of what she was fifty years ago.

Mrs Cripps heard a step on the narrow stair leading to her room—a manly step. It mounted higher and more slowly, because the stairs were dark as well as narrow. Then the visitor's hat knocked against the door. He opened it, and

stood there looking in. A gentleman! Not a District Visitor or a Sister trying to persuade her to early Church—nor yet the clergyman—a young gentleman.

'You are Mrs Cripps?' he asked. 'The policeman at Gray's Inn directed me here. You are laundress, I believe, to Mr Edmund Gray of No. 22?'

'Suppose I am, sir,' she replied suspiciously. A laundress is like the Hall Porter of a Club: you must not ask her about any of her gentlemen.

'I have called to see Mr Edmund Gray on very important business. I found his door shut. Will you kindly tell me at what hours he is generally in his Chambers?'

She shook her head; but she held out her hand.

The young gentleman placed half a sovereign in her palm. Her fingers closed over the coin. She clutched it, and she hid it away in some secret fold of her ragged dress. There is no woman so ragged, so dropping to pieces with shreds and streamers and tatters, but she can find a safe hiding-place, somewhere in her rags, for a coin or for anything else that is small and precious.

'I never tell tales about my gentlemen,' she said, 'especially when they are young and handsome, like you. A pore laundress has eyes and ears and hands, but she hasn't got a tongue. If she had, there might be terrible, terrible trouble. Oh! dear—yes. But Mr Gray isn't a young gentleman. He's old, and it isn't the same thing.'

'Then,' said George, 'how and when can I find him?'

'I was coming to that. You can't find him. Sometimes he comes, and sometimes he doesn't come.'

'Oh! He doesn't live in the rooms, then?'

'No. He doesn't live in the rooms. He uses the rooms sometimes.'

'What does he use them for?'

'How should I know? All the gentlemen do things with pens and paper. How should I know what they do? They make their money with their pens and paper. I dun know how they do it. I suppose Mr Gray is making his money like the rest of them.'

'Oh! he goes to the Chambers and writes?'

'Sometimes, it's weeks and weeks and months and months before he comes at all. But always my money regular and beforehand sent in an envelope and a postal order.'

'Well, what is his private address? I suppose he lives in the country?'

'I don't know where he lives. I know nothing about him. I go there every morning and I do the room. That's all I know.'

There was no more information to be obtained. Sometimes he came to the Inn; sometimes he stayed away for weeks and weeks and for months and months.

'I might ha' told you more, young gentleman,' murmured the old woman, 'and I might ha' told you less. P'raps you'll come again.'

He went back to Lincoln's Inn and set down his facts.

First, there was a forgery in the year 1882, in which the name of Edmund Gray was used.

Next, in the series of forgeries just discovered, not only was the name of Edmund Gray used throughout, but the handwriting of the letters and cheques was exactly the same as that of the first cheque, with the same peculiarities in the signature. This could hardly be a coincidence. The same man must have written the whole.

Then, who was Edmund Gray?

He was a real personage—a living man—not a Firm—one known to the landlord of the Chambers and to the laundress, if to nobody else. He did not live in the Chambers, but he used them for some business purposes; he sometimes called there and wrote. What did he write? Where was he, and what was he doing when he was not at the Chambers? He might be one—leader or follower—of some secret gang. One has read of such gangs especially in French novels, where the leaders are noble Dukes of the first rank, and Princesses—young, lovely, of the highest fashion. Why should there not be such a gang in London? Clever conspirators could go a very long way before they were even suspected. In this civilisation of cheques and registered shares and official transfers, property is so much defended that it is difficult to break through the armour. But there must be weak places in that armour. It must be possible for the wit of man to devise some plan by means of which property can be attacked successfully. Had he struck such a conspiracy?

Thus. A man calling himself Edmund Gray gets a lease of Chambers by means of a forged letter in answer to a reference. It is convenient for certain conspirators, hereinafter called the company, to have an address, though it may never be used. The conspiracy begins by forging a cheque to his order for £720. That was at the outset, when the conspirators were young. It was found dangerous, and the notes were therefore replaced in the safe. Note, that the company, through one or other of its members, has access to that safe. This might perhaps be by means of a key—in the evening, after office hours: or by some one who was about the place all day.

Very good. The continued connection of some member of the Firm with Dering & Son is proved by the subsequent proceedings. After eight years, the company having matured their machinery, and perhaps worked out with success other enterprises, return to their first quarry, where they have the advantage of access to the letters and can look over their disposition. They are thus enabled to conduct their successive *coups*, each bigger than the one before. And for four months the thing remains undiscovered. Having the certificates in their hands, what was to prevent them from selling the whole and dividing the proceeds? Nothing. Yet, in such a case they would disappear, and here was Edmund Gray still fearlessly at large. Why had he not got clear away long before?

Again—all the correspondence concerning Edmund Gray was carried on between the office and the brokers. There were no letters from Edmund Gray at all. Suppose it should be found impossible to connect Edmund Gray with the transactions carried on in his name. Suppose the real Edmund Gray were to deny any knowledge at all of the transactions. Suppose he were to

say that ten years before he had brought a letter of introduction to Mr Dering, and knew nothing more about him. Well—but the certificates themselves—what about them? Their possession would have to be accounted for. So he turned the matter over and over and arrived at nothing, not even the next step to take.

He went back to the Chief and reported what he had discovered: the existence of an Edmund Gray—the letter of recommendation to the landlord. 'Another forgery,' groaned Mr Dering.

'It is done in the office,' said George. 'It is all done in the office—letters—cheques—everything.'

'The office,' Checkley repeated. 'No doubt about it.'

'Give up everything else, George,' said Mr Dering eagerly—'everything else. Find out—find out. Employ detectives. Spend money as much as you please. I am on a volcano—I know not what may be taken from me next. Only find out, my partner, my dear partner—find out.'

When George was gone, Checkley went after him and opened the door mysteriously, to assure himself that no one was listening.

'What are you going on like that for, Checkley?' asked his master irritably. 'Is it another forgery? It rains forgeries.'

'No—no. Look here. Don't trouble too much about it. Don't try to think how it was done. Don't talk about the other man. Look here. You've sent that young gentleman to find out this business. Well—mark my words: he won't. He won't, I say. He'll make a splash, but he won't find anything. Who found out the last job?'

'You said you did. But nothing was proved.'

'I found that out. Plenty of proof there was. Look here'—his small eyes twinkled under his shaggy eyebrows—'I'll find out this job as well, see if I don't. Why'—He rubbed his hands. 'Ho! ho! I have found out. Don't ask me—don't put a single question. But—I've got 'em—oh! I've got 'em, I've got 'em for you—as they say—on toast.'

THE STORY OF A GREAT LIBRARY.

AMONG the many notable buildings which adorn the city of Oxford, few possess more interest to all intelligent persons than the institution known for almost three centuries as the Bodleian Library. It is one of the chief glories of that noble seat of learning. Sir Thomas Bodley, however, from whom the name is derived, was not the original founder of the University Library. A collection of a kind had existed for upwards of two centuries before Bodley's day, and to Bishop Thomas Cobham of Worcester belongs the honour of being the originator. It was the first lending library on record, and its primitive nature may be gathered from the fact that the books were kept in boxes and given out under pledges. This was the tiny rill which in the years to come was to broaden into a majestic river, spreading its beneficent influences over all the land. The gradual development of this great institution, second only in importance to the British Museum Library, is of considerable

interest, and, fortunately, we are able to trace it under the guidance of an accomplished official, Mr W. Dunn Macray, who two years ago signalised fifty years of 'glad labour' within its walls by the publication of a second edition of the *Annals of the Bodleian Library*, originally issued in 1868. In the volume we have details, more or less minute, of the progress of the library from year to year down to 1881, and imbedded in these details is a large amount of curious out-of-the-way matter not to be found elsewhere.

The first benefactions to the library were of course manuscripts. The art of printing as yet was not. Among the early donors may be mentioned with honour Duke Humphrey of Gloucester—of whose six hundred manuscripts it is mournfully recorded that only six survive; Richard of Bury, Bishop of Durham, but better known as the author of the work called *Philobiblon*; and Thomas Kempe, Bishop of London. Gradually, as the contributions increased, the room became too small, and a new building was completed in 1480, which now forms the central portion of the great reading-room. Almost in its infancy the library suffered a terrible disaster, not by accident, or from an enemy, but from those who ought to have been its friends. The Commissioners deputed by Edward VI. for reformation of the universities visited Oxford in 1550, and executed their duties in a very iconoclastic and barbarous fashion, destroying, 'without examination, all manuscripts ornamented by illuminations or rubricated initials, as eminently Popish.' Anthony à Wood mentions that many of these precious documents 'were burned, and others were sold to tailors for their measures, and to bookbinders for their covers, and the like, until not one remained.' But life has its compensations. Some years after this 'pillage and waste,' an undergraduate entered at Magdalen, and the soul of the young student burnt with shame and indignation at the vandalism which had taken place. This was Thomas Bodley, belonging to a family of good repute in Exeter. After several years at the university, he entered the diplomatic service, and was employed in various missions during the reign of Elizabeth. On retiring from public life, he resolved to restore the library of his *alma mater*. As he quaintly puts on record: 'I concluded at the last to set up my staffe at the libraire-dore in Oxon; being throughly perswaded that in my solitude and surcease from the commonwealth affayers, I could not busie myselfe to better purpose than by redusing that place to the publique use of students.'

During the closing years of the sixteenth century, Bodley was busy fitting up the building, and gathering contributions both in books and money; he likewise bestowed upon it a handsome sum himself as an endowment. At last, on November 8, 1603, the library, consisting of two thousand volumes, was opened with great ceremony. The year following, Bodley was knighted by James I., who jocularly remarked on the occasion that for his good deeds he ought to be called Sir Thomas Godley, rather than Bodley.

During the three centuries which have elapsed, twelve head-librarians have presided over the Bodleian. The first of these, Thomas James by name, was selected by the founder himself. It is

amusing to notice that shortly after his appointment he petitioned for an increase of his stipend, and also that he might be allowed to take a wife, which was contrary to the regulations, clerical celibacy at that period being more common than now. The rules were framed, apparently, on the supposition that the library was to be the only spouse of the librarian, and that if he took another, it would be a divided allegiance. The poor man eventually got his wife, a point being reluctantly stretched in his favour; but the absurd regulation as to celibacy was not relaxed till the year 1813, and even then, the person appointed must be unmarried when elected, but could marry afterwards, a curious example of academical compromise. Only in 1856 was the restriction entirely removed. It was also ordained that the librarian 'should have livery given him of the best cloth worn by gentlemen.'

The progress of the institution at different periods varies much; in later years the books increasing at an infinitely accelerated rate. In 1649 the volumes had accumulated to 15,975, one-third being folios. By 1714 the shelves contained 30,169 volumes of printed books, and 5916 volumes of manuscripts. In 1849 the number was 220,000; in 1860, 350,000; and in 1888, 440,000 printed books! This is the largest collection in the United Kingdom, with the exception of the library of the British Museum, which now contains 1,500,000 printed volumes.

Mr Macray remarks that in the beginning of the seventeenth century there were only two other libraries in Europe open to the public—one in Rome, and the other in Milan, the famous Mazarin Library in Paris having only been opened in 1643. This may account for the large number of foreigners, chiefly Danes, Swedes, and North Germans, making use of the Oxford Library. The total number of foreigners entered in the *Liber Admissorum* between 1683 and 1714 was 244. Regarding the lending out of books, the practice seems to have varied. In the earliest period, as already noticed, books were given out; but later on we find that both Charles I. and Cromwell were refused books by Rous, the librarian. The rule, however, was afterwards relaxed, for mention is made of the serious losses to the library from the practice of allowing books to be lent; but in 1888 it was finally agreed that no books were to be given out to any one, except in particular cases and by a special vote of Convocation. King Charles was more fortunate in getting a loan during his troubles from the funds of the library of £500, which was never repaid. The sum was kept on as an asset from 1642 till 1782, when it was finally written off as a bad debt.

Like the British Museum, the Bodleian has been munificently helped by many benefactors. Some of the earliest have been already mentioned; but other names are also to be had in remembrance, such as Archbishop Laud, Rawlinson, Selden, Malone, Douce, Sir F. Madden. The journals and other papers of the last named—the late keeper of the manuscripts in the British Museum—were bequeathed to the Oxford institution with the remarkable condition that the box in which they are contained is not to be opened till the 1st day of January 1920. Among smaller donors are Pope, Burton—author of the *Anatomy of*

Melancholy—Fairfax, Baskett, who presented a magnificent copy of the 'Vinegar' Bible in vellum. In 1620 Milton sent a copy of his Poems with a Latin ode in his own handwriting; but this and another volume were afterwards thrown out amid a heap of duplicates as worthless. About the same time James I. presented a copy of his works to both Oxford and Cambridge universities, receiving in return from the authorities of both an amount of sickening flattery almost past belief. What will be thought of George Herbert, at the time Public Orator at Cambridge, bespattering His Majesty in this fulsome fashion? 'Now that we are sprinkled with the royal ink, there is no subject too sublime for us; we can cut our way through all controversies. Would that some Jesuit might now be given us, in order that by mere friction against your Majesty's book we might pulverise the man forthwith.' Doubtless, James received all this adulation as proper and becoming. The donations, however, were not always of a literary or artistic nature—books, pictures, and the like. There were at different times such odd gifts as Guy Fawkes' lantern, a crocodile, a dried body of a negro boy, a sea-elephant, a negro baby preserved in spirits—which, the narrator observes, 'has unaccountably disappeared'—various clog almanacs, a primstaff calendar, a pair of Queen Elizabeth's gloves, and a Latin translation of an Italian sermon, written and translated by Her Majesty, as a new-year's gift to Edward VI.

There are several notices relating to the agreement with the Stationers' Company, by which they bound themselves to supply a copy of every new book to the library in return for certain advantages received. The first arrangement was made in 1610; and a hundred years later a parliamentary enactment was obtained, granting the privilege of getting copies of all new publications to nine libraries, subsequently increased to eleven—a grievous burden to publishers—but eventually reduced to five: the British Museum; the Bodleian; University Library, Cambridge; the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh; and Trinity College, Dublin. Much laxity seems to have existed, until of late years, in regard both to the proper surveillance of the works received, and also with respect to rejecting trifling or worthless publications. These matters now receive careful attention; and so exact is the practice in the Bodleian that nothing is rejected, even a blacking label or some special brand of whisky being duly entered. Interesting illustrations are also afforded of the greatly enhanced value during the last half-century of early-printed books, and still more recently, of first editions—the latest literary craze. The practice formerly in the Bodleian seems to have been to sell or give away first and early editions, when subsequent issues appeared, judging, very properly, it may be thought, that the later editions were presumably an improvement on the earlier. Early-printed books are, however, in a different category, and the comparative appreciation in which these are now held affords evidence of a more intelligent estimate of the literary history of the past. As examples of the enormous increase of value, we find, in 1788, that Steevens estimated a first folio Shakespeare as worth eight pounds,

while in 1887 the same volume was appraised by Mr Quaritch at £785. Again, in 1793, a superb copy of the Mazarin Bible was purchased by the curators of the Bodleian for £100; and in 1884, a copy, probably not so good, was sold at a public sale for £3900. While on the subject of Bibles, an extraordinary incident may be narrated here. In the year 1750, volume one of the Vulgate, on vellum, printed in 1462 by Fust and Schœffer, was bought for £2, 10s. It wanted eighteen leaves at the end; but, marvellous to relate, fourteen of these eighteen leaves were found in the bottom of a box of manuscripts sent to the library from Venice in 1818, and identified as belonging to the volume purchased in England sixty-eight years before.

One or two other extracts of a miscellaneous character may form a concluding paragraph. In 1620 there is a decision of the authorities which is a good example of the grandmotherly legislation of the period. The ordinance was to the effect that 'heretical and schismatical books are not to be read without leave of the Vice-chancellor and the Regius Professor of Divinity.' Seventeen years after this (in 1637), the 'Decree of the Starre Chamber concerning Printing' was issued, which evoked Milton's noble argument to the Parliament of England for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing—the famous *Areopagitica*. An item of a less serious nature occurs under 1687, at a grand banquet given to James II. when visiting the library. 'Upon the king rising to depart, a scene of strange indecorum ensued; the rabble of courtiers and academics rushed upon the mass of untouched dainties, and began a disorderly scramble, in which they flung the wet sweetmeats on the ladies' linnen and petticoats and stained them.' The oddest fragment in the book, however, is a story current about 1648, that some rich Jews, with a view to supply King Charles with funds, had offered £600,000 for St Paul's Cathedral and the Bodleian Library, the former to be used as a great metropolitan synagogue. The editor, by the way, does not vouch for the truth of the story, which certainly looks somewhat apocryphal.

A BOYCOTTED BABY.

CHAPTER II.—JEM'S WIFE.

At home every one knew by the master's looks that something had happened; but no one dared to question him. Not a word did he speak to his wife as to what had taken place. The dinner to Lord Polonius and his daughter was not again mentioned. Perhaps Matthew's intention was to let his wife discover for herself; if so, he carried it out long enough to cause her a good deal of anxiety. James Bulbous, according to rule, had always dined at home on Sundays, usually staying from Saturday till Monday; but for two Sundays after these events he did not appear, nor did he write. Matthew Bulbous still was silent, and his wife was afraid to speak. She knew that her husband was aware of the reason of her son's absence. At last, neither seeing nor hearing from her son, the mother's anxiety conquered her fear.

'Matthew,' she said, following him as he went

towards his 'study' one evening after dinner—'Matthew!' He halted, and looked round. Her hand timidly touched his arm, and she could hardly speak. 'Jem,' she said, 'is anything—the matter?'

'As far as I know, he is quite well,' he answered coldly. He walked away, leaving her standing in the middle of the hall. At the door of the study, however, he stopped and thought for a while. 'Come with me,' he then said; 'I have something to tell you.'

Mrs Bulbous followed her husband into the room, and sank into a chair, trembling. She knew he had ill news to communicate, and Matthew Bulbous showed little consideration for her feelings in his method of telling it.

'You want to know about your son,' he said. 'Very well. I'll soon tell you all I know, and I daresay you will think it enough—of the kind. He has been married for six or seven months.'

She gasped, and slightly raised her hands with a gesture of dismay. Then, clasping them tightly, she stared at the husband, who proceeded: 'Who or what is she? Of course, as a mother and a woman, you are deeply interested to know. Who she is, I cannot tell. What she is—or has been—I can tell. Your son's wife'—

'Matthew!' She leaped up with a cry—this gentle and timid woman—and stood panting before him, with heaving bosom and blazing eyes. Matthew Bulbous was startled, but only for a brief time; his big hard eyes and set face soon reduced her, and she sank in the chair with a moan.

'If you doubt it, send for him and her. She'll come to you quick enough; but take care of yourself! How would you like to see her in your house—your son's wife—beside your daughter—in her painted and impudent ugliness, in her tawdry finery and rags? Why, woman, to look at her,' he exclaimed, extending his arm towards the door, as though his son's wife were standing there—'to look at her is to feel sick! A creature you would cross the road to avoid—a degraded animal, whom your very avoidance would rouse to tear and claw you. Yes, send for her, by all means; one interview will be enough.'

'Jem, Jem, Jem!' murmured the poor woman, sobbing. It was indeed harder to her than to her husband to realise that the young man could have fallen into such folly, and she felt the agony of which her husband was insensible.

He had been lured into it—trapped into it—drugged into it. It was blasphemy against nature to suppose that he had voluntarily done such a thing, with all his faculties at his command.

Mrs Bulbous, after this, was practical enough to mourn her son as dead. She knew he should never pass his father's door again. Week passed after week, and nothing was heard from him. His name was never mentioned. He was dead and gone out of their lives. His chambers had been given up—as the mother learned in some indirect way—and he had disappeared.

The room James Bulbous had been in the habit of occupying when he slept at Blackheath was locked up now—locked by Mr Bulbous

himself, who kept the key of it. The night he locked it there was a little incident which is worth relating. There were several photographs on the table, framed; the mother and sister, some friends, and that of a very lovely girl with dark eyes. Mr Bulbous examined this curiously for half a minute, holding it in his hand; with the other hand he turned over a small heap of photographs of noted persons, such as you see in shop windows.

'An actress—or a dancer—or one of that sort,' he remarked, having another look at the picture, and throwing it on the heap with the others. 'I never thought he was that kind of fellow.'

Two days before Christmas, he had a brief note from his brother Joseph—which was the first communication between them since that day at Chelsea—inquiring whether Matthew still meant him to emigrate. Matthew seemed to have forgotten the project; but he sent a message to his brother to come to the office at three o'clock the next day. Punctually to the minute Joseph was there, and the clerk was sent out of the room.

'If you still mean it,' observed Joseph, with the manner of a man resuming an interrupted conversation, 'I would prefer New Zealand. The climate is better, and I couldn't go to Canada for months yet. I don't care for Canada.'

'As you please,' said Matthew indifferently. 'Let it be New Zealand, then; and as you are in a hurry to go, the sooner the better. Go to the tailor's and order an outfit. I'll see to the rest.'

Then there was a pause. There seemed no more to be said on the particular subject. After a while, Joseph inquired concerning the health of his brother's wife and daughter, then there was another pause. At last Matthew asked if Joseph knew anything about Jem.

'I didn't like to mention his name first, Matthew,' he answered. 'Yes; I saw him last night. He supports himself by writing for the papers and things now.'

'Yes. Anything else?'

'Well—his wife is'—

'Stop!' Joseph stopped very quickly, and looked at his brother.

Matthew's face was dark, but presently it cleared, and he observed: 'I feel no interest in that quarter. I asked about Jem. I didn't want to hear about her.'

'I thought you might be interested to know'—

'That there's a baby?' said Matthew, with a grin that showed his mouth to great disadvantage. 'I'm sure I'm delighted!'

'To know,' continued Joseph, not heeding the interruption, 'that Jem's wife is—dead.'

Matthew Bulbous leaped to his feet. He drew back the chair, and looked intently at his brother. 'Dead, did you say? When did she die? What did she die of? There's no mistake about this?'

'Died yesterday morning. Found dead in her bed. Heart disease, the doctor said. No mistake at all, Matthew, as you may see for yourself if you like to attend her funeral tomorrow.'

'I attend her funeral? I'd see the woman—ahem; well, that sort all end that way. I'm not

a bit surprised,' he observed, with a deep-drawn sigh of relief.

He could not sit on the chair now. He walked about the room with his hands in his pockets. Mr Matthew Bulbous was powerfully excited, for the liberation of his son was fraught with momentous possibilities. But as Joseph was sitting there, eyeing him with a curious interest, and waiting to be sent away, Matthew had to come back to him.

'You may come over to Blackheath to-morrow, if you like,' he said, 'after the funeral. You are going to the funeral, I suppose?'

'Yes, I'm going.'

'Come over after the funeral. As it will be Christmas Day, you may stay for dinner if you like. What hour is the funeral to be?'

'Two o'clock.'

'Come over immediately afterwards. I shall expect you at four. Have you any money?'

He took a few sovereigns from his waistcoat pocket and threw them on the table. Joseph Bulbous picked them up and went away.

After his brother's departure, Matthew Bulbous sat down and leaned back in the chair with his large eyes staring vacantly at the inkstand on the table. His senses were unconscious of outward things—even of the absence of the clerk, who was idly waiting outside to be summoned back to his work. Bulbous was filled with deep and absorbing joy. Jen's wife was dead. The detested obstacle to his ambitious projects was removed. It was not unreasonable to suppose that the event must be a happy relief to the young man himself. The experience would chasten and subdue him, and generally be good for him. After just a little delay, sufficient to wipe out the last miserable vestige of the late wife's memory, the young man would be ready to accept with gladness his father's schemes. Jen's wife was dead. Oh, the silent and mighty upheaval of Matthew Bulbous's energies, paralysed for the time by his son's unfortunate marriage, now that friendly Death had undone it, in fairly good time! Everything would, and should come right now—now, that Jen's wife was dead.

Matthew's action was prompt. Jumping into a cab he drove to Lord Polonius's club, and found that nobleman there. His lordship received him civilly, but curiously. Lady Jessalinda was quite well, he politely assured Mr Bulbous; and then the latter proceeded to business, stating the case briefly and clearly. At first the Earl listened with an affectation of polite indifference; but he soon showed his interest. Mr Bulbous explained very plainly the folly of his son, and the bitterness of his repentance, and assured Lord Polonius that the young man was ready now to do his part with proper spirit to promote the early realisation of the project upon which they were both so cordially agreed a few months ago. Bulbous did not put his thought in words, but he felt no apprehension of his son's matrimonial prospects having been interfered with by the addresses of another suitor in the interval.

'Well—ah—really, Mr Bulbous, it requires consideration,' observed Lord Polonius gravely.

'Why should it?' Mr Bulbous asked, the case not being one for sentiment. 'It has been considered already in all its points. Unless, indeed,'

he added, as an act of politeness of which he privately did not see the necessity, 'unless Lady Jessalinda'—

'Yes, that's it,' said his lordship quickly; 'we do not know exactly how Lady Jessalinda will regard it. Ladies are sensitive of such an experience, and, as a rule, do not prefer newly-made widowers. We must take all this into consideration.'

Matthew Bulbous, anxious as he was about his project, began to stiffen. He suspected that this clever old peer was laying himself out to extract further pecuniary concessions. 'Do you propose to reopen the matter with Lady Jessalinda, my lord?' he asked, with ominous coolness.

'I did not mean to leave any doubt as to that,' said Lord Polonius, who, from his own private interests, was as anxious as Matthew Bulbous to carry out the project; 'it is as to the result that there may be a little doubt. I only meant to imply that, naturally, it will be less easy to win Lady Jessalinda's consent now than it was a few months ago.'

In private, Matthew Bulbous was not so sure about this; but still, women were women, and there was no counting on their whims. Lord Polonius, in conclusion, promised to drop in upon him later in the afternoon, and Mr Bulbous took his departure.

At six o'clock his lordship called. 'I have spoken to Lady Jessalinda,' said Lord Polonius in a confidential whisper, 'and I think we may venture to hope that—ah—matters may in time—ah—not impossibly resume their former footing. Of course we must allow a little time, so as to forget the—a certain episode. Then, we may proceed again.'

'That will do,' said Matthew Bulbous, understanding aright the meaning conveyed by the Earl's circumlocution. 'How long will it take?'

'Well, as to that, we can lay down nothing definite. Now, if your son would go abroad for a while'—

'He's going,' said Mr Bulbous promptly; 'but the question is, how long is he to stay abroad?'

'He can be recalled when it is considered judicious,' said Lord Polonius. 'Of course he will keep you advised of his address. I do not think,' he added, lowering his voice again and significantly pressing Mr Bulbous's hand, 'his exile need be very long.'

Matthew gave a gratified smile, which our American cousins would describe as of large dimensions; but the next moment an observation casually made by Lord Polonius quickly changed the expression of his face.

'Of course,' his lordship observed, pulling on his gloves, 'there is hardly need to mention it, but of course the understanding is entirely upon the assumption that there is no surviving issue of the—the marriage?'

These were ominous and startling words, because the Earl meant them, and they suggested a possibility of which Matthew had not thought before. But the situation was critical and he was equal to it.

'No, my lord,' he answered with confidence, 'there is no child of that marriage.'

'Ah, that is satisfactory. I trust everything will go on well now,' said the Earl; and then he

took a gracious farewell of Mr Bulbous for the present.

Matthew Bulbous went home in high spirits. His old luck had not deserted him, after all. He felt himself to be a man who could not fail. He might have known himself better than to have felt beaten by Jem's marriage. Here was the demonstration that he was still the same successful man!

The church bells were ringing as he walked up the frosty road from the station. As a rule, it was a noise he hated; but to-night the bells pealed a tune that gladdened his heart.

'Jem's—wife—is—dead!

Jem's—wife—is—dead dead dead!

Jem's—wife—is—dead dead dead DEAD!

So the bells rang out in the clear frosty sky. Matthew Bulbous laughed, and wished them a Merry Christmas.

At dinner, his wife and daughter were struck with the exuberance of his spirits. After dinner he made Agnes play several 'lively' pieces on the piano—an instrument he only loved less than church bells—and said something about buying her a new one. For the keys gave out the same carol as the bells, no matter what she played.

Later on, he called his wife into his study, and exultingly announced the great news to her. The result startled him.

'Matthew!' she exclaimed, with natural horror, 'surely you are not rejoicing over the poor creature's sudden death!'

'Surely I am, though. Pray, why shouldn't I?' he demanded defiantly.

'It is wicked—horrible! No, Matthew,' his wife said with a shudder, 'she is dead, and past all enmity.'

'I have no enmity,' he growled. 'She wasn't a fit subject for enmity. But I say what I feel, and I cannot but feel glad. Have you no thought for your son? Are you sorry for his release?'

But his wife, without further word, left the room, and Matthew Bulbous put down his pipe, pushed away the half-consumed toddy, and stared angrily in the fire. When he was angry, it was a sign he was conscious of having made a mistake. Undoubtedly, he was glad of the woman's death, and believed he had a right to be glad; but perhaps the exhibition of his joy was not exactly proper. After all, Jem's wife was dead, and could do no further harm. As the harm which she had done was being happily remedied, it might have been better to ignore the fact that she had ever existed. And considering her miserable life and miserable end, her death was probably an unworthy and indecent subject for exultation.

Matthew Bulbous was a coarsely-bred man, not free from superstition, and at heart a coward. Hence the words of his wife disturbed him, and howsoever he might have despised his son's wife when living, he was not so sure that the dead could be treated with the same impunity. In fact, he uneasily felt that on the whole it was best to leave the dead alone. In the fading embers of the fire, the wasted and rigid face of the poor creature who had already passed before her Judge met his eyes oftener than he cared. With the

fire, his energy of mind seemed to sink also, lower and lower as the time passed.

Just as the chimes of midnight startled him, as from a troubled sleep, the most extraordinary thing came to pass that ever happened to Matthew Bulbous. The door opened, and a female figure glided into the room. The lamp was turned low, and he could not see her distinctly; a shawl hung over her head, half concealing her face, and the gloom hid the rest of it; but he experienced a strange and unaccountable sense of recognition. He was convinced he had seen the face before—he knew not when or where—though he certainly did not see it now. She did not speak for some time, but stood before him in a silent and expectant attitude, as though he had sent for her. The strangest thing was that he knew this to be the apparition of his son's wife, while at the same time it was certain that the invisible face was not the face of the dead woman.

Jem's wife had been so much in his thoughts, that this sudden visitation took him, in a manner, at a great disadvantage. But it was nevertheless a situation of a character with which he was not well fitted to cope. Some time elapsed, therefore, before he could bring himself to address her with an inquiry, in a respectful and conciliatory tone, as to her identity and business. She turned slowly towards him and told him (as he expected) who she was.

This confirmation, in spoken words, of his previous conviction had the effect of disturbing his mental equilibrium still further. In vain, rallying his courage, he assured her she was mistaken—that Jem's wife was dead, and was to be buried at two o'clock next day—that she had been found dead in her bed, dead of heart disease, brought on by her own conduct, as the doctor said. This discharge of hard facts and exact information seemed not to affect her in the smallest degree. Then it occurred to him to summon the butler, and he rang the bell with nervous energy. The effect amazed him, but seemed not to disconcert his visitor in the least. The butler and other servants were either not in the house, or they were buried in the sleep of the Seven Sleepers, or they were all dead. For the bell rang loud and long down the passage, up the stairs, through all the rooms in the house, and finally passed up the chimneys, and died away in the sky; but no person answered it.

Matthew Bulbous listened to this extraordinary performance with fear perspiring from every pore. He felt now there was nothing left but to ask his visitor humbly to state her business. He abjectly pleaded that he was tired and wanted to go to bed. Then the dark reproachful eyes settled upon him, from out the shadow, with a gentle scorn which caused him to look another way as she delivered her message. They had been happy, her husband and she, and did not want Matthew Bulbous's money. He had cast off his son because he failed to marry him to a grand lady. He was rejoicing now because the son's wife was dead and the grand lady might still become his wife. The visitor knew all Matthew's thoughts and schemes. Very well; but she added, with a movement that made him start, that she had left a baby, and would hold him to account for it. 'According as you are

kind and just to it, I will be merciful to you. It has no mother, and you must supply my place !'

A dim apprehension of consequences likely to arise from the existence of a baby passed like a cold wave over Matthew Bulbous. Did she know the assurance he had given Lord Polonius, and was she warning him? Did she mean that, to supply her place, he was to get Jem immediately married to Lady Jessalinda? There were doubts on this point; it was contrary to all experience of her sex that she should be anxious to be quickly succeeded by another wife, and to place her baby on the bosom of a stepmother; and it was extremely doubtful whether Lady Jessalinda would consent to dedicate herself to that maternal office.

But he gave his solemn promise to look after the child; and as he spoke the words, there was a knock at the door. Looking up, he discovered that his visitor was gone. With the instinct of a man of business, his first thought was whether she had heard him make that promise concerning the baby. He would have given a thousand pounds to be certain she had not heard the words. Could she possibly, he asked himself, have heard them, seeing that she was gone when he looked up?

The appearance of the butler at the door, inquiring if his master wanted anything further that night, gave him a considerable start; and he rose to his feet quickly, looking hard at the spot where the visitor had been standing during the late interview.

'No, Perks,' he answered absently, drawing a deep respiration. 'I—I believe I have been asleep !'

But the conviction that he had been dreaming did not restore a tranquil mind. All night through his thoughts were haunted with shadowy fears. That face, hidden from physical perception, but still familiar though unaccountable, was no trick of fancy. And he could by no effort rid himself of the fear that the baby might be a dread reality, worse to face than the ill-starred marriage which it sprang from—a reality that would have to be 'boycotted' with vigour and thoroughness.

NAVAL SAVINGS-BANKS.

WITH a desire of promoting and encouraging habits of thrift among our sailors and marines, and placing their hitherto neglected finances upon a satisfactory footing, an Act was passed in 1866 for the establishment of Naval Savings-banks. By this enactment, power was given to the Admiralty to institute them. It was also decreed that regulations for their guidance were to be made by Orders in Council. The Privy Council were further empowered to prescribe the rate of interest to be paid to depositors. This was in no case to exceed £3, 15s. per cent. per annum. It was also ordained that all Orders emanating from the same high authority regulating the conduct of these banks should be notified in the *London Gazette*. Furthermore, it was provided that a balance-sheet, showing by full information the result of their operation, should be annually laid before both Houses of Parliament.

Nor were these pecuniary safeguards, which have so materially contributed to the welfare of those who constitute the bone and sinew of our ships of war, unneeded. For surely there was cause and effect enough to account for this wise and judicious measure. In the absence of such auxiliaries to aid economy during the term of a long roving commission, the baneful result was, that when ships were paying off, or when paid off, our men's pockets were invariably at dead low-water mark. Succeeding generations have changed the fashion somewhat; but even nowadays Jack and Joe, with any superfluous cash about them, are often distinguished for the indulging of profuse generosity almost amounting to unjustifiable rashness and folly. Moreover, it was no easy task to implant the seeds of economy into the lower ranks of our navy. Just as the Admiralty comprehended it to be their best policy to promote all possible improvements on the lower decks of our warships, and create a desire on the part of those who man them to put by something for a rainy day, so there was, at first, on the part of the men a great disposition to behold such laudable efforts put forth on their behalf with comparative passiveness and unconcern. In recent years, however, a remarkable change and astonishing improvement have taken place. Slowly but surely those for whose special benefit these banks were organised began to realise the inestimable advantages thus conferred upon them. That these institutions have now gained abundant favour and large custom, the following facts and figures, taken from the last Account presented to Parliament, proclaim.

The accounts open and opened during the financial year numbered 24,966. This stream of business formed a remarkably striking percentage of the 38,388 seamen and 12,066 marines then serving in the fleet and at marine headquarters. In the same period 7341 accounts were registered closed; thus leaving the final number of those men of sense and economical resolution standing at the highly respectable total of 17,625; a pretty satisfactory proof how freely these banks have been taken advantage of. The addition of £146,431, 18s. to swell the deposits is particularly excellent, which is more than can be said concerning £145,683, 7s. 8d., representing withdrawals. The accumulated savings, including £7338, 11s. 4d. accrued as interest, stood at £201,505, 16s. 8d. A gratifying surplus of £1804, 17s. 2d. raises this total to £203,310, 13s. 10d. as the net balance standing to our men's credit. These figures show that each depositor's acquisition averages £11, 9s. a head. Considering that the mean pay of an able seaman—continuous and non-continuous service—is only 1s. 5½d. a day, or £26, 10s. a year; whilst that of a marine private is a paltry 1s. 2d., or £21, 5s. 10d. annually; and in addition that bluejackets have to provide themselves with an extensive and expensive kit out of their scanty wage, the signifi-

cance of these returns cannot be overrated. Another benefit, too, was reaped which was none of the least: a sum of £5839, 5s. 3d., paid as interest, undoubtedly proved a source of pleasure and satisfaction to the saving, and of dolefulness to the improvident.

The regulations governing these banks are simple, intelligible, and altogether free from the proverbial red-tapeism usually so eminently characteristic of Admiralty ventures. In them there is a strong family likeness to the Post-office Banks. The interest paid afloat, £3, 15s. per cent., is, however, better. Unlike them, there is no limit to the amount which may be deposited in one year. Their general supervision is vested in the Commanding Officer. The Paymaster is regarded as their manager, with the Accountant Staff as his assistants. The banks are open for transacting business whenever monthly advances are paid, and failing 'advances' being required the captain shall settle a day for them to be open. He has also to appoint a commissioned officer to attend personally and witness receipts and payments. In cases of necessity, the latter are made at any time. Each depositor is furnished with a neat and strong pass-book, which bears on the corner his official or regimental number. In this all entries are verified both by the Paymaster and officer witnessing payments or withdrawals. When a depositor leaves one ship, his deposit can be transferred to another, although pay and savings-bank documents are quite unconnected, and studiously kept distinct, except the Paymaster's cash account, in which are debited and credited respectively the amounts deposited and withdrawn. Whenever depositors are discharged, promoted, or paid off, their deposits can be transferred to a Post-office Bank; assigned for payment at the Admiralty; remitted for payment at the men's own homes; paid in cash by the Paymaster in the presence of the captain; or, all or part can be transferred to a dockyard bank. In the case of marines, their deposits are transferred to the Naval Savings-banks of their respective divisions, or they may elect any of the foregoing methods of disposing of their savings. Should a death occur, the account is sent, together with the deceased's pass-book, to the Accountant-general of the navy for settlement with his representatives.

There is a striking peculiarity, too, about these banks. They are perfect models of skilful and economical management, their cost to the country altogether being only £144, 19s. annually!—a writer, exclusively employed at Portsmouth on this work, and non-commissioned officers of the royal marines, acting as clerks, receiving pay and allowances only. The remainder of the whole compass of this business is performed by Accountant Staff on board ship—in addition to their own work—without any remuneration whatever. This cheap method of working indicates that the public interests are most carefully studied. It is hardly possible, however, that such a one-sided arrangement satisfies both parties.

An institution like this, as it gradually gains strength in our royal naval service, cannot fail to exercise a corrective and restraining operation upon squandering propensities and infuse a decided taste for frugality. Nor is this spirit of self-denial, growing in the ranks of our sailors and

marines, unattended with solid and substantial happiness even after their rough and adventurous service career has given place to retirement and tranquillity.

BRONCHOS.

EVERY person in the West of the United States of America is familiar with the word *Broncho* and its meaning; even the uneducated cowboy will tell you a 'Broncho' is a wild-horse. Webster derives the word from the Spanish *bronco*, rough, wild. Whether these horses are of Spanish origin, such as are found on the prairies of Texas and Mexico, or the result of breeding between the Indian ponies and well-bred horses, such as roam in immense herds in California, Oregon, Washington Territory, and Montana, it makes no difference, for these animals in their wild state are all properly called bronchos. Neither size nor build has anything to do with the name, for there are bronchos large enough to be used as stage and draught horses, as well as those smaller ponies used by the cowboys to run cattle with. The generally prevailing idea, except amongst those who work with these horses, is, that a broncho must necessarily be a small vicious pony, only fitted for the cattle-camp; but such in reality is not the case, for in many of the herds in the northern Territories where attention has been given to breeding, large well-built powerful horses can be found which would never be recognised, after they are broken, as half-breeds, except for the brand of the owner of the herd burnt on the animal's hip or shoulder.

The bronchos of the South are easily recognised from those bred in the North by their smaller size and slighter build, as well as by the brands. Especially is the latter feature noticeable, because, as a rule, the Texan or Mexican owner brands with Spanish characters, and often covers the whole hip and shoulder with deep-burnt scars, which have more the appearance of the map of some uncivilised country, and are wholly unintelligible to residents of the North. As they differ in size and build, so do they differ in disposition. Here is where blood tells; and while the southern broncho represents in a marked degree the disposition of the Greaser (low-type Mexican) and Indian, the northern specimen mirrors the more trustworthy and substantial qualities possessed by the miner, lumberman, and farmer.

The broncho of Spanish origin as a rule is never thoroughly broken, no matter how old he grows or how hard he is ridden; a short rest is all that is necessary for his untamable and often vicious spirit to assert itself. Many an old cow-pony which has been ridden for years will invariably buck every time he is mounted. That bucking is peculiar to bronchos; and from personal observation, I have discovered that the southern-bred is entitled to the distinction of being able to buck harder, faster, and with more variations, as it were, than its northern cousin. He can arch his back higher, get his nose nearer the ground, at the same time that his body is in the air, and strike the ground with all four feet nearer in one place than any of his half-bred

cousins of the North ever thought of doing. While as a general rule the northern broncho never bucks after he is fairly well broken, his Spanish cousin as a general rule bucks both before he is broken and afterwards.

While the different climatic influence and breeding has given the northern and southern distinctive characteristics in some respects, in one—that of endurance—no difference can be discovered. No matter how long the road, the broncho will reach the end of it. For one to travel sixty or sixty-five miles between sunrise and sunset, and repeat the performance for more than one day, is no extraordinary test of endurance; in fact, ponies weighing no more than seven or eight hundred pounds have been known to carry a heavy man that distance and show no bad effects afterwards. The Indians will often ride a two-year-old colt at a gallop for a distance of ten or fifteen miles without drawing rein, then dismount, let it graze and drink; remount, and repeat the dose. But among the whites it rarely if ever happens that they break a broncho before it is four.

Until breeders commenced raising this class of horses in the North, only one means was ever used to break them. The idea that a Spanish broncho could be better broken by care and kindness never entered the heads of the *vacqueros*, as the riders of wild-horses are called in the South. The lasso was used to catch the animal wanted, and at once it was thrown, blindfolded, and a saddle girthed or, as we say, 'snicked' on its back; then, without a moment's delay, the *vacquero* mounted, drew the folds from the frightened and maddened animal's eyes, and drove the big spurs deep into its sides. The fight for mastery was thus inaugurated, and a regular bucking entertainment commenced. The rider's main object was to get the horse to running, instead of making a series of high jumps and alighting almost on the same spot each time with nose to the ground and all four feet as nearly close together as it is possible to place them. Usually, you may consider your broncho conquered if you can get it to run; but otherwise, it may conquer the most accomplished and daring *vacquero*, because the continued force of the beast's striking the ground will after a while cause blood to flow from nose, mouth, and ears; indeed, men have been bucked to death by a particularly vicious broncho.

After it is conquered, then it is considered broken, for but little attention is paid to teaching it to respond to the bit; that, it is expected to learn by practical experience. But as the breeding of the broncho with graded horses has demonstrated that it improves in size and build and general disposition, even though its untamable wildness is apparently as strongly defined, the idea that more civilised methods should be adopted in breaking it for service has forced itself into men's minds, so that to-day it is no rare sight to see a broncho caught from the herd and subjected to the restraints of a biting harness and gradually taught, with care and kindness, what is required of it. Of course, such a method is looked on with contempt by the *vacqueros*, who usually are of nearly as wild and untamable a nature as the animals they risk their lives in conquering. Indian ponies are

really not entitled to the name broncho, because they are never in a wild state; from the time they are foaled, the squaw and children handle them; indeed, most of the young colts in a herd of Indian ponies will be found decorated with coloured flannel or cotton collars with bells attached; and the young boys will often be seen riding colts not yet a year old; while the warriors themselves don't disdain to ride them as early as eighteen months and two years. Were it otherwise, I doubt if the Indian would ever break his ponies, because, although they can ride a long distance, yet they are not as a rule good rough-riders.

FLATTERY.

Oh, you pretty Robin, keeping watch beside a lowly dwelling,

Where the happy sunshine rushes o'er the gorse bloom bright and gay,

Where the blackbirds and the thrushes are their loud love stories telling—

Do you know, I fancy, Robin, you as sweetly sing as they.

Do you see that verdant meadow where the buttercups are growing,

Where the golden-hearted daisies twinkle 'mid the tender grass?

Do you mark the lights and shadows that the fleecy clouds are throwing,

As across the sky of azure they fantastically pass?

Just above it there's a cottage, sheltered by the budding beeches,

Where the cherry bloom is scattered on the serried crocus lines

By the playful south wind's antics, where the glistening ivy reaches

To the red-tiled roof and chimneys where the green wisteria twines.

Pretty Robin, there's a maiden tall, and fair, and rather stately,

With a voice as soft as yours is, dwelling in that very cot,

And her tresses catch the sunbeams, though she speaks and moves sedately,

And her eyes are just the colour of a blue forget-me-not.

Whisper, Robin—can you tell me is she wand'ring by the river,

Where the catkins clothe the willows and the water-cresses grow?

Tell me, Robin, pretty Robin, and I'll be your debtor ever,

For her father does not love me, and so, mind you, whisper low.

M. ROCK.

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WILD LIFE IN A TOWN GARDEN.

THE lover of Nature, and hence of outdoor instincts, condemned by untoward fortune to spend his days in a busy town, has his compensation if he possesses a garden. Let it be but that circumscribed plot commonly attached to the middle-class villa, it is still a *rus in urbe*, a breathing-ground, a place wherein he may profitably study the fauna and flora of his parish. There he can escape for a time the soul-warping stress of business cares, and indulge, in comparative solitude, the finer, contemplative fancies of his brain. But it goes without saying that a due appreciation of his consolation is impossible if he is of the no-eyes kind. He must needs be a careful observer of small things, a student of the apparently trivial, a scrutiniser of the microscopic. 'None of us—poor street-struck creatures!—can see the things we ought to see,' remarks Mr Besant, in his *Eulogy of Richard Jefferies*. True; but then we seldom try, and rarely care to see the innumerable wonders that Jefferies found in a hundred yards of hedgerow. Yet, when the faculty of looking at unconsidered trifles is formed, it grows with astonishing vigour, and is an unailing solace and relaxation. For instance, we know a clerk with a zeal for ornithology, who, between his house and his place of business, both within the town, has discovered forty-seven species of birds, including several scarce varieties. No-eyes people who use that road daily regard the walk as a penance, but to our friend it is fraught with the perennial pleasure of natural research.

It will perhaps surprise some of our readers to learn that while strolling in a garden, thirty-five yards in length and twenty-five in breadth, in a central part of a town of sixty thousand inhabitants, we have within a year put up a partridge, seen wild-ducks fly over, watched herons daily winging their way above adjacent factory chimneys, seen an owl, noticed over a hundred varieties of insects, and formed an interesting intimacy with a sagacious and melancholic toad. Yet

these are facts, and we live in daily anticipation of still adding some unlikely specimen to our catalogue of things seen.

Perhaps the best time for a zoological excursion in our domains is before breakfast. The spring sunrise has been welcomed by the loud song of a fine blackbird in a neighbour's birch-tree. Soon after five the merry fellow woke us with a carol that brought calm waking thoughts of woods and meads touched with the faint green of this belated spring. There sits our friend of the past three weeks, 'a molecule of song' clad in shining jet black, with a yellow bill open before the glowing hues of sunrise. No discordant sounds from the surrounding houses or in the street mar the full melody of the warbler; every note is clear and distinct as it hovers on the still air. But in spite of his gratuitous music, we have a grudge against the bird. He has despoiled our early primroses. Several flowers are nipped off the stem, and are strewn on the bed. It is too bad! We have given him *carte blanche* to hunt the lobworms on the lawn, and to make his breakfast upon slugs in the flower-borders, and this is how he repays our hospitality. But a brave defiant note is his only answer to our remonstrances, and we cannot choose but forgive him when he flies into the top branches of our acacia tree, and bids us a blithe good-morning.

Two starlings are seated wing to wing on the eave of the roof, chatting about the late spring and the perils of the past rigorous winter. These are odd, confiding, sociable creatures, with some of the jackdaw's cunning and sense of humour. They often alight on the lawn, when they know that our wary grimalkin is lying in ambush behind a lilac tree, then lure him to within a yard or so, and with cackles of derision, fly up to the eave to exasperate him with guttural bad language. If you whistle softly to these starlings they will answer with a sibilant note, listening parrot-like and intelligently, with their heads held on one side. One often envies Thoreau his occult faculty of taming birds. We are sure these engaging starlings are worth cultivating,

but alas! they will not permit us to approach so near as they will our cat.

We cannot boast of a bird's nest this year, but in the ivy near the garden door are the remains of a robin's house, constructed of worsted, string, feathers, and shreds from a doormat. A pert cock-robin haunts the garden, and bullies the sparrows; but we believe he is unmated. An industrious bumble-bee, evidently bent on a long day's work, is buzzing around a white hyacinth. Later on, the working-bees will visit the flowers to search every creamy bell, and learn, to their vexation, that the big marauder was up first and has filched the honey. When a chill breeze bends the daffodils, the bumble-bee finds that it is bad policy to rise 'in the morning early' in spring-time. A wave of cold east wind seems to paralyse him, and, like a portly alderman who has dined indiscreetly, he sprawls on his back beneath the hyacinth.

There are no butterflies to-day; but in summer the Small White flutters along the borders; and now and then one of the fleet-winged Vanessa tribe, the Peacock, Red Admiral, or Small Tortoiseshell, fans its wings on the flower-border. At dusk, the Gamma moths hover like miniature humming-birds over the patches of mignonette and dwarf nasturtium; the frail Magpie Moth flits through the shrubs; and in the dark, many weird, dusky lepidoptera fly before the gaslight rays of the open window. On the ground in autumn we have found the handsome green and lilac larva of the Privet Hawk Moth. This caterpillar feeds on privet, and in the autumn goes to ground, and is a shiny chrysalis until summer, when one fine day it emerges in the form of a large moth. How mysterious and beautiful are these three transformations from the egg on the privet leaf to the larva, chrysalis, and finally the imago, in the glory of pink, brown, and yellow, blended with the exquisite taste of Nature!

In a streak of sunshine on the gravel dwells a community of black ants. For longer hours than the hardest-worked human being, these untiring creatures toil and come and go in the teeming thoroughfares of their city. Their artisans never strike or clamour for an Eight Hours' Bill; yet they share, with much of man's intelligence, his temptation to 'scamp' work. Huber tells us that 'on the visit of an overseer ant to the works, when the labourers had begun the roof too soon, he examined it, and had it taken down, the wall raised to the proper height, and a new ceiling constructed with the fragments of the old one.' Occasional observers are unable to discover much method in the hurrying to and fro of these remarkable insects, and were it not for the contrary evidence of Huber, Sir John Lubbock, and others, we should be inclined to regard them as creatures of boundless but superfluous energy. But the ordinary person does not watch ants long enough, and often enough, to understand their operations. Give an ant eyes of wider scope, and set him on a roof in Cheapside, and he would wonder why black throngs of men speed up and down the street all day to no apparent purpose.

We are not certain that the toad is indigenous to the garden; he may be an importation of a former tenant. As a rule, he shuns society; but in wet weather he is sometimes tempted from his

forest hermitage behind the shrubs, and will sit bandy-legged, blinking his golden eyes on the watch for insects. Only once have we heard his thoughts expressed in his odd saurian tongue, and that was when our cat alarmed him by carrying him in her mouth to the kitchen. We have heard a man offer to eat his hat, but toads make a practice of eating their old coats. We have not witnessed our toad make the meal; but the Rev. J. G. Wood says that these reptiles, after shedding their skins, roll them into balls, take them in their paws, and push them into their mouths. We know no better instance of frugality!

At half-past seven every morning a heron flies over the garden. When first visible, it is no bigger than a skylark; but as it nears, its long neck and spindle legs are easily seen. Rooks pass over in the early morning and at sundown. Ducks fly high above the smoke in winter. On a dark night, seated by the fireside, one may hear the humming sound of hundreds of wings. The sound is suggestive of Macbeth's weird sisters flying through 'the fog and filthy air' on birch besoms. You open the window, and thrust out your head. Stars are twinkling, and an orange moon shows above the slated roofs; but no birds can be seen, though the wing-sounds on the frosty air tell of a great flock.

Swallows and martins are daily visitors in summer. At twilight they skim and flash above the acacia, swooping now and then into a cloud of midges, and screaming in mad frolic, like children at a game of romps. When, from the dark shadows of the trees, bats flit into the light of the parlour window, the swallows disappear for a few hours, to come again at dawn. We cannot claim the owl for an actual visitant, for it merely flapped across the garden about ten one summer evening. But another strange comer, a partridge, we roused in a sequestered corner during a frost. We were delighted to find game in our covers; still we have thought it scarcely worth while to buy a gun and a license. Sarcastic friends say, 'Don't you think it was a tame one?' But who ever heard of a domesticated partridge? There is no doubt that it was a genuine wild bird, driven to the haunts of man by the severe weather and scarcity of food. We have two varieties of worms—the lob and the brandling. The first kind get up when the birds are gone to bed. Before Darwin wrote his work upon *Earthworms*, we suppose most persons never thought about lobes unless they wanted some for fishing. Since then we have been more tolerant of worms, though their casts sadly disfigure the lawn. 'Things appear to go on in the night in the garden uncommonly,' says Mr Charles Dudley Warner, in *My Summer in a Garden*. The casts are among the 'things' that 'go on.' Now, we are ready to admit with the scientists that these casts are the beginnings of mountains; but we don't want a mountain in the garden, and as long as we can borrow a neighbour's roller, we intend to retard its growth. A friend of a money-making disposition suggests that we should 'encourage' the lobes by constantly watering the lawn, and sell them to fishermen. Perhaps the idea is worth consideration. We have heard that a big trade in lobes is done in the neighbourhood of Nottingham.

A great dragon-fly, locally misnamed a 'hoss-stinger,' sometimes visits the garden on hot days, and hawks invisible insects that hover over the flowers. It is a graceful, harmless insect, and as it does not possess a sting, it cannot be called a stinger. We have several of the large plethoric spiders, that spin beautiful webs from twig to twig, and catch bees, small moths, and flies. They are handsome, intelligent, and truculent insects, with strange geometrical propositions in gold on their brown backs; and they have none of the Satanic attributes of the long-legged, black, hairy house-spiders. It seems odd that those frail gossamer strands, spun from the creature's body, should be strong enough to support its weight; and yet strong winds do not injure the delicate web.

These are only a few of the denizens of our estate. A German specialist in natural history would find material for a life's study and several ponderous volumes in our back garden. It is a museum of living wonders, a verdant oasis in a desert of bricks and stones, the haunt of singing birds, and we trust that we are duly thankful for its delights.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XIV.—THINGS MORE REMARKABLE.

AFTER such a prodigious event as the discovery of these unparalleled forgeries, anything might happen without being regarded. People's minds are open at such times to see, hear, and accept everything. After the earthquake, ghosts walk, solid things fly away of their own accord, good men commit murder, rich men go empty away, and nobody is in the least surprised.

See what happened, the very next day, at the office in New Square. When George arrived in the morning he found that the senior Partner had not yet appeared. He was late. For the first time for fifty years and more, he was late. He went to his place, and the empty chair gave an air of bereavement to the room. Checkley was laying out the table; that is, he had done so a quarter of an hour before, but he could not leave off doing it: he was loth to leave the table before the master came: he took up the blotting pad and laid it down again: he arranged the pens: he lingered over the job.

'Not come yet?' George cried, astonished. 'Do you think that yesterday's shock has been too much for him?'

'I believe it's killed him,' said the old clerk—'killed him. That's what it has done; and he went on muttering and mumbling. 'Don't,' he cried, when George took up the letters. 'P'raps he isn't dead yet—you haven't stepped into his shoes just yet. Let them letters alone.'

'Not dead yet. I hope not.' George began to open the letters, regardless of the surly and disrespectful words. One may forgive a good deal to fidelity. 'He will go on for many years after we have got the money back for him.'

'After some of us'—Checkley corrected him—'have got his money back for him.' He turned

to go back to his own office, then turned again and came back to the table. He laid both hands upon it, leaned forward, shaking his head, and said with trembling voice: 'Did you never think, Mr Austin, of the black ingratitude of the thing? Him that done it you know—him that eat his bread and took his money.' When Checkley was greatly moved, his grammar went back to the early days before he was confidential clerk.

'I daresay it was ungrateful. I have been thinking, hitherto, of stronger adjectives.'

'Well—we've agreed—all of us—haven't we?—that it was done in this office—some one in the office done it with the help of some one out: some one who knows his ways'—he pointed to the empty chair—'some one who'd known all his ways for a long time, ten years at least.'

'Things certainly seem to point that way'—'and they point to you,' he would have added, but refrained.

The old man shook his head again and went on. 'They've eaten his bread and done his work; and—and—don't you call it, Mr Austin—I ask you plain—don't you call it black ingratitude?'

'I am sure it is. I have no doubt whatever about the ingratitude. But, you see, Checkley, that vice is not one which the Courts recognise. It is not one denounced in the Decalogue.—There is a good deal to consider, in fact, before we get to the ingratitude. It is probably a criminal conspiracy: it is a felony: it is a thing to be punished by a long term of penal servitude. When we have worried through all this and got our conspirators under lock and key, we will proceed to consider their ingratitude. There is also the bad form of it and the absence of proper feeling of it; and the want of consideration of the trouble they give. Patience! We shall have to consider the business from your point of view presently.'

'I wouldn't scoff and snigger at it, Mr Austin, if I were you. Scoffin' and sniggin' might bring bad luck. Because, you know, there's others besides yourself determined to bring this thing to a right issue.'

George put down his papers and looked at this importunate person. What did he mean? The old man shrunk and shrivelled and grew small. He trembled all over. But he remained standing with his hands on the table—leaning forward. 'Eight years ago,' he went on, 'when that other business happened—when Mr Arundel cut his lucky'—

'I will have nothing said against Mr Arundel. Go to your own room.'

'One word—I will speak it. If he's dead, I shall not stay long here. But I shall stay so long as he's alive, though you are his partner. Only one word, sir. If Mr Arundel hadn't—run away—he'd a been a partner instead of you.'

'Well?'

'Well, sir—s'pose he'd been found out *after* he was made a partner, instead of before?'

George pointed to the door. The old man seemed off his head—was it with terror? Checkley obeyed. But at the door he turned his head and grinned. Quite a theatrical grin. It expressed malignity and the pleasure of anticipation. What was the matter with the old man? Surely, terror. Who, in the office, except him—

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self, had the control of the letters? Who drew that quarterly cheque? Surely, terror.

It was not until half-past eleven that Mr Dering arrived at the office. He usually passed through the clerks' office outside his own: this morning he entered by his own private door, which opened on the stairs. No one had the key except himself. He generally proceeded in an orderly and methodical manner to hang up his hat and coat, take off his gloves, to place his umbrella in the stand, throw open the safe, sit down in his chair, adjusted at a certain distance of three inches or so, to put on his glasses, and then, without either haste or dawdling, to begin the work of the day. It is very certain that to approach work always in exactly the same way saves the nerves. The unmethodical workman gets to his office at a varying hour, travels by different routes—now on an omnibus, now on foot; does nothing to-day in the same way that he did it yesterday. He breaks up early. At sixty he talks of retiring: at seventy he is past his work.

This morning, Mr Dering did nothing in its proper order. First, he was nearly two hours late. Next, he came in by his private door. George rose to greet him, but stopped because—a most wonderful thing—his Partner made as if he did not observe his presence. His eyes went through George in creepy and ghostly fashion. The junior partner stood still, silent, in bewilderment. Saw one ever the like, that a man should at noontide walk in his sleep! His appearance, too, was strange; his hat, pushed a little back, gave a touch of recklessness—actually recklessness—to the austere old lawyer: his eyes glowed pleasantly; and on his face—that grave and sober face—there was a pleased and satisfied smile: he looked happy, interested, benevolent, but not—no—not Mr Edward Dering. Again, his coat, always tightly buttoned, was now hanging loose; outside, it had been swinging in the breeze, to the wonder of Lincoln's Inn: and he wore no gloves, a thing most remarkable. He looked about the room, nodded his head, and shut the door behind him.

'He's somnambulating,' George murmured, 'or else I am invisible: I must have eaten fern-seed without knowing it.'

Mr Dering, still smiling pleasantly, walked across the room to the safe and unlocked it. He had in his hand a brown paper parcel tied with red tape—this he deposited in the safe, locked it up, and dropped the keys in his pocket. The window beside the safe was open. He sat down, looking out into the Square.

At this moment Checkley opened the door softly, after his wont, to bring in more letters. He stopped short, seeing his master thus seated, head in hand, at the window. He recognised the symptoms of yesterday—the rapt look, the open eyes that saw nothing. He crept on tiptoe across the room. 'Hush!' he whispered. 'Don't move. Don't speak. He went like this yesterday. Don't make the least noise. He'll come round presently.'

'What is it?'

'Kind of fit, it is. Trouble done it. Yah! Ingratitood.' He would have hissed the word, but it has no sibilant. You can't hiss without the materials. 'Yesterday's trouble. That's what's done it.'

They stood watching in silence for about ten minutes. The office was like the Court of the sleeping Princess. Then Checkley sneezed. Mr Dering probably mistook the sneeze for a kiss, for he closed his eyes for a moment, opened them again, and arose once more himself, grave and austere.

He nodded cheerfully, took off his hat, hung it on its peg, buttoned his coat, and threw open the safe. Evidently he remembered nothing of what had just passed.

'You are early, George,' he said. 'You are before me, which is unusual. However—the early bird—we know.'

'Before you for once. Are you quite well this morning? None the worse for yesterday's trouble?'

'He's always well,' said Checkley, with cheerfulness assumed. 'Nobody ever sees him ill—he get ill? Not him. Eats as hearty as five-and-twenty, and walks as upright.'

'I am perfectly well, to the best of my knowledge. Yesterday's business upset me for the time—but it did not keep me awake. Yet it is certainly a very great trouble. You have no news, I suppose, that brought you here earlier than usual?'

'Nothing new since yesterday.'

'And you feel pretty confident?'

'I feel like a sleuth-hound. I understand the pleasures of the chase. I long to be on the scent again. As for Edmund Gray, he is as good as in prison already.'

'Good. I was for the moment shaken out of myself. I was bewildered. I was unable to look at the facts of the case calmly. For the first time in my life I wanted advice. Well: I now understand what a great thing it is that our profession exists for the assistance of men in trouble. How would the world get along at all without solicitors?'

He took his usual place at the table and turned over his letters. 'This morning,' he went on, 'I feel more assured: my mind is clear again. I can talk about the case. Now then. Let us see—Edmund Gray is no shadow, but a man. He has made me recommend him to his landlord. He is a clever man and a bold man. Don't be in a hurry about putting your hands upon him. Complete your case before you strike. But make no delay.'

'There shall be none. And you shall hear everything from day to day, or from hour to hour.'

Left alone, Mr Dering returned to his papers and his work.

At half-past one, Checkley looked in. 'Not going to take lunch this morning?'

'Lunch? I have only just'—Mr Dering looked at his watch. 'Bless me! Most extraordinary! This morning has slipped away. I thought I had only just sat down. It seems not more than half an hour since Mr Austin left me. Why, I should have forgotten all about it and let the time go by—nothing worse for a man of my years than irregular feeding.'

'It's lucky you've got me,' said his clerk. 'Half-a-dozen partners wouldn't look after your meal-times—Ah!' as his master went up-stairs to the room where he always had his luncheon laid out, 'he's clean forgotten. Some of these

days, walking about wropped up in his thoughts, he'll be run over.—Clean forgotten it, he has. Sits down in a dream: walks about in a dream: some of these days he'll do something in a dream. Then there will be trouble.' He closed the door and returned to his own desk, where he was alone, the juniors having gone out to dinner. His own dinner was in his coat pocket. It consisted of a saveloy cut in thin slices and laid in bread with butter and mustard—a tasty meal. He slowly devoured the whole to the last crumb. Then, Mr Dering having by this time finished his lunch and descended again, Checkley went up-stairs and finished the pint of claret, of which his master had taken one glass. 'It's sour stuff,' he said. 'It don't behave as wine in a man's inside ought to behave. It don't make him a bit joyfuller. But it's pleasant too. Why they can't drink Port wine—which is real wine—when they can afford it, I don't know.'

It was past three in the afternoon when George returned, not quite so confident in his bearing, yet full of news.

'If you are quite ready to listen,' he said, 'I've got a good deal to tell. First of all, I thought I would have another shot at Gray's Inn. I went to the Chambers. The outer door was open, which looked as if the man was at home. I knocked at the inner door, which was opened by the laundress, the old woman whom I saw yesterday. "Well, sir," she said, "you are unlucky. The master has been here this very morning. And he hasn't been long gone. You've only missed him by half an hour or so." I asked her if he would return that day; but she knew nothing. Then I asked her if she would let me write and leave a note for him. To this she consented, rather unwillingly. I went in, therefore, and wrote my note at Mr Gray's table. I asked him to call here on important business, and I marked the note "Urgent." I think there can be no harm in that. Then I looked about the room. It is one of those old wainscoted rooms, furnished simply, but everything solid and good—a long table, nearly as large as this one of yours: solid chairs—a solid sofa. Three or four pictures on the wall, and a bookcase full of books. No signs of occupation: no letters: no flowers. Everything covered with dust, although the old woman was there. I could have wished to examine the papers on the table, but the presence of the old woman forbade that dishonourable act. I did, however, look at the books. And I made a most curious discovery. Mr Edmund Gray is a Socialist. All his books are on Socialism: they are in French, German, and English: all books of Socialism. And the pictures on the wall are portraits of distinguished Socialists. Isn't that wonderful? Did one ever hear before of Socialism and forgery going together?'

'Not too fast. We haven't yet connected Edmund Gray with the forgery. At present, we only know that his name was used.'

'Wait a bit. I am coming to that. After leaving the chambers, I went into the City and saw Mr Ellis. First of all, none of the stock has been sold.'

'Oh! they have had three months, and they have not disposed of it? They must have met with unforeseen difficulties. Let me see.'

Mr Dering was now thoroughly alert. The

weakness of the morning had completely passed away. 'What difficulties? Upon my word I cannot understand that there could have been any. They have got the papers from a respectable solicitor through a respectable broker. No—no. Their course was perfectly plain. But rogues often break down through their inability to see the strength of their own case.'

'Next, Mr Ellis has ascertained that some of the dividends are received by your Bank. I therefore called on the manager. Now, be prepared for another surprise.'

'Another forgery?'

'Yes—another forgery. It is nine or ten years since you sent a letter to the manager—I saw it—introducing your client Edmund Gray, gentleman, who was desirous of opening a private account. He paid in a small sum of money, which has been lying to his credit ever since, and has not been touched. In February last he received another letter from you: and again in March and April, forwarding certificates, and requesting him to receive the dividends. With your own hand you placed the papers in the Bank. I saw the letters. I would swear to your handwriting.'

'These people are as clever as they are audacious.'

'At every point a letter from you—a letter which the ablest expert would tell was your handwriting. Your name covers and vouches for everything.'

'Did you tell the manager what has happened?'

'Certainly; I told him everything. And this is in substance the line he takes. "Your Partner," he says, "alleges that those papers have been procured by forgery. He says that the letter of introduction is a forgery. Very good. It may be so. But I have opened this account for a customer who brought me an introduction from the best solicitor in London, whose handwriting I know well, and recognise in the letter. Such an allegation would not be enough in itself for me to take action: until a civil or criminal action is brought—until it is concluded—I could not refuse to treat the customer like all the rest. At the same time I will take what steps I can to inquire into my customer's antecedents."'

'Quite right,' said Mr Dering.

'I asked him next, what he would do if the customer sent for the papers. He said that if an action were brought, he would probably be served with a *sub poena duces tecum*, making him keep and produce these papers as forming part of the documents in the case.'

'Certainly, certainly; the manager knows his law.'

'"And," he went on, "as regards cheques, I shall pay them or receive them until restrained."'

'In other words, he said what we expected. For our own action now.'

'We might apply to a judge in Chambers for an attachment or a garnisher order. That must be *pendente lite*, an interlocutory proceeding, in the action. As yet, we have not brought an action at all. My partner—Mr Dering rubbed his hands cheerfully—'I think we have done very well so far. These are clumsy scoundrels, after all. They thought to divert suspicion by using my name. They thought to cover themselves

with my name. But they should have sold and realised without the least delay. Very good. We have now got our hands upon the papers. It would have complicated matters horribly had the stock been sold and transferred. So far we are safe. Because, you see, after what they have heard, the Bank would certainly not give them up without letting us know. They would warn us: they would put the man off: they would ask him awkward questions about himself. Oh! I think we are safe—quite safe.'

Mr Dering drew a long breath. 'I was thinking all night,' he continued, 'of the trouble we might have if those certificates had changed hands. They might have been bought and sold a dozen times in four months: they might have been sold in separate small lots, and an order of the Court necessary for every transaction. We have now nothing but the simple question before us: how did the man Edmund Gray get possession of this property?'

He sat in silence for a few minutes. Then he went on quietly. 'To lose this money would be a heavy blow for me—not all my fortune, nor a quarter, but a large sum. I have plenty left. I have no hungry and expectant heirs: my people are all wealthy. But yet a very heavy loss. And then—to be robbed. I have always wondered why we left off hanging robbers. They ought to be hanged, every one. He who invades the sacred right of property should be killed—killed without hope of mercy.' He spoke with the earnestness of sincerity. 'To lose this property would not be ruin to me; yet it would be terrible. It would take so many years out of my past life. Every year means so much money saved. Forty thousand pounds means ten years of my past—not taken away so that I should be ten years younger, but, ten years of work annihilated. Could I forgive the man who would so injure me? Never.'

'I understand,' said George. 'Fortunately, we shall get the papers back. The fact of their possession must connect the possessor with the fraud. Who is he? Can he be warned already? Yet who should tell him? Who knows that we have discovered the business? You—your friend Mr Ellis—the Manager of the Bank—no one else. Yes—there is also Checkley—Checkley,' he repeated. He could not—yet—express his suspicions as to the old and faithful servant. 'Checkley also knows.'

At this point Checkley himself opened the door and brought in a card—that of the Bank Manager.

'I have called,' said the visitor hurriedly, 'to tell you of something important, that happened this morning. I did not know it when we were talking over this business, Mr Austin. It happened at ten o'clock as soon as the doors were open. A letter was brought by hand from Mr Dering—'

'Another forgery! When will they stop?'

'—asking for those certificates to be given to the bearer—Mr Edmund Gray's certificates. This was done. They are no longer at the Bank.'

'Oh! Then they have been warned,' cried George. 'Who was the messenger?'

'He was a boy. Looked like an office boy.'

'I will inquire directly if it was one of our boys. Go on.'

'That settles the difficulty as to our action in case the papers are wanted by you. We no longer hold them. As to the dividends, we shall continue to receive them to the account of Mr Edmund Gray until we get an order or an injunction.'

'The difficulty,' said George, 'is to connect the case with Mr Edmund Gray bodily. At present, we have nothing but the letters to go upon. Suppose the real Edmund Gray says that he knows nothing about it. What are we to do? You remember receiving the dividends for him. Has he drawn a cheque?'

'No; we have never paid any cheque at all for him.'

'Have you seen him?'

'No; I have never seen him.'

'It is a most wonderful puzzle. After all, the withdrawal of the papers can only mean a resolution to sell them. He must instruct somebody. He must appear in the matter.'

'He may instruct somebody as he instructed me—in the name of Mr Dering.'

'Another forgery.'

'Yes,' said George. 'We must watch and find out this mysterious Edmund Gray. After all, it will not help us to say that a forged letter gave certain instructions to do certain things for a certain person—say the Queen—unless you can establish the complicity of that person. And that—so far—we certainly have not done. Meanwhile—what next?'

Obviously, the next thing was to find out if any of the office boys had taken that letter to the Bank. No one had been sent on that errand.

MOUNTAIN OBSERVATORIES.

IF any one of my readers has ever, as is probable, made the now fashionable ascent of Mont Blanc, I should like to ask him how long he stayed at the summit, and whether he could submit to a sojourn there of longer or shorter continuance. This inquiry is made not as an idle question, for the mere amusement to be derived from hearing the answer, but as a matter for practical and serious consideration—for somebody soon will have to reside there—in connection with a project launched by M. Janssen in the admirable *Notice Scientifique*, on which what follows is entirely based.

The progress of science at the present day, he holds, brings us face to face with divers orders of questions in astronomy, in celestial physics, in meteorology, and even in the domain of biological investigation, which can only be resolved by the intervention of lofty stations of observation. The history of discoveries made since Saussure's time on elevated table-lands or mountains is a more than sufficient demonstration of the fact, and its truth is now admitted by every eminent man who has studied the question. As for M. Janssen himself, his conviction has been formed long ago—founded as it has been on repeated experience in various and distant points of the globe—that our atmosphere is a great obstacle to accurate

observation, and that lofty stations offer great advantages.

The globe we inhabit, which serves as our purveyor as well as our dwelling-place, is surrounded by a fluid envelope, composed of gases, vapours, solid and liquid dust, and germs of different natures. The phenomena of which it is the theatre are connected with its composing elements, and with its relations to the solid and liquid surface of the globe it surrounds. The succession of these phenomena forms a cycle whose effect is to maintain in their integrity the conditions indispensable to the manifestation and the maintenance of life; and the harmony of this combination ought to be an eternal subject of study, thought, and admiration.

But the atmosphere is not only the principal factor in the maintenance of life on earth, it is also that which confers on it its great charm and its poetry. What, in fact, would be our sojourn here without the admirable blue vault which covers us, without clouds floating through it, without twilights, dawns, and sunsets, whose lovely effects are all due to the presence of the atmosphere? Without the atmosphere—to suppose an impossibility—were the earth still habitable, it would offer but a sorry residence. Thus the atmosphere admirably fulfils the two grand objects of supporting life and of giving it a charm; and it is wonderful that such different ends should be attained by such simple methods.

As regards the astronomer who is also a natural philosopher, we have only to consider the atmosphere in respect to the disturbance and the modifications it causes in the observations he is endeavouring to make. In the first place, it refracts the rays which reach us from the stars; that is, it makes them deviate from their true direction, giving to those stars an apparent place the further removed from their real position the nearer they are to the horizon.

But above all, the atmosphere diffuses light; in such a way that a luminous ray which traverses it illuminates a more or less considerable portion of it, thus introducing light which spreads itself in all directions where it is not wanted. It is by this diffusion of light that the atmosphere gives us the spectacle of a blue celestial vault overhead. It is also this diffusion and this illumination of the atmosphere, especially in the neighbourhood of the heavenly bodies, which offer the greatest obstacle to observations. Moreover, the atmosphere absorbs a considerable proportion of the light which comes both from the sun and from the stars. And not only does it absorb a very notable part of these radiations, but it does not absorb their component elements in equal measure. It modifies their very nature; the result being that we cannot be sure of the composition of those radiations when they reach us at the surface of the earth, as we might do if we received them before they entered our atmosphere. Consequently, the obstacles with which the astronomer and the physicist have to contend at the very outset are, an alteration of the true positions of the stars, an illumination which weakens and confines our powers of vision, and an absorption of radiations with a change in their component rays.

M. Janssen takes as an instance the daily movement of the sun in the heavens, from its highest

point in the sky until its setting. Suppose we are at a spot between the tropics where the sun is at the zenith at noon. There, the disc is beheld in its true place; but the action of the atmosphere is not the less felt in other respects. Although, if it be homogeneous and calm, it alters neither the apparent place nor the shape of the sun, still it makes the sun's colour appear considerably more yellow than it ought to be. But, as the sun descends towards the west, changes in its appearance become more and more pronounced. The disc will be seen in a position higher than its real position, and the lower the sun sinks, the greater will be the divergence. At the same time, the roundness of the image will be altered, the disc showing a tendency to flatten. Its vertical diameter is shortened, whilst its horizontal diameter remains sensibly the same. Besides which, the disc, hitherto yellowish white, but bright, becomes not only less luminous, but deeper in hue; first orange, then red, and finally blood red, in northern climates. At that stage, the distance between the sun we behold and the real sun is so decided, that the one is completely below the horizon while we still have before our eyes the flattened, ruddy, and deformed figure of its image. And what thus occurs with respect to the sun must evidently happen to the other heavenly bodies. The constellations, for instance, are in like manner disfigured in their form and in the colour of their constituent stars.

If the atmosphere is a hindrance to general astronomy, it is a serious obstacle to physical astronomy. Take, once more, as an example, the sun, whose constitution, as we know it at present—it is not so long ago that it was surmised to be habitable—is quite a recent conquest of science, made within the last thirty years through the agency of the spectroscope. Now, one of the properties of the spectroscope is to liberate us in certain cases from the effects of atmospheric illumination. Our ideas at present of what the sun is will demonstrate the impulse which lofty stations are likely to give to astronomical studies.

The sun consists of a globe formed, in a general way, of the materials of the system of which it is the centre and the regulator. This globe, especially in its interior, is heated to temperatures which we cannot guess at, but which must be excessively high. Its luminous surface is formed by incandescent vapours in which float little clouds—the granulations—whose true form has been revealed by photography, as well as the unity of constitution in all the parts of the solar surface—which surface shows the well-known spots that, for two centuries and a half, have furnished the basis of all discussions and speculations concerning the constitution of the sun. Such is the sun as seen through telescopes.

At present, above this luminous surface we find a first gaseous or vaporous envelope, some two thousand leagues thick—very little for the sun—and consequently demanding special care in its study. The certainty of its existence was shown by the spectroscope, although a glimpse of it had often been obtained during total eclipses. Above the chromosphere—as the gaseous stratum is called—are found fiery protuberances shooting outwards, whose nature and daily movements are also displayed by the spectroscope. All these

phenomena are enveloped and as it were bathed in an immense and final covering of rarefied gases, whose colossal dimensions are evidenced by solar occultations. During eclipses, this solar atmosphere produces a most magnificent spectacle and confers on the phenomenon all its splendour. It is composed of hydrogen gas and other bodies still unknown. Its object, doubtless, is to separate the incandescent globe from cold empty space, which would cool it too rapidly. There are also swarms of meteorites which circulate round the sun, and the zodiacal light, whose precise cause is unknown.

Of all this, the earth's atmosphere prevents our seeing more than the luminous globe bounded by the photosphere—that is, the central nucleus. The existence of all the rest has been unveiled by total eclipses, but could only have been studied and comprehended by the intervention of the spectroscopic.

An observer who beheld the sun at the limits of our atmosphere would see, without resorting to any artifice, the globe in its complete and entire magnificence—its superincumbent atmospheres, its flaming appendages, its immense luminous corona—that is, he would see the sun in all its glory. And fortunately, to enjoy a near approach to that spectacle, it is found that there is no need to climb to extraordinary altitudes. A moderate elevation is ascertained to yield a notable amelioration in astronomical observations.

As evidence of the service to be expected from observatories stationed on lofty altitudes, M. Janssen cites the results obtained during the eclipse of 1868, which inaugurated the spectroscopic study of the circumpolar regions of the sky, and excited great emulation in the astronomical world. The eclipse of 1871 induced several observers to combine the altitude of the station with the favourable circumstances of the occultation. Mr C. A. Young observed the eclipse on Mount Sherman, at an altitude of 8300 feet, and reported that stars of the seventh magnitude were visible by the naked eye. The spectral lines of the chromosphere were three times more numerous there than on the plain. He thence concludes that powerful instruments, placed on elevated positions, would enable science to make an advance which, otherwise, would take scores of years to accomplish.

While Mr Young was on Mount Sherman, a French mission was observing at Schoolor, on the Neilgherries, and was enabled thereby to definitely demonstrate the reality of that last solar envelope which has been mentioned as the sun's 'coronal atmosphere,' and which separates the solar globe from starry space. We have thus two important discoveries made on elevated stations.

A very favourable eclipse occurred in 1878, observable in North America. The observers took up successive positions, one after the other—to which they were obliged by the line of the eclipse—on lofty stations. Messieurs Eartman and Pritchett observed at Las Animas, Colorado, at 3976 feet. They were astonished by the clearness of the sky. No twinkling at the zenith; the Milky Way outlined in wonderful detail; Jupiter's satellites visible by the naked eye. This last possibility had been so little foreseen,

that Jules Verne thought it, and meant it for, fun, when he made one of his personages, an extra-capable serving-man, able to see the said satellites without the help of a telescope. Now that their visibility, unaided by a spyglass, is an established fact, one is strongly tempted to go and personally verify the experiment.

At Jaho Spring, 7800 feet, the satellites of Jupiter were continually seen by the naked eye, even with the moon above the horizon. The Milky Way assumed the aspect of chains of hills covered with snow, having dark intervening spaces, whose existence was afterwards confirmed. Mr Holden and his assistants observed at Central City, Colorado, at 9013 feet. They recorded the extraordinary intensity of the corona, which they attributed to the altitude of the station. Mr Langley selected Pike's Peak, at an elevation of 14,100 feet. All the outlines were of surprising distinctness, and the sky, quite close to the sun—a criterion—remained blue.

Mr Asaph Hall, the discoverer of Mars's satellites, took up his position at La Junta, Colorado, 4187 feet; sky extraordinarily transparent; a great number of stars visible by the naked eye; the Milky Way shining with marvellous distinctness. 'It is quite time,' said Mr Hall, 'to profit by the advantages offered by lofty stations, and to resolve this question, which is of capital importance.'

But before these eclipse observations, elevated altitudes had already been utilised for special researches. In 1856 and 1857, Piazzi Smith went to the Peak of Tenerife to study the solar spectrum, and was highly satisfied with the success of his visit. In 1868 and 1869, M. Janssen ascended the Himalayas, after his expedition to the coast of Coromandel to observe the eclipse of the 18th of August 1868. So convinced was he of the advantages of lofty stations that he passed the whole winter there. The very pure and very dry atmosphere of those elevated regions allowed him to search for the presence of watery vapour in the planets and the stars without being incommoded by the presence of that vapour in the atmosphere. At Simla, during the first half of the winter 1868-69, the air was of such excessive dryness as frequently to give singular signs of electrification. The paper on which he wrote his notes emitted sparks on a simple touch. He saw no reptiles there and very few insects, though the former might then be hibernating. The mutton brought them by the mountaineers would keep for an indefinite length of time. The unused pieces simply got dry, preserving all the while a healthy pink hue. The atmosphere was perfumed by the balsamic odours exhaled by the surrounding cedar forests.

At night, the Himalayan sky displayed such treasures that time did not suffice for him to make all the observations to which they invited him. First, there was the mighty Sirius, whose bluish light was extraordinarily brilliant, revealing by the gaps in its spectrum the enormous atmosphere of hydrogen by which it is surrounded and, doubtless, also the rapid rotation of its immense globe. Then there was Arcturus, whose ruddy light seemed to indicate a sun in a stage of declining vigour. Then there was the admirable constellation of Orion—one of the first to fix the attention of men—whose stars seem to

resume amongst themselves all the phases of solar life, just as its beautiful nebula, the largest in the sky, presents us with their genesis. Finally, there were our planets, whose light he interrogated respecting their watery elements and their atmospheres; and of whom we must inquire, by proceedings which M. Janssen, unfortunately, has only had time to begin, both their geological age and the mystery of the forms of life which exist hidden on their surface. And so, as lofty stations are now the grand desideratum, preparations, begun last August, have already been made for building an observatory on the top of Mont Blanc; and built it certainly will be. M. Janssen, and M. Eiffel, who assists him in the enterprise, are not men to do things by halves. The first step is to hit upon a rocky foundation; but hitherto nothing has been found firmer than snow more and more compressed by the weight of successive layers. Samples of this snow have been put aside, to ascertain what solid particles or mineral dust they contain. A vessel filled with snow from the summit is found to hold about half the bulk when melted. Galleries in search of rock have been quarried in the snow. Their acoustic qualities are peculiar. The voice rapidly ceases to be audible. The workmen—who continued in good health—could scarcely hear each other speak at the distance of sixty feet. The summit of Mont Blanc is not exactly a point or a peak, but a very narrow ridge in the direction from north to south; but very long, on the contrary, from east to west. But whatever the difficulties, the thing will be done. A building will be erected, with double-walled dormitories and under-snow storehouses, very habitable, M. Janssen says, and for which he expects to succeed in finding scientific occupants.

A BOYCOTTED BABY.

CHAPTER III.—JEM'S BABY.

MATTHEW BULBOUS was thankful when the daylight came at last on that Christmas morning. He rose at once, and wandered restlessly about the rooms below until breakfast. In spite of his vigorous common-sense, the affair of the previous night left a most uneasy impression on his mind. Not that he troubled himself as to what it really was—he knew this well enough; but he could not shake off a superstitious fear as to what it meant. More than once he went into the study and regarded thoughtfully the spot on which the visitor stood. His memory was usually excellent in even small matters, but it disturbed and annoyed him excessively to find that by no effort could he recollect where he had seen that face before. The strangest fact was his recognition of the face on this occasion without being able to see it.

'At anyrate,' he reflected, 'the thing was an imposture. It was not Jem's wife, who was quite another sort of female. But where did I see this one before?'

It was no use vexing himself with the effort to remember. After breakfast, while he was impatiently wishing it were four o'clock, an idea struck him of going privately to Jem's wife's funeral. It would help to pass the time, and

it would also be satisfying. He announced this Christian resolution to his wife, by way of set-off to his uncharitable feelings of the day before, and left home. But he did not know the address, and much as he would have wished to see the funeral without even his brother's knowledge, Joseph was the only person from whom he could get the address. When he arrived at Chelsea, however, the landlady said Mr Joseph Bulbous was not at home. Interrogated further, she said he had particularly mentioned that he was going out to Penge to a funeral, the funeral of his nephew's wife, and that he was not coming back until late in the evening. The information was satisfactory, in so far as it confirmed the fact that there was no deception about Jem's wife being really dead. Matthew Bulbous straightway drove to Victoria Station and took a train to Penge, where he arrived in thirty minutes.

Finding a four-wheeled cab at the station, he inquired of the driver if the cemetery was far off—there was a funeral going there which he wanted to meet. The driver knew all about the cemetery, and he also knew of a funeral for which a friend's equipage had been chartered—the name was Bulbous, and they would pass the house. Matthew got into the cab. After driving down the main street of Penge, they turned to the right up Croydon Road, and he observed with a feeling of reassurance a hearse and two mourning coaches standing before one of the small villas which fringed the road.

On the top of the hill there is an inn, where another road crosses Croydon Road at right angles, and from this spot the cemetery was visible on rising ground about half a mile off. Matthew thought this would be a good point to obtain a view of the funeral as it passed, as he could conceal himself in the bar of the inn. He detained the cab, therefore, and went into the house.

Presently the funeral came by. The hearse was an honest hearse with glass panels, admitting of no deception as to a coffin being inside. Next the hearse came the principal mourning coach, whose occupants he scanned narrowly, but with a nervous start which attracted the curiosity of the barkeeper. First, he recognised his son, with a band on his hat; but beside him sat a lady heavily veiled in crape—the same person, if identity between substance and shadow were possible, who had visited Matthew Bulbous the night before! Her face was so thickly veiled as to be undiscernible to an ordinary eye; but Matthew Bulbous's recognition of it was undoubted and startling.

For some minutes he was dazed; but the purpose for which he came was still unconsciously active, and he followed the funeral at a distance in the cab. He was able in due time to see, from a safe place, the coffin lowered into the grave and the earth shovelled in upon it. Then he drove to another station, and got back to Blackheath by train.

He was glad to have been able to witness the burial without the knowledge of his brother, and he told his wife that, being unable to find the address, he had not left London. Joseph, therefore, would be left in the dark. But he did not suspect that, in passing the public-house, Joseph, who sat in the second coach, had glanced

into the bar as an object of interest, and had detected his brother's face through the door.

At four o'clock Joseph Bulbous arrived, and after paying his respects to the ladies, went to the study and remarked that it was all over.

'All over, is it?' said Matthew carelessly, putting down the newspaper he had been reading. 'I thought of going myself, after all, and actually went to Chelsea. But you were gone, and I didn't know the address.'

'So you came home again? Well, now I remember it, I never did give you Jem's address—you never asked me. However, it doesn't matter, I suppose?'

'Not in the least,' said Matthew.

Now, as the reader knows, there were two points on which Matthew Bulbous was particularly anxious to obtain information—namely, the identity of the lady who sat with his son in the first carriage, and whether there was a baby. As to the first, his lips were sealed, for he would not divulge either the visit he had received the previous night, or the fact that he had been at the funeral. But on the second point he was not left long without information.

'I suppose,' said Matthew after a pause, 'Jem is not much cut up on account of her death?'

'Well, no, Matt,' was the solemn reply; 'he couldn't very well be cut up. He did his duty by her, better than most men would have done—better than she deserved. It must be a relief to him, though he doesn't say a word.'

'What does he intend doing?'

'I don't think he has any plans yet. If you are inclined to overlook the past, the best thing to do would be to let him go abroad for a while—not very long—and by the time he returned he would have got over everything.'

It was the very thing Matthew wanted, but he was not going to say so. He therefore took some minutes to think over it before he answered.

'If he wishes to go away for a bit—and to have the past overlooked,' he said, measuring out his words slowly and with emphasis, 'you may tell him I will supply him with all the money he requires. But it will be on two conditions—first, that he leaves England at once; and second, that he holds no communication with his mother or any one else until he returns. If he agrees to these, you may come to my office the day after to-morrow and I will give you the money for him.'

'Very well. I think he will agree. Then, about the baby?—'

'What! there's a baby, then?' he exclaimed, with an angry start. He was more than angry—he was indignant. What was the good of the woman dying if she left the luckless marriage perpetuated by a child? Yes, there was a baby, Joseph said in a pathetic voice; a pitiful little thing, just such as might be expected from such a mother—sickly, puny, and ill-formed.

'It will be a mercy if it dies,' Joseph observed; 'but it isn't likely to die. Things of that sort die hard.'

Matthew Bulbous rose and paced rapidly up and down. He was powerfully moved over this matter. Again and again, he indignantly exclaimed in his angry thoughts that the woman might as well not have died at all. But there was one thing clear. The baby must go!—it

must leave his path—it was a fact with which no compromise could be contemplated.

Did Joseph Bulbous, sitting there silent and apparently abstracted, suspect what was passing in his brother's thoughts? Possibly he did, for he was the only person who knew Matthew down to the sole of his feet—knew him, indeed, better than the elder brother knew himself.

'You wouldn't care, Matt, I suppose,' he remarked thoughtfully, 'for your wife to know about this baby? Women have such unaccountable ways where babies are concerned, you never know what they'll do. You wouldn't care, I suppose,' Joseph observed mildly, 'to have the child in your own house?'

For an instant Matthew glared savagely at the mere suggestion, with the blood hot in his face. 'Look here!' he exclaimed, with suppressed anger, 'it would be ill for my wife, or for any woman of our family, to oppose me in this—ill for her and hers. I'll have none of it! You understand me? I hope Jem has not written to any of them about the child? If he has, you had better, for their own sakes, let them know what I say.'

'He has not done so. Nobody knows anything about the child. But what do you intend to do with it?'

This required thought. There was one thing clear to Matthew Bulbous—he must depend on his brother to help him out of this grave embarrassment. There was no one who could accomplish it better, if he had the will; and, notwithstanding the past, there was no one else on whose fidelity he could so fully rely. But it would be necessary to confide in his brother if his agency were to be secured in this emergency.

'What do I intend to do with it?' Matthew repeated. 'You must help me in this matter, Joe; it is the last service I shall ask of you, and I shall not forget it when you are going. Now I'll tell you exactly how it stands.'

He related what had passed between him and Lord Polonius, and of course Joseph Bulbous saw the situation at once. There was a silence of several minutes. Then Matthew spoke again, but all he said was the monosyllable: 'Well?'

There are many ways of pronouncing this short word, and the way in which Matthew Bulbous uttered it now caused his brother to draw a deep breath and slightly raise his shoulders.

'What I have said to Lord Polonius, Joe, must be made true, in fact. The Thing is not worth being in the way of a less important business. I don't care how it's done or what it costs, so long as it is done safely. You understand me now?'

'Very well,' replied the other. 'I am acquainted with a—private institution, which makes a specialty of that line of business. I'll see what I can do.'

On the next day but one Joseph Bulbous called at the office. James Bulbous had accepted his father's proposal, and was ready to start for the continent that afternoon. Matthew gave his brother a roll of bank-notes for the purpose; and then the latter reported the gratifying intelligence that he had arranged an interview for Matthew with the Lady Principal of the institution which he had referred to. Matthew made a grimace, as though he would prefer to decline

a personal meeting; and suggested the arrangement being entirely carried out by Joseph himself.

'That's impossible,' replied the latter. 'The lady is a lady of high standing in her profession, like yourself, and will only negotiate with principals.'

On being assured that Jem had not communicated in any way with his mother—whose knowledge of the baby's existence, gentle as she was, Matthew felt would have been unfavourable to his business—he reluctantly agreed to attend at his brother's lodging at seven o'clock.

He felt far from comfortable as he drove to Chelsea in the evening. The consciousness that he was taking a principal part in putting an end to a life that stood in his way, made itself very troublesome in a breast which was naturally cowardly. Matthew had, while keeping well outside of the law, taken a hand in shady proceedings before now in order to make money; but he had never been concerned in so hazardous a matter as this. Not that his moral sense was touched—it was the risk he was thinking of; the infant's life itself was as nothing to him in comparison with the advantages to be gained by putting an end to it.

As he stepped out of the cab, he rallied himself with the reflection that this kind of thing was done every day—was, in a sense, legitimised for want of evidence to hunt it down when done by careful professional hands.

At his request Joseph went out as the lady came in, for it was a business not requiring a witness. Matthew glanced at her curiously. She wore a reassuring aspect of 'business' in her countenance, looking straight at him with an expression in her steady eye and well-set mouth—the latter encircled by a growth of resolute bristles—which indicated strength of character. Mrs Griffon proceeded to business without delay. She understood that Mr B.—it was her professional practice to mention names by initials—wished to entrust to her care an infant whose father had gone abroad, its mother being deceased. She also understood that the baby was delicate, and hardly—all right. Mr Bulbous regretfully implied that this was so. Then Mrs Griffon uttered a sympathetic 'Ah!' and pointed out how them was the objects as lived when other babies died—that such was her experience; that they seemed to live on their misery, and generally did credit to their keep. Of course for the care of such a baby as that, requiring extra attention and et ceteras, terms was necessarily higher than ordinary; likewise, as we never know what may happen, there was doctor and funeral expenses to be considered. The result of the negotiations was the payment to Mrs Griffon (in cash) of fifty pounds, provisionally; at the end of three weeks, should further arrangements be necessary, a small sum would be paid weekly for the child's maintenance. This sum would be so small that it would obviously not be the interest of Mrs Griffon to look forward to it.

Regular reports came to Matthew Bulbous, by request. No parent was ever more anxious. In three days he learned that, after all, the baby's vitality did not seem so tenacious since its mother's death. Mothers, as Mrs Griffon ex-

plained, contrived to keep such things alive when all the attention and science of an experienced nurse failed to do so, which was one of those strange facts no one was capable of explaining. Consequently, though far from desiring to alarm Mr Bulbous, Mrs Griffon felt it her duty to prepare him for what might happen in the course of nature.

Joseph Bulbous came to the office one morning at the end of a week. 'The doctor,' he stated gravely, 'says it is impossible to keep the child alive—he has tried all his skill.'

'Oh, he has, has he?' Matthew observed.

'Yes. Radical disease from birth—called it some hard name which I forget.—Mrs Griffon,' he added, 'wanted to leave town in a couple of days, to pay a visit to a dear friend who is ill; but she can't leave the baby in that critical condition.'

'Hasn't she some one to take her place?' demanded Matthew.

'Yes, of course there is the—the staff,' replied Joseph, wiping some moisture from the corner of one of his eyes. 'But, professionally, she feels bound to be in at the—I mean, to be on the spot on such important occasions. However, the doctor says it is very likely she will be able to go.'

Matthew Bulbous drew a deep breath. He would give a thousand pounds for the whole thing to be over. He could not command an easy moment until it was past and safely buried in oblivion.

'Joe,' he said, 'telegraph to me immediately—your understand? And I would like to know the nature of the disease. Ask the doctor to send me a report, and I will pay him for it.'

Within two hours the report arrived by a messenger who was instructed to 'wait answer.' The report was scientific and satisfactory, and Matthew Bulbous wrote out a cheque for five guineas and sent it to the doctor.

Sending a cheque was not a prudent act, as he recollected after it was gone. The doctor, he was aware, or he suspected, was a confederate of Mrs Griffon, and if anything went wrong, the cheque might be awkward evidence of Matthew Bulbous's relations with the parties. He had been careful to pay Mrs Griffon in cash and without a witness. Now that it was too late, he was annoyed on account of the cheque, much more so than another man would have been, for Matthew Bulbous was in the habit of carefully considering minor details in connection with important transactions.

The hour of his deliverance was nearer than he expected, but it came accompanied by a fresh circumstance of great vexation. At nine o'clock that evening he had a telegram—from his brother, of course, though it was not signed—in the following terms: 'Child died at seven o'clock. Will be buried to-morrow.'

Joseph Bulbous had had large experience in framing telegrams in terms intelligible only to the receiver. Was he drunk when sending this, not to remember that it was a case specially calling for careful phraseology? Matthew was excessively vexed, and took some time to cool down sufficiently to realise the full import of the news. He felt puzzled and disappointed. It was curious that the receipt of this momentous

message, so anxiously awaited, failed to produce on his mind the effect for which he had prepared himself. The death of the unhappy infant meant everything to his ambition, removed the one obstacle from his path, making all smooth to him. Yet he was not elated; he hardly felt satisfied; and almost began to get angry against his own unreasonableness; and although he knew it was illogical and absurd, he felt a secret anxiety which he could no more root out of his breast than he could now—if he so wished it—call back the spark of life into the baby's miserable little body.

Nobody, except his wife, knew that Matthew Bulbous did not go to bed that night. He could not rest. Hour after hour he grew still more restless and anxious, till the dawn of a day of wrath fell on his shrinking face through the study window.

A MILITIA 'TRAINING.'

THOUGH the Militia of the United Kingdom has undergone some rather sweeping changes within recent times, it continues to represent the 'constitutional' defensive force which has existed—with a few blanks and many modifications—almost from the Anglo-Saxon period. It was reorganised at the Restoration on a basis which, as to its main features, may perhaps be said still to subsist. A few years ago, however, the authorities decided to style the militia battalions as additional ones to those of the infantry of the line. The method of officering the force, too, has been amended. But probably the most notable change to the eyes of the ordinary observer has been the assimilation of the uniform to that of the 'regulars'; and above all, the substitution of their gold lace and gilt buttons for the time-honoured silver, or white, lace and buttons so long the distinguishing mark of the militia.

The great event of the militia year is the annual 'training.' It lasts a month, and during that not very long period, a surprising amount of military instruction is imparted to the members of a battalion. For two months previous to this general training, the recruits collected since the previous one are called in and drilled; and when the main body is mustered, they are able to take their places in the ranks, if not exactly as 'trained soldiers,' at least with a fair knowledge of such elementary exercises as, for example, the curious one well known as the 'goose step.'

What may be considered as the typical kind of training usually takes place 'under canvas'—that is to say, the men occupy a temporary encampment during its progress. They are apprised of the date of assembly by means of placards posted in public situations, such as the entrances to parish churches; and these notices set forth, among other things, the 'advantages' of service in the militia, one of the principal attractions held out being a 'bounty' payable at the conclusion of the month's drill. The 'muster parade' is advertised to occur at mid-day, and those who fail to appear there forfeit a day's pay; for the military day commences, not after the stroke of midnight, but after that of twelve noon.

Though nominally understood to be held at mid-day, the drums do not commonly beat for muster parade till a little later. During this interval, an observer looking into the precincts of the camp might be surprised at the doings of some hundreds of men, who have gathered in the vicinity of a tent pitched apart from the ordinary 'lines' of canvas dwellings. They are some of them engaged in divesting themselves of part of their clothing; others are drawn up in 'single rank' with their shirt sleeves turned up as far as that operation can well be carried, while boots and stockings have been removed, and nether garments rolled up above the knee. In other words, they stand bare-legged and bare-armed. After a little they are seen to march in this semi-clad condition into the tent above alluded to; then, with hardly any delay, to issue from it and resume possession of the piles of boots and clothing with which the grass in the neighbourhood is sprinkled. The spectator of this peculiar scene, if of an inquiring nature, might perhaps be tempted to approach and peep in at the tent 'door,' were it not for the somewhat austere demeanour of a sentinel standing near by. This man, of course, is one of the recently drilled recruits, and, like the proverbial broom, may be expected to carry out his function with exactness. Even if he should waive interference with an intruder, however, there is nothing so very extraordinary or mysterious in the tent. At a table sits the medical officer, with company rolls before him. As each bare-legged man comes in he (the man) says 'Fit,' or, in a few instances, 'Unfit'—meaning fit for duty, or not fit from illness, as the case may be. In the former event the surgeon promptly writes 'Fit' opposite the man's name on the list; in the latter, the complainant is detained for subsequent examination.

Before long comes the muster parade, which is but a roll-call, and is quickly over. Soon afterwards the men are seen proceeding by companies to a permanent edifice of wood or stone, the interior of which is fitted up with a vast number of small compartments, something like the berths in a ship. This is the store; and here each man, on giving his 'kit number,' is handed a large canvas bag, that for the past eleven months has found a resting-place, along with a variety of equipments, in one of the above-mentioned compartments. The bag contains a complete outfit of uniform clothing and 'necessaries'—such as, for instance, a knife, fork, and box of shoe-blackening. Having retired to a convenient spot, the recipient of the bag clothes himself in uniform, and then he returns it, filled with his own private garments—which are not invariably of a fashionable character—to its appropriate compartment, there to remain undisturbed till the end of the 'training.'

Henceforth, most of the militiaman's time is occupied with drill, at least during the day. This commences with the rudiments of a soldier's instruction as exemplified in the goose step, and in these curious motions familiarly known as 'fly-catching,' which are said to be viewed with astonishment by continental visitors to our shores. Later on, more ambitious exercises and movements are entered upon in a creditable manner. As already hinted, the officering of

the force has been modified: the adjutant, for instance, is now selected from the officers of the regular regiment to which the militia is attached as a third or fourth battalion. From that regiment, too, come all the principal non-commissioned officers. Thus every company has one or more experienced sergeants from the 'regulars'; and it may be said with perfect truth that these men form the backbone of the whole militia system. Under an officer known as the musketry instructor, assisted by a certificated sergeant instructor, the companies are 'put through'—what is now almost the most important item of a soldier's education—a course of rifle-shooting.

A few days after the camp has been got into working order, at a certain hour on a fine sunny morning, the inhabitants of each tent may be seen drawn up in front in single rank. In a central position stand the adjutant and sergeant-major; and the latter may be heard, in somewhat truculent tones, giving instructions to the groups of men. Suddenly he makes a sign to a bugler, who is standing hard by in the constrained attitude of 'attention.' Forthwith the boy sounds a prolonged 'G' on his instrument; and in a moment the men fly to the ropes of the bell tents, while an important functionary termed the 'front-rank poleman' rushes into each and seizes the central pole. Then the sergeant-major makes another sign, which quickly draws forth a second 'G' from the bugle. Almost before the sound of this has died away, the tents have fallen with a dull thud upon the ground, and the polemen may be seen struggling, in a diverting manner, to extricate themselves from the canvas in which they are for the moment enveloped. An extraordinary scene of activity supervenes. In a shorter time than it takes to state the fact, the tents with their ropes, pegs, and everything have been packed into the bags provided for this purpose; and supposing the men ready accoutred, the battalion could march away with its impedimenta almost immediately.

Two or three hours later, the lines of tents rise again, as if by magic, to the sound of the bugle; the polemen lapsing into comparative obscurity till the camp is once more 'struck.' During the month, some of the tents, particularly in wet or windy weather, show a good deal of eccentricity, and it is by no means an unknown experience for the inmates to be rudely awakened in the night by the overflow of the 'ditch,' or even the total overthrow of the canvas structure by the wind.

At length the end of the 'training' comes round. On the morning of the day of disbandment, rifles and equipments are returned to the store; while the bags are brought out of the berth-like compartments, and the men resume the garb of everyday life. Then the battalion 'falls in' at an appointed hour. At this parade the pay-sergeants—who, of course, belong to the permanent staff—appear wearing haversacks. Having called the roll for the last time, they take from the haversacks a quantity of envelopes, each bearing a man's name, and apparently containing some weighty substance. As the name on the envelope is called out by the sergeant, its owner advances, takes possession, and retires to the ranks, where he may be seen to carefully count the coins which constitute his 'bounty.' (Some-

times, we understand, the men are not paid until they are in the railway carriages on the way from the dépôt.) Very soon the commanding officer dismisses the battalion; and next day the only relics of the 'training' are the circles in the grass that mark the situation of the now filled up tent 'ditches.'

HOME LETTERS.

'THE mail-steamer has passed Cape Borda,' says somebody, looking over the paper at breakfast-time.

'When will she be in?'

Another look at the paper and a little calculation soon satisfies us that 'she' will be off the semaphore by mid-day.

'Suppose we go and see the mails landed,' suggests somebody else.

Carried unanimously.

A line of low sandhills, on which stands the front row of houses at the semaphore, the rest of the little town being out of sight behind them, a long stretch of sandy beach, from which two jetties, about a mile apart, run out into the sea like long black arms, are the chief features of that part of South Australia first seen by a new arrival. But these things are too familiar to us to call for comment, as, at the appointed time, we take our way along the esplanade towards Largs Bay, where the mails are landed. We have soon passed the last of the semaphore houses; and looking to the right over the low rush-grown sandhills, and beyond the clump of masts and chimneys that marks the Port, can see the Mount Lofty range rising soft and blue in the distance. Below us, on the left, lies the sea, with the steamer close in now—a black blot on its brightness, that grows larger every minute. She is nearly at the anchorage, where two fussy little steam launches are bobbing up and down, as if impatient for their load of letter-bags. We must hurry.

Our destination is soon reached; and passing the Pier Hotel with its cool-looking balconies, we make the best of our way along the jetty. Here, near the end, a train is waiting, while a group of men stand ready to land the mails. We find a place which commands a view of the landing-stage, and sit down to await events.

The first boat from the steamer brings passengers and luggage; but the one with the mails follows hard behind. There are meetings and greetings on the landing-stage and on the jetty, a hurried examination of luggage on the part of the Customs officials; and these first arrivals hurry away with their friends. By this time, two or three active men in the second launch are hard at work throwing out the bags, while another gang carries them up to the train. An engine goes off with the first few trucks as soon as they are filled, and another will come soon for the next. Back and forth pant the little launches; up and down the sloping stage go the men, carrying sacks, on which, in staring capitals of brilliant hue, is printed the name of their destination. We try to count them, but soon give it up, for the launches come in two at a time now, and the men work faster. The last sack is tossed into its place; the official in charge climbs into the train; the men straighten their backs, an engine

comes rumbling along the jetty and rumbles off again with its precious charge. The mail is landed, and home letters will soon be spread all over the colonies. Adelaide letters will be delivered this afternoon; those for Melbourne will reach their destination to-morrow if they catch the afternoon express; and Sydney will get hers next day.

Some letters will have to travel for weeks before they arrive at the up-country post-office or far-away run to which they are directed; but the farther they go the warmer their welcome; and the man who goes for them will be well repaid for his long ride, though he may have had to swim his horse across a river, or even to camp out a night on the way, by the joy called up by the mention of English letters in the half-peeled face of some homesick new chum, who is rapidly losing his fresh complexion and romantic notions of bush-life under the influence of sunshine and unpoetic realities; or the well-tanned one of a man who has been long enough out to be used to life and work, and quite at home in the colony, yet has not forgotten the old country—Home, as we always call it here.

Even the knock-about hand who is known to have seen better days—being, in fact, one of those ne'er-dowells so often shipped off to our shores—brightens up at the mention of home letters. Who knows what he is expecting—news that he has come into a fortune, or maybe a title as well? Such things do happen in this topsyturvy land of ours. Or maybe he is just hoping against hope that some friend, some member of the family which has cast him off, perhaps deservedly, has relented enough to send a few kind words. There is nothing for him. He did not really think there would be; but his hard face grows harder and his bitter thoughts more bitter as he turns away. He may be a thorough scamp, beyond any one's power to reclaim; yet who knows? The knowledge that somebody cared whether he lived or died; whether he was struggling to recover lost ground or drifting from bad to worse, would at least have done no harm.

By-and-by, a tired stockman or boundary-rider comes in after his long day's work, jogging slowly homewards, weary in body and mind. But the mention of home letters puts new life into him; he hastily swallows his evening meal, and then—perhaps by the humble illumination of a bush-lamp—a tin of fat with a bit of rag for wick—he reads and rereads his precious missives.

Home letters! What magic there is in those two words; they call up a hundred scenes, of which this is only one. The modern magic of steam and electricity has so annihilated time and space that we sometimes feel as if we were 'within cooe' of the old country; but it is a far cry after all, and though our letters bear a recent date, they speak of a very different world. It is perhaps difficult to write regularly to people at a distance, where difference of surroundings may seem to entail lack of common interest; but the time has gone by when long voyages added to the difficulty, when, as Charles Lamb says, writing to Australia was 'like writing for posterity,' when news became history in the transit. It no longer requires two prophets to carry on a correspondence satisfactorily; and it is surely worth while

to write a few kindly home-breathing words when they will be so precious, so very precious to friends across the sea.

While we have been thinking, other onlookers have drifted away. The Customs officers have shut themselves into an office so like an up-ended packing-case that one fancies they are doing penance therein for the disarrangement they inflict on neatly packed portmanteaus. The old tart-seller who is always on hand on mail-days with his basket, his dog, and his bronzed good-natured face, has departed, seeing no further prospect of trade in confectionery, and the jetty is deserted save by ourselves and a few patient but dejected-looking fishermen; so we turn our steps homewards, and are soon discussing, over a welcome cup of tea, what the mail will bring for us.

SOME CURIOSITIES OF EPITAPH LITERATURE.

In an article on this subject which appeared in these pages a few years ago (No. 54, January 10, 1885), many instances were given of the epitaphs common before clergymen began to exercise supervision over the churchyards of their parishes. Most of the epitaphs quoted set at defiance every canon of orthography, grammar, and metre, not to speak of the decency which one expects to find in such places; and the writer referred with satisfaction to the vast improvement which has taken place since the beginning of the century. This improvement, among other reasons, may explain the fact that, as far as this country is concerned, there is little that is new to be written on the subject; and such of the inscriptions given below as are native productions are merely inserted as a supplement to the previous paper. Those from the other side of the Atlantic, bearing as they do many characteristic marks of their origin, may be read with more interest. But all, British or foreign, are such curiosities of this kind of literature, that no apology is needed for bringing them before the public.

During the whole of last century, epitaph-making seems to have been the special and favourite vocation of doggerel-mongers, and doubtless it was so as far back as people had the small amount of education necessary to compose such lines as the following, which, according to a newspaper of 1838, were then to be seen at Liverpool:

This humble stone is raised to JULIAN TREE,
Who in 1776 died in direst poverty:
Unloved by daughter, wife, or friend,
He went his way unto the end.—R.I.P.

In the same place was another, shorter and more pithy, and expressing a truism which is too well known to be worth commemoration in distich-form, but which, perhaps for that very reason, was in special demand with the epitaph-makers of the last century:

In Memory of JAMES BROWN.
'All men must die,' and so did he
Who lies beneath—in 1703.

The inscription on one Samuel Hearne and his wife is told in smoother verse—if it can be digni-

fied by any such name—but its tone is much the same as the above. It runs :

SAMUEL HEARNE, a man was he,
Who lived through youth and age to be
Full ninety years of age and more,
Before he died in 1804.
His wife survived him many a day,
In '21 being called away;
And now they here together rest
And moulder into silent dust.

In contrast to the long life of Samuel Hearne was that of Mary Thompson, buried in a London churchyard, whose pathetic story is told by her epitaph :

Here buried lies in Mother Earth
The mortal shell of one
Who wished before her life's decay
That it was nearly done,
And so she faded right away
Without Disease's 'Ay' or 'Nay.'

More tragic was the fate of Thomas Ramage of Hull, who died, presumably of hydrophobia, in 1824.

'Let sleeping dogs lie' is a proverb that's true,
As he who lies under has cause to tell you,
For he woke one that slept, who bit him in rage,
And he died of his wound, did THOMAS RAMAGE.

In a graveyard in another part of Yorkshire may be read an inscription of a different kind, but one in which the sentiment, though heard often enough even at the present day, is rather ambiguous and enigmatical :

Under this tablet rests in peace
A man, JOHN JENKINS JONES,
Whose death to him was a release—
Also to Widow Jones,
Who now to him erects this stone,
In mem'ry that she's left alone.

Upon another member of the great Jones family, who may or may not have been a relation of the John Jenkins above mentioned, the following lines are said to stand as an epitaph, but the locality is unknown to us :

Here lies old EBENEZER JONES,
Who all his life collected bones,
Till Death, that grim and bony spectre,
That all-amassing bone-collector,
Boned old Jones, so neat and tidy,
That here he lies, all *bond fide*.

Much of the same character is a glowing eulogium upon a Dublin lawyer of the name of Alexander Gray, who was apparently a *rara avis* of a legal practitioner, if we are to trust the common belief that honest lawyers are as few and far between as the proverbial angels' visits. He died in 1798, and his epitaph said :

Of ALEX. GRAY
Let no man say
That he was either black or gray ;
For though his life
Was spent in strife,
It was as open as the day.
In all his ways
White as the Grays,
He lived an honest lawyer.

Another epitaph of the same kind, punning upon the name of the deceased, is that on the great-grandfather of John Wesley—John White, a celebrated Puritan lawyer, and one of the members of Parliament actively opposed to Charles I. Clarendon says of him : 'He was a

grave lawyer, but notoriously disaffected to the Church.' According to Tyerman, in his *Life of Samuel Wesley*, he died on the 29th of January 1644, and was buried in the Temple Church, where a marble stone was afterwards placed upon his grave, with this inscription :

Here lyeth a John, a burning, shining light,
His name, life, actions, were all WHITE.

Sharing with the above the weighty association of history is the epitaph upon John Hatfield, the Keswick impostor, well known in connection with the Buttermere Mary mentioned by Wordsworth in his *Prelude*. The story of Hatfield's crimes and punishment is too long to be told here, and may not, besides, be unknown to our readers. He was executed at Carlisle and buried in St Mary's Churchyard there, where the following epitaph may still, for all that we know to the contrary, be read on his tombstone :

Our life is but a winter's day :
Some only breakfast and away ;
Others to dinner stay,
And are full fed ;

The oldest man but sups and goes to bed.
Large is his debt who fingers out his day ;
He who goes soonest has the least to pay.

The same epitaph is also to be seen in Stirling Churchyard, but it is impossible to say which of them is the original.

Of inscriptions which have never really served as such we have a good instance in the story of a potter and an itinerant musician, who, meeting at a country inn and discussing epitaphs, proposed that each should furnish one for the other. The musician, after some deliberation, produced the following for the potter :

On earth he oft turned clay to delf,
But now he's turned to clay himself.

The potter followed suit with this for the musician :

In beating time his life was passed,
But time has beaten him at last.

Like these, as far as its purpose is foreign to that for which epitaphs are generally supposed to be written, is the one which, according to a New York paper, is to be seen in an American graveyard :

Here will lie MR JAMES JONES ; at present he lives and carries on his shoe business at 150 Franklin Street.

Somewhat similar, and even more distinctively transatlantic, is our next, for the authenticity of which, however, we do not vouch :

This stone is erected to the memory of THOMAS LAING, who died on July 13, 1880, by his son Ulysses G. Laing, who now carries on his business with the same public-spirited enterprise at the Bonanza Cyclopean Stores, Bond Street ; see advertisements in the daily papers.

This reminds us of a Parisian inscription which, freely translated, runs :

To the everlasting Memory of MARIE FERRY.

The railing around this grave is the handiwork of her bereaved husband, Pierre Ferry, Blacksmith, who will execute all orders of a similar nature with cheapness and despatch.

A slight confusion of meaning is discernible in another inscription, bearing a scriptural text, which may be seen in the cemetery at Peshawur, India. It is only charitable to suppose that it

was drawn up by others than the deceased's professional brethren :

Sacred to the Memory of the Rev. ———, Missionary, murdered by his *chokidar*.—'Well done, thou good and faithful servant.'

Scarcely less malapropos is the oft-quoted epitaph on husband and wife :

Here lies the body of JAMES ROBINSON and RUTH, his wife.—'Their warfare is accomplished.'

And in a sequestered Californian burial-ground, far from the haunts of men, a stone was recently discovered, bearing the simple explanation :

To SAMUEL CONSTABLE.

'After life's scarlet fever, he sleeps well.'

Probably unique in its way is the epitaph of George H. Churchill, in that it is that of a suicide, composed by himself. He ended his life by taking poison at San Francisco a few years ago—his reasons for taking the fatal step being ill-health and inability to work. In a letter to the coroner he said : 'It takes money to live, and it requires work to get money ; and I am unable to work, too proud to beg, and not smart enough to steal. I am absolutely compelled by the unfortunate circumstances in which I am placed to end a life which has become a burden to me.' Appended was the epitaph which he wished placed upon his tombstone :

Here unfortunate CHURCHILL lies ;
Nobody laughs, nobody cries ;
Where he's gone, how he fares,
Nobody knows, nobody cares.

The neighbouring State of Oregon contains an epitaph of a slightly different character from that of Churchill's, to an unnamed person with the sobriquet of 'Whisky Jim,' who had died there in the early days of its settlement. It is such as one would hardly expect to find in the Western society of those days, and is as follows :

In the green shades of which the poets sing,
When this old world has had its earthly fling,
You'll find the spirit, if *you're* there, of him,
To whom this stone is raised—we called him WHISKY JIM.

He died in 1853.

Further east, close to one of the prairie telegraph stations of the Pacific Railway, but apparently placed there years before the making of that road, is a stone bearing an inscription of more pretension than the above. It is evidently the work of a man of some education, and probably, judging from the way in which it is turned, an Englishman. It says :

Stranger ! when passing, pause you here,
The rough and ready grave of FRIER,
The best and bravest, first and last,
Of pioneers of Yankee caste,
Who came, 'tis said, from far-off Maine,
And passed away without pain.
An honest man ; could read and write ;
Knew how to get both sup and bite
By trapping, farming, building, or
Teaching the youths his learned lore ;
Could handle gun like a frontier man,
And hit his mark as only such can ;
And now that you his virtues know,
We only add that he lies below.

The following on Lem. S. Frame commemorates the same qualities :

To LEM. S. FRAME, who during his life shot eighty-nine Indians, whom the Lord delivered into his hands,

and who was looking forward to making up his hundred before the end of the year, when he fell asleep in Jesus at his house at Hook's Ferry, March 27, 1843. He was married thrice, and had fifteen sons and daughters, all of whom are now alive. After the strifes and cares of this world, may he rest in peace !

Even more remarkable are other two epitaphs of the same kind, the first of which is said to be upon a tombstone in the city of Sacramento :

Here is laid DANIEL BORROW, who was born in Sorrow, and Borrowed little from Nature except his name and his love to mankind and hatred to redskins ; who was nevertheless a gentleman and a dead shot ; who, through a long life, never killed his man except in self-defence or by accident ; and who, when he at last went under, beneath the bullets of his cowardly enemies in the saloon of Jeff Morris, did so in the sure and certain hope of a glorious and everlasting Morrow.

The other, which belongs to a Nevada burying-place, is such a noteworthy achievement in this line that it may fitly conclude our compilation of a few of the curiosities of epitaph literature :

Sacred to the Memory of HANK MONK—the Whitest, Biggest-hearted, and Best-known Stage-driver of the West ; who was kind to All and Thought ill of None. He Lived in a Strange Era, and was a Hero ; and the Wheels of his Coach are now Ringing on Golden Streets.

N A M E L E S S.

THERE is no name, no mark, no sign,
To tell who lies below
The tall rank grass, where daisies shine
And pale primroses blow ;
Yet mournfully the lindens wave
And sunbeams gently play,
As if within that nameless grave
An exiled monarch lay.

No monarch sleeps a whit more sound
In dim cathedral aisles
Than this poor heart in earth's green bound
Beneath the sun's glad smiles.
Though it may be that alien earth
Entombs his lifeless clay,
Far from the land that gave him birth,
He rests in peace to-day.

Did friends around his death-bed watch
And wait his latest sigh,
With parted lips, as if to catch
His ling'ring fond good-bye ?
Or did he die an outcast lone,
With none to pray or weep,
With none to hear his dying moan
Or close his eyes in sleep ?

Did death come to him as a friend
That brings repose and peace,
And bliss that ne'er shall know an end,
And joy that will not cease ?
We only know he sleeps below
The daisies and the grass,
Where, ever tenderly and slow,
The lingering sunbeams pass.

M. Rock.

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'STRANGERS IN A STRANGE LAND.'

THE native of India has become a familiar object in the streets of the metropolis. He is no longer, as formerly, the cynosure of every eye; and indeed—unless, perchance, he be wearing his native dress—is as likely as not to be passed by unnoticed. After all, we may be inclined to ask, what are a few Indians more or less among London's huge population, including as it does representatives of well-nigh every nationality? But the native of India can hardly be considered in the same light as the swarthy Boohoo Islander, or the last importation from Topsy-turvy Land, though both be equally familiar. He differs from these last in being our fellow-subject, and accordingly he is, or should be, more closely connected with us.

'The possession of India,' says a recent writer, 'has added a new and clearly-defined element to English life.' His reference was solely to the Anglo-Indian; but it might well have been extended to include the real as well as the adopted children of the gorgeous East.

Indians in England fall broadly into three divisions. First, those who have come over purely for amusement, much as Englishmen now visit India in the cold season. These are mere birds of passage. Second, business men, chiefly merchants, who import Indian produce for sale in this country, and have establishments here and in India. Third—and this is by far the largest and, to our mind most interesting class—students. That there are a very considerable number of Indians residing here for purposes of education is a fact perhaps not generally known. The majority are engaged in working for the Bar examinations or the Indian Civil Service; but there are others qualifying for their doctor's degree, and indeed for almost every profession. And what a strange life is theirs! a life which to an English lad would be intolerable—a life of all work and no play, such as we have been led to believe makes Jack a dull boy. Doubtless, however, the constitution of the young Indian

is not the same as that of the subject of the old lines. For to the Indian student the English public school is, save in a few exceptional cases, a *terra incognita*. The crammer's establishment does duty for his Eton; his playing-fields are Kensington Gardens and Hyde Park. The best years of his life are passed in some dismal lodging in a Bayswater back street, far from home and relatives, occasionally with others of his countrymen as fellow-lodgers, more frequently in dreary solitude. His pleasures are few. Work from morn to night at his tutor's, preparation for next day's tasks in the evening, leave him but little time he can call his own. A stray visit to a theatre or music hall is his only dissipation; for, though his needs are small, his purse is but slender.

These strangers' powers of application are astonishing. Of original genius they may be devoid; but for work which requires of the mind imitation rather than creation they are pre-eminently adapted. The essential difference between whist and chess, both games of skill, has been held to lie in the fact, that while the latter, to be successful, must proceed strictly in accordance with a definite system, which admits not the smallest deviation, the whist-player's greatest triumphs are won by some bold *coup* which throws all rules to the winds, so that it is hardly a paradox to say that to play whist well is to play in spite of rules. If this be so—and it is not an absolutely untenable theory—then the native of India should be a capital chess-player, but a bad partner for a rubber. Of him, if of any one, it may be said, that he can obey, not command. After all, perhaps, he possesses the more important qualification.

We hear much nowadays of the influx of Germans and other foreigners, whose competition ousts Englishmen from the labour market, inasmuch as the foreigner will not only, owing to his lower standard of living, be satisfied with a smaller wage, but is also a better workman. But it is not unreasonable to suppose that the competition of our Indian fellow-subject will ere long

be a far more serious element in our social system. His standard of living is lower even than that of the foreigners we now complain of; his industrial efficiency will, with the extension of Indian education, be far greater.

Of society, even if he can find time for it, the Indian student has little. Between him and his native fellow-students is a great gulf fixed, that 'most blighting of all human institutions, caste,' whose potent influence even some thousand miles of sea cannot wholly destroy. True, there are exceptions to the rule. Happy the Indian whom a kindly *kismet* permits to reside at either university. There the line of caste distinction is less firmly drawn.

But if he knows but little of those around him of his own race, he knows even less of his English fellow-students. As the Jews had no dealing with the Samaritans, so there is seldom any degree of intimacy between East and West at their common tutor's, though for weeks together they sit side by side on the same form. Your friend Jones's son is at Fillem and Swallow's, the great Indian crammers, imbibing what may be not inaptly termed a *judicious* mixture, which may qualify him to hold the scales between some thousands of denizens of Her Gracious Majesty's Eastern Empire. But ask Jones Junior if he knows So-and-so, and he will elevate his aristocratic eyebrows, much as if you had suggested that he was not unacquainted with the interior of Dartmoor prison. You repeat the question; and you will be told: 'Oh, one of those Indians, you mean. I have seen him about at the "shop"'—the shop being Messrs Fillem and Swallow's establishment—'but we don't have anything to do with *them*.' The amount of contempt thrown into that little word '*them*' is incredible; it chokes you; and yet Jones' Junior's grandfather was once a shopboy, while your Indian friend draws his blood straight from the Moguls.

It is not quite so bad with the fair sex. 'He has such beautiful eyes,' said an English girl the other day, when remonstrated with for flirting with 'that Indian.' So there is some power still in *les beaux yeux*.

But though familiar to the *blasé* Londoner, there is one class to whom the Indian, such as we have described, is a never-failing novelty. The country cousin, up for a week's sight-seeing, seldom omits to turn and gaze at this, to him, strange species of the genus British subject. And can we say that his attention is ill bestowed? Is there not a peculiar signification in this latest object lesson? May not the sight of these Indians in Fleet Street, this mingling of East and West, afford as much room for reflection as a visit to the Tower or a climb to the top of the Monument? Each points a moral. The Monument and the Tower are, so to speak, pictures in the great volume of English history. They remind us inevitably of the past; the sight of them awakes a hundred slumbering reminiscences of time gone by.

But the sight of these Indians is even more suggestive. It suggests the Past, for their mere presence in our midst illustrates the difference

between the nineteenth and all previous centuries; it suggests the Future, for it makes us wonder what will be that social system of which they must one day form an integral part.

THE IVORY GATE.*

BY WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XV.—CHECKLEY'S CASE.

THAT evening Mr Checkley was not in his customary place at the *Salutation*, where his presence was greatly desired. He arrived late, when it wanted only a quarter to eleven. The faded barrister was left alone in the room, lingering over the day's paper with his empty glass beside him. Mr Checkley entered with an air of triumph, and something like the elastic spring of a victor in his aged step. He called Robert, and ordered at his own expense, for himself, a costly drink—a compound of Jamaica rum, hot water, sugar and lemon, although it was an evening in July and, for the time of year, almost pleasantly warm. Nor did he stop here, for with the manner of a man who just for once—to mark a joyful occasion—plunges, he rattled his money in his pocket and ordered another for the barrister. 'For,' he said, 'this evening I have done a good work, and I will mark the day.'

When the glasses were brought, he lifted his and cried: 'Come, let us drink to the confusion of all Rogues, great and small. Down with 'em!'

'Your toast, Mr Checkley,' replied the barrister, 'would make my profession useless: if there were no rogues, there would be no Law. That, however, would injure me less than many of my brethren. I drink, therefore, confusion to Rogues, great and small. Down with 'em.—This is excellent grog.—Down with 'em!'

So saying, he finished his glass and departed to his garret, where, thanks to the grog, he slept nobly, and dreamed that he was a Master in Chancery.

The reason of this unaccustomed mirth was as follows: Checkley by this time had fully established in his own mind the conclusion that the prime mover in the deed—the act—the Thing—was none other than the new partner, the young upstart, whom he hated with a hatred unextinguishable. He was as certain about him as he had been certain about Athelstan Arundel, and for much the same reasons. Very well. As yet he had not dared to speak: King Pharaoh's chief scribe would have had the same hesitation at proffering any theory concerning Joseph. To-night, however—But you shall hear.

Everybody was out of the office at half-past seven, when he left it. He walked round the empty rooms, looking into unlocked drawers—one knows not what he expected to find. He looked into Mr Austin's room and shook his fist and grinned at the empty chair.

'I'll have you yet,' he said. 'Oh, fox! fox! I'll have you, if I wait for thirty years!'

It adds an additional pang to old age when one feels that if the end comes prematurely, when one is only ninety or so, there may be a revenge unfinished. I have always envied the dying

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hero who had no enemies to forgive because he had killed them all.

When Checkley left the place he walked across the Inn and so into Chancery Lane, where he crossed over and entered Gray's Inn by the Holborn archway. He lingered in South Square: he walked all round it twice: he read the names on the door-posts, keeping all the time an eye on No. 22. Presently, he was rewarded. A figure which he knew, tall and well proportioned, head flung back, walked into the Inn and made straight for No. 22. It was none other than Athelstan Arundel. The old man crept into the entrance, where he was partly hidden; he could see across the Square, himself unseen. Athelstan walked into the house and up the stairs: the place was quiet: Checkley could hear his steps on the wooden stairs: he heard him knock at a door—he heard the door open and the voices of men talking.

'Ah!' said Checkley, 'now we've got 'em!'

Well—but this was not all. For presently there came into the Inn young Austin himself.

'Oh!' said Checkley, finishing his sentence—'on toast. Here's the other; here they are—both.'

In fact, George, too, entered the house known as No. 22 and walked up the stairs.

Checkley waited for no more. He ran out of the Inn and he called a cab.

If he had waited a little longer, he would have seen the new partner come out of the house and walk away: if he had followed him up the stairs, he would have seen him knocking at the closed outer door of Mr Edmund Gray. If he had knocked at the door opposite, he would have found Mr Athelstan Arundel in the room with his own acquaintance, Mr Freddy Carstone, the Cambridge scholar and the ornament of their circle at the *Salutation*. But being in a hurry, he jumped to a conclusion and called a cab.

He drove to Palace Gardens, where Sir Samuel had his town-house. Sir Samuel was still at dinner. He sat down in the hall, meekly waiting. After a while the Service condescended to ask if he wished a message to be taken in to Sir Samuel.

'From his brother's—from Mr Dering's office, please tell him. From his brother's office—on most important business—most important—say.'

Sir Samuel received him kindly, made him sit down, and gave him a glass of wine. 'Now,' he said, 'tell me what it all means. My brother has had a robbery—papers and certificates and things—of course they are stopped. He won't lose anything. But it is a great nuisance, this kind of thing.'

'He has already lost four months' dividends—four months, sir, on thirty-eight thousand pounds. And do you really think that he will get back his papers?'

'Certainly—or others. They are, after all, only vouchers.—How is my brother?'

'Well, Sir Samuel, better than you'd think likely. This morning, to be sure'—He stopped, being loth to tell how his master had lost consciousness. 'Well, sir, I've been thinking that the property was gone, and from what I know of them as had to do with the job, I thought there was mighty little chance of

getting it back. It kept me awake. Oh! it's an awful sum. Close upon forty thousand pounds. He can stand that and double that'—

'And double that again,' said Sir Samuel. 'I should hope so.'

'Certainly, sir. But it's a blow—I can feel for him. I'm only a clerk; but I've saved a bit and put out a bit, Sir Samuel. Cheese-parings, you'd say; but I've enjoyed saving it up—oh! I've enjoyed it. I don't think there is any pleasure in life like saving up—watching it grow—and grow and grow—it grows like a pretty flower, doesn't it?—and adding to it. Ah!' he sighed, and drank his glass of wine. 'Sir Samuel, if I was to lose my little savings, it would break my heart. I'm an old man, and so is he—it would break me up, it would indeed. Ever since yesterday morning, I've been thinking whether anything could happen to make me lose my money. There's Death in the thought. Sir Samuel—for an old man—and a small man—like me—there's Death in the thought.'

'Don't tell anybody where your investments are, and lock up the papers, Checkley.—Now, what do you want me to do for you?'

'I want you to listen to me for half an hour, Sir Samuel, and to give me your advice, for the business is too much for me.'

'Go on, then. I am listening.'

'Very well. Now, sir, I don't know if I shall be able to make my case clear—but I will try. I haven't been about Mr Dering for fifty years for nothing, I hope. The case is this. Nine years ago, a man calling himself Edmund Gray took Chambers in South Square, Gray's Inn—forty pounds a year. He is represented as being an elderly man. He has paid his rent regularly, but he visits his Chambers at irregular intervals. Eight years ago there was a forgery at your brother's. The cheque was payable to the order of Edmund Gray; mark that. The money was paid'—

'I remember. Athelstan Arundel was accused, or suspected of the thing.'

'He was. And he ran away to avoid being arrested. Remember that. And he's never been heard of since. Well, the series of forgeries by which the shares and stocks belonging to Mr Dering have been stolen are all written in the same handwriting as the first, and are all carried on in the name and for the order of Edmund Gray. That you would acknowledge in a moment if you saw the papers: there are the same lines and curves of the letters'—

'Which proves, I should say, that Athelstan never did it.'

'Wait a minute. Don't let's be in a hurry. The forgers by themselves could do nothing. They wanted some one in the office, some one always about the place: some one who could get at the safe: some one who could get from the office what the man outside wanted, some one to intercept the letters'—

'Well?'

'That person, Sir Samuel, I have found.'

Sir Samuel sat up. 'You have found him?'

'I have. And here's my difficulty. Because, Sir Samuel, he is your brother's new partner; and unless we lodge him in the Jug before many days, he will be your own brother-in-law.'

Sir Samuel changed colour, and got up to see

that the door behind the screen was shut. 'This is a very serious thing to say, Checkley—a very serious thing.'

'Oh! I will make it quite plain. First, as to opportunities; next, as to motives; third, as to facts. For opportunities, then. Latterly, for the last six months, he's been working in the Chief's office nearly all day long. There he sat, at the little table between the windows, just half turned round to catch the light, with the open safe within easy reach of his hand when the Chief wasn't looking; or when—because he doesn't always touch the bell—Mr Dering would bring papers into my office and leave him alone—ah! alone—with the safe. That's for opportunities. Now for motives. He's been engaged for two years, I understand, to a young lady'—

'To Lady Dering's sister.'

'Just so, sir. And I believe, until the unexpected luck of his partnership against the wish of Lady Dering's family.'

'That is true.'

'He had two hundred a year. And he had nothing else—no prospects and no chances. So I think you will acknowledge that there's sufficient motive here for him to try anything.'

'Well, if poverty is a motive—no doubt he had one.'

'Poverty was the motive. You couldn't have a stronger motive. There isn't in the whole world a stronger motive—though, I admit, some young men who are pore may keep honest. I did. Mr Austin, I take it, is one of those that don't keep honest. That's for motive. Now for facts. Mr Austin had nothing to do with the forgery eight years ago; he was only an article clerk beginning. But he knew young Arundel who did the thing, remember. That cheque was written by young Arundel, who ran away. The letters of this year are written by the same hand—by your brother-in-law, Sir Samuel, by Mr Athelstan Arundel.'

'But he is gone; he has disappeared: nobody knows where he is.'

Checkley laughed. This was a moment of triumph. 'He is back again, Sir Samuel. I have seen him.'

'Where? Athelstan back again?'

'I will tell you. All these forgeries use the name of Edmund Gray of 22 South Square, Gray's Inn. I have told you that before. When the thing is discovered, young Austin goes off and makes himself mighty busy tracking and following up, hunting down, doing detective work, and so on. Oh! who so busy as he? Found out that Edmund Gray was an old man, if you please; and this morning again, so cheerful and lively that it does your heart good—going to settle it all in a day or two. Yah! As if I couldn't see through his cunning! Why! I'm seventy-five years old. I'm up to every kind of dodge: what will happen next, unless you cut in? First, we shall hear that Mr Edmund Gray has gone abroad, or has vanished, or something. When he's quite out of the way, we shall find out that he did the whole thing—him and nobody else. And then if there's no more money to be made by keeping the papers, they will all come back—from Edmund Gray, penitent—oh! I know.'

'But about Athelstan Arundel?'

'To be sure. I'm an old man, Sir Samuel, and I talk too much. Well, I go most nights to a parlour in Holborn—the *Salutation* it is—where the company is select and the liquor good. There I saw him a week ago. He was brought in by one of the company. I knew him at once, and he wasn't in hiding. Used his own name. But he didn't see me. No—no, thinks I. We won't give this away. I hid my face behind a newspaper. He's been staying in Camberwell for the last eight years, I believe, all the time.'

'In Camberwell? Why in Camberwell?'

'In bad company—as I was given to understand. In Prodigal Son's company.'

'You don't mean this, Checkley? Is it really true?'

'It is perfectly true, Sir Samuel. I have seen him. He was dressed like a Prince—velvet jacket and crimson tie and white waistcoat. And he walked in with just his old insolence—nose up, head back, looking round as if we were not fit to be in the same room with him—just as he used to do.'

'By Jove!' said Sir Samuel, thrusting his hands into his pockets. 'What will Hilda say—I mean—Lady Dering, say, when she hears it?'

'There is more to hear, Sir Samuel, not much more. But it drives the nail home—a nail in their coffin, I hope and trust.'

'Go on. Let me hear all.'

'You've caught on, have you, to all I said about Edmund Gray of 22 South Square—him as was mentioned eight years ago—and about the handwriting being the same now as then?'

'Yes.'

'So that the same hand which forged the cheque then has forged the letters now?'

'Quite so.'

'I said then—and I say now—that young Arundel forged that cheque. I say now that he is the forger of these letters, and that Austin stood in with him and was his confidant. What do you think of this? To-night, after office, I thought I would go and have a look at 22 South Square. So I walked up and down on the other side: my eyes are pretty good still: I thought I should perhaps see something presently over the way. So I did. Who should come into the Square, marching along as if the old place, Benchers and all, belonged to him, but Mr Athelstan Arundel! He pulled up at No. 22—No. 22, mind—Edmund Gray's number—he walked up-stairs—I heard him—to the second floor—Edmund Gray's floor.'

'Good Lord!' cried Sir Samuel. 'This is suspicious with a vengeance.'

'Oh! but I haven't done. I stayed where I was, wondering if he would come down, and whether I should meet him and ask him what he was doing with Edmund Gray. And then—I was richly rewarded—oh! rich was the reward, for who should come into the Square but young Austin himself! He, too, went up the stairs of No. 22. And there I left them both, and came away—came to put the case into your hands.'

'What do you want me to do?'

'I want you to advise me. What shall I do? There is my case complete—I don't suppose you want a more complete case—for any Court of Justice.'

'Well—as for that—I'm not a lawyer. As a City man, if a clerk of mine was in such a suspicious position as young Austin, I should ask him for full explanations. You've got no actual proof, you see, that he, or Athelstan either, did the thing.'

'I beg your pardon, Sir Samuel. I'm only a clerk, and you're a great City Knight, but I don't know what better proof you want. Don't I see young Austin pretending not to know who Edmund Gray is, and then going up to his Chambers to meet his pal Athelstan Arundel? Ain't that proof? Don't I tell you that the same hand had been at work in both forgeries? Isn't that hand young Arundel's?'

'Checkley, I see that you are greatly interested in this matter'—

'I would give—ah!—twenty pounds—yes, twenty hard-earned pounds to see those two young gentlemen in the Dock—where they shall be—where they shall be,' he repeated. His trembling voice, cracked with old age, seemed unequally wedded to the malignity of his words and his expression.

'One of these young gentlemen,' said Sir Samuel, 'is my brother-in-law. The other, unless this business prevents, will be my brother-in-law before many days. You will therefore understand that my endeavours will be to keep them both out of the Dock.'

'The job will be only half complete without; but still—to see young Austin drove out of the place—with disgrace—same as the other one was—why, that should be something—something to think about afterwards.'

Checkley went away. Sir Samuel sat thinking what was best to be done. Like everybody else, he quite believed in Athelstan's guilt. Granted that fact, he saw clearly that there was another very black-looking case against him and against George Austin. What should be done? He would consult his wife. He did so.

'What will Elsie say?' she asked. 'Yet, sooner or later, she must be told. I suppose that will be my task. But she can wait a little. Do you go to-morrow morning to Mr Dering and tell him. The sooner he knows the better.'

You now understand why Mr Checkley was so joyous when he arrived at the *Salutation* and why he proposed that toast.

In the morning, Sir Samuel saw his brother and whispered in his ear the whole of the case, as prepared and drawn up by Checkley. 'What do you say?' he asked when he had concluded.

'I say nothing.' Mr Dering had heard all the points brought out one after the other without the least emotion. 'There is nothing to be said.'

'But, my dear brother, the evidence!'

'There is no evidence. It is all supposition. If Athelstan committed the first forgery—there is no evidence to show that he did—if he has been living all these years a life of profligacy in England—I have evidence to the contrary in my own possession—if he was tempted by poverty—if young Austin was also tempted by poverty—if the two together—or either separately—could undertake, under temptation, risks so terrible—you see, the whole case is built up on an "if."'

'Yet it holds together at every point. It is a

perfect case. Who else could do it? Checkley certainly could not. That old man—that old servant.'

'I agree with you, Checkley could not do it. Not because he is too old. Age has nothing to do with crime—nor because he is an old servant. He could not do it because he is not clever enough. This kind of thing wants grasp and vision. Checkley hasn't got either. He might be a confederate. He may have stopped the letters. He is miserly—he might be tempted by money. Yet I do not think it possible.'

'No—I cannot believe that,' said Sir Samuel.

'Yet it is quite as difficult to believe such a thing of young Austin. Oh! I know everything is possible. He belongs to a good family: he has his own people to think of: he is engaged—he has always led a blameless life. Yet—yet—everything is possible.'

'I have known cases in the City where the blameless seeming was only a pretence and a cloak—most deplorable cases, I assure you—the cloak to hide a profligate life.'

'I think, if that were so, I should not be deceived. Outward signs in such cases are not wanting. I know the face of the profligate, open or concealed. Young Austin presents no sign of anything but a regular and blameless life. For all these reasons, I say, we ought to believe him incapable of any dishonourable action. But I have been in practice for fifty years—fifty years—during this long period I know not how many cases—what are called family cases—have been in my hands. I have had in this room the trembling old profligate of seventy, ready to pay any price rather than let the thing be known to his old wife, who believes in him, and his daughters, who worship him. I have had the middle-aged man of standing in the City imploring me to buy back the paper—at any price—which would stamp him with infamy. I have had the young man on his knees begging me never to let his father know the forgery, the theft, the villainy, the seduction—what not. And I have had women of every age sitting in that chair confessing their wickedness, which they do for the most part with hard faces and cold eyes, not like the men, with shame and tears. The men fall being tempted by want of money, which means loss of pride and self-respect, and position and comfort. There ought to have been a clause in the Litany, "From want of money at all ages and on all occasions, Good Lord, deliver us."

'True—most true,' said Sir Samuel. "'From want of money"—I shall say this next time I go to church—"from want of money at all ages, and particularly when one is getting on in years, and has a title to keep up—Good Lord, deliver us." Very good indeed, brother. I shall quote this in the City. To-morrow, I have to make a speech at the *Helmet Makers' Company*. I shall quote this very remarkable saying of yours.'

Mr Dering smiled gravely. 'A simple saying, indeed. The greatest temptation of any is the want of money. Why, there is nothing that the average man will not do rather than be without money. He is helpless: he is a slave: he is in contempt: without money.—Austin, you tell me, was tempted by want of money. I think

not. He was poor: he had enough to keep him: he was frugal: he had simple wants: he had never felt the want of money. No—I do not think that he was tempted by poverty. Everything is possible—this is possible.—But, brother, silence. If you speak about this, you may injure the young man, supposing him to be innocent. If he is guilty, you will put him on his guard. And, mind, I shall show no foolish mercy—none—when we find the guilty parties. All the more reason, therefore, for silence.

Sir Samuel promised. But he had parted with the secret—he had given it into the keeping of a woman.

TRANSATLANTIC STEAMSHIP ROUTES.

SAFETY of ships at sea is a matter of the first importance to passengers, and more especially to the many who travel in those marvellous specimens of man's handiwork that cross the North Atlantic Ocean between the Old World and the New with the precision of express trains. Ancient navigators were necessarily required not only to be sterling seamen, but also to pilot their own vessels in narrow waters, and to rely solely upon that knowledge of the proposed path across the waste of waters only attainable by actual personal experience or from oral tradition. Modern mariners are well furnished with sailing directions and charts embodying the recorded observations of their predecessors; and more accurate instruments have been gradually introduced for determining a ship's geographical position on the trackless deep by means of celestial or terrestrial measurements. Nevertheless, the successful application of steam-power to the propulsion of ships at sea probably demands a more intuitive perception of possibilities than when the unbought air in sensible motion was the prime mover. Rapid progress in marine engineering has somewhat decreased the undisputed supremacy of seamanship, and navigation becomes less difficult every day, so that its rudiments are rendered available to men of most meagre education with but slight mental exertion. Hence both causes conspire to lower the shipmaster's status; but many officers are beginning to come out of their sleepy hollow of indifferentism and strive for better things.

It is conceded on all hands that the measures in force for preventing collision at sea are insufficient for practical purposes, and many and various plans have been devised for lessening this too prevalent cause of death and disaster. Four years ago, the question of distinct tracks for ships making passages in opposite directions was brought prominently under the notice of our Board of Trade; but the futility of this scheme, which looks so well on paper, was clearly pointed out by ship-owners and the London Shipmasters' Society. The great and ever-increasing number of tracks that converge in certain parts of the world of waters make fixed routes impracticable and undesirable for those crowded crossings. Swift steamships bound round the Cape of Good Hope, or running between Europe and North America, or between California and China, might find it advantageous to follow separate tracks for outward and homeward bound passages, so as to

avoid crashing into each other when proceeding in diametrically opposite directions.

Sailing-ships and slow steamers, however, have to be provided for; and it must not be forgotten that some of the most terrible collisions on record have taken place between sailing-ships and steamers. An American sailing-ship, the *Charles Bartlett*, collided with the British steamer *Europa*, when one hundred and thirty-five out of one hundred and seventy-seven emigrants were drowned by the sinking of the sailing-vessel. Another American sailer, the *Governor Fenner*, was sent to the bottom near Holyhead by the British steamship *Nottingham*. The *Governor Fenner* disappeared beneath the whirling waters within one minute, taking with her one hundred and twenty-two of her passengers and crew. Not a soul was saved except her master and mate, who contrived to clamber over the advancing front of the *Nottingham*. The French steamship *Ville du Havre* sank shortly after collision with a British sailing-ship, the *Loch Earn*, in 1873. No fewer than two hundred and twenty-six lives were lost; and had not the water-tight bulkhead of the sailing-vessel withstood the pressure of the sea-water pouring in cascades through her stricken side, every person on board both vessels would have been engulfed with them. Eventually, the *Loch Earn* also sank; but happily succour was nigh at that time. That pioneer Atlantic greyhound, the British steamer *Oregon*, ran right into an American schooner which was sailing without lights. Both ships sank within a short interval; but the loss of life was comparatively insignificant, although all on board the schooner perished with her. It is to be feared that occasionally an officer in charge of a steamship's deck defers altering his course till the very last moment. In the meanwhile, the sailing-ship officer begins to fear that the lookout on the steamer has not perceived his lights, performs some hurried manœuvre, and actually precipitates the collision which he sought to avoid.

Winds and currents differentiate the tracks of outward and homeward bound ships to some extent. Take, for example, the track followed by an antiquated timber-carrier making her way from Europe to New Brunswick under sail. From a glance at an atlas it would appear that this passage can best be made by steering in the direction of the setting sun; but taking into account the fact that westerly winds prevail along this route, it is not difficult to discern that the longest way round may be the shortest way to her appointed destination. Such a ship steers to the southward, after clearing the English Channel, as though bound across the equator, till the twentieth parallel of north latitude is reached; then steers to the westward before favourable breezes from the eastward; and when well over on the western side of the North Atlantic, curves to the northward to make her port. She thus escapes a pitched battle with adverse gales, is assisted by the Gulf-stream, and reaches her destination sooner, despite the longer distance sailed over by following the southern passage. When steam was in its infancy, the small-powered vessels were unable to make headway against the south-west monsoon when bound from Bombay to Aden, and were compelled to follow a more southerly track than the shortest

possible. Similar instances of separate routes marked out by meteorological conditions for outward and homeward bound ships are not far to seek.

The blue ribbon of the Atlantic passenger service is a much-coveted distinction, and the fleet steamships of to-day are timed to the nearest second, while strenuous efforts are made to break a record. The shortest course that can possibly be drawn between two points on the earth's surface is that of a great circle. Hence the most direct track between New York and Queenstown is indicated on a globe by a thread tightly drawn between the ports. This shortest distance measures only 2670 miles; but its western end passes over the land, so that a deviation has to be made. Moreover, numerous icebergs drift down from the Arctic regions directly across part of this track during the greater part of each year; many fishing-vessels lie at anchor on the Grand Banks of Newfoundland with their hardy crews, pursuing a most dangerous calling, and not infrequently concealed from view by dense fog peculiar to that region, where mingle the waters of the cold ice-bearing Labrador current and the warmer life-giving Gulf-stream; and the outlying Virgin Rocks must be allotted a wide berth. Hence the desirability and absolute necessity of keeping to a route which shall approximate nearly to the great circle track, while at the same time combining directness with safety. The nearest available points of Europe and America may some day in the near future become important factors in affording a minimum of time and danger on the transatlantic passage. Public opinion tends towards the adoption as terminal ports of Whitehaven, Nova Scotia, on the American coast, and Milford Haven on this side of that ocean which but joins the two kindred nations it divides. The oversea distance is thus decreased by one-third, and could be accomplished in four days by fast steamships specially built for carrying mails and passengers only. A thirty hours' journey by rail covers the distance between New York and Whitehaven, so that, by following this route, it would be possible for a person setting out from London to arrive at New York within five and a half days.

It has long been felt that danger from collision might be considerably reduced if passenger steamships crossing the North Atlantic were compelled, under heavy penalties, to follow totally distinct routes on the outward and homeward passages. One of America's most renowned sons, the passage-shortener Maury, drew up a serious scheme for this very purpose as far back as 1856. It was based upon a critical examination of many logbooks kept on board passenger steamships belonging to the well-known Cunard Line, whose proud privilege it is never to have lost the life of a passenger out of the many thousands they have carried; and the now defunct Collins Line. Maury found that the zone traversed by these splendid steamers was about three hundred miles wide when going westward, but only about half that width on the homeward track. Having this zone clearly defined on a chart, he took a band of about twenty miles to the northward for his proposed outward track, and another band of twenty miles to the southward for his homeward route. These routes were fifty miles apart near

Cape Clear, and two hundred miles in about fifty degrees west longitude. He took no account of seasonal requirements, and therefore crossed the Banks of Newfoundland at all times, notwithstanding the icebergs, fogs, and helpless fishing-vessels, likely to endanger the safety of swiftly-moving steamers.

In 1878, Messrs Ismay, Imrie, & Co. requested the Board of Trade to consider the advisability of compulsory outward and homeward tracks, which they had previously brought under the notice of the North Atlantic Steam Transport Conference, held at Liverpool in 1876. They proposed to follow Maury's plan with slight modifications, but failed to obtain that unanimity among shipowners which is essential to success. The United States Hydrographic Office has consistently and energetically advocated the adoption of distinct routes, and on each month's issue of that Department's invaluable North Atlantic Pilot Chart have been clearly laid down those outward and homeward tracks between New York and Queenstown which are deemed the shortest possible, having regard to safety. The transatlantic route was a plank in the platform of the International Maritime Conference held at Washington in 1888-89, and a resolution was carried to the effect that fast passenger steamers during spring and summer months should follow a route leading clear of the Grand Banks of Newfoundland, in order to avoid the fog and ice of that dangerous locality. They, however, found that the enforcement of an international compulsory use of such a route was hedged round with difficulties, and could not be recommended.

There is at present an almost insuperable difficulty in enforcing the rule requiring vessels to proceed at a moderate speed in thick weather or snow. Sailing-ships cannot always regulate their speed, even if they would, for once having kept before a freshening gale, it is sometimes simply impossible to bring them to the wind without endangering the masts and the safety of all on board. Then, again, shipmasters fairly urge that steamers answer the helm more readily when moving swiftly through the water; and, moreover, the chance of collision is lessened by shortening the period spent in the fog. Postal contract time must be kept despite atmospherical conditions. As a general rule the swifter ship stands the best chance in the event of a collision, and being thickly peopled, it is more important that she should survive. Finally, no definition of what is meant by moderate speed has yet been given, and that speed which is merely the result of turning over an ocean greyhound's engines would be a fair speed for a bluff-bowed collier-craft under canvas.

Compulsory routes seem an impossibility, yet it is undesirable to lay down international rules unless enforced by heavy penalties. Icebergs, sailing-ships, fog, and steamers cutting across the tracks on northerly or southerly courses will harass the best-laid routes; but nevertheless greater immunity from disaster is secured by their general adoption. The Conference at Washington strongly recommended that the large lines of passenger steamships might well come to some decision on this point among themselves, so as to establish and adhere to particular routes. From March to November no fewer than six hundred

vessels belonging to the United States, British North American provinces, France, and Portugal, are fishing on the Grand Banks. In fact, some United States schooners fish for halibut there even in the depth of winter. Fishermen's safety is best promoted by their own unceasing vigilance, and a careful compliance with the present rules, especially those referring to light and sound signals. It is said that if fast steamers were kept off the Banks, the fishermen might become careless, and thus lay themselves open to danger from other vessels when least expected. It cannot be denied that the travelling public clamour for quick passages, and that record-breaking is of paramount importance; so that, if the rule with respect to proceeding at a moderate speed in fog or snow could be rigidly applied, then it would be the interest of swift ships to keep clear of the fishermen's anchorage on the Grand Banks.

We are glad to see that the persistent leverage of the United States Pilot Chart and the recommendation of the Conference have raised the question of outward and homeward routes into a more possible plane. The Cunard, Guion, Inman, National, and White Star transatlantic steamship lines have formally agreed upon distinct routes to be followed by all the vessels of their world-renowned fleets. Since this agreement came into force on the 16th of last November some continental companies, the North German Lloyd, the Hamburg-American, Compagnie-Générale Transatlantique, and the Red Star of Antwerp, have come in with some slight modifications. Let us sincerely hope, for the sake of all concerned, that the chosen tracks will be strictly followed, and that other companies may adopt them without delay. In proportion as the number of vessels using these tracks is increased, the risk from collision is lessened; and a broken-down steamship, or a crew compelled to take to their frail boats, will know within moderate limits of error whither to steer in order to be rescued from their perilous position as soon as possible.

The American Hydrographic Office advised that steamships sailing to or proceeding from the English Channel should follow the same tracks as those setting out from Queenstown going or coming on at the twentieth meridian of west longitude; but the actual courses chosen by the continental lines do not coincide with the Queenstown route until near the Grand Banks, thus enlarging the area within which vessels bound east and west are liable to meet each other. The distance saved is only six miles for the northern route and nine miles for the southern. We are not surprised to read that the American authorities are gratified by this new departure, which in its most essential features is almost identical with that so ably advocated on the Pilot Chart ever since 1887. Western-bound steamships get the benefit of the Labrador current setting to the southward, and those bound to the eastward go sufficiently far to the southward to be set towards their ports by the Gulf-stream. At the same time, along that belt which lies between the outward and homeward tracks, the danger to fishing fleets and other vessels is reduced to a minimum. To the northward of this unfrequented region, danger may be looked for principally from the eastward; whereas, to the

south of this no-man's land, danger will come from the westward in the shape of steamships bound to Europe. It would be suicidal to keep a careless lookout on the ground that a ship was running along the track, and therefore out of harm's way, for the introduction of specified steamship routes does not get rid of the danger always in evidence at converging points, though it does certainly render the chance of disaster much less.

Two Danish steamers belonging to the same company, the *Geiser* and the *Thingvalla*, proceeding in opposite directions, collided with each other in mid-Atlantic, when loss of life ensued. Such a catastrophe would have been impossible had they kept to distinct outward and homeward routes. On the other hand, a collision like that between the two White Star steamers, *Celtic* and *Britannic*, will occasionally occur despite every precaution, inasmuch as the shipping at the terminals of the routes is very congested. Two leviathans are being built on the Clyde for the Cunard Line, in anticipation of an increased demand for accommodation of passengers attracted to America by the forthcoming Chicago Exhibition. They will each be six hundred feet long, about twelve thousand tons gross, and propelled by twin screws, are expected to make twenty-two knots an hour and break the record by half a day. The enormous momentum of such a heavy ship proceeding at this high rate of speed makes us shudder to think about, and affords an excellent object lesson of the need which existed for separate outward and homeward tracks.

Sophocles sang of the power displayed by the human race in rendering the elements subservient to their will, and his first illustration is inspired by the skill and daring of the navigator. Horace, in that beautiful ode to the barque about to convey Virgil to the Grecian shores, marvels at the courage of him who first put to sea; and Ovid sings in similar strain. To-day, although navigation is more precise, danger is ever present; and whatever tends to greater safety is worthy of praise.

A BOYCOTTED BABY.

CHAPTER IV.—THE DAY OF WRATH.

LORD POLONIUS was, from his own point of view, quite as interested in the marriage of his daughter to James Bulbous as the latter's father. Matthew had shown himself very liberal upon the matter of settlements; the sale of the family estate would be disguised by the assumption of the family name by his daughter's husband and the descent of the estate to her issue; and the prospect of having two votes in the House of Commons and a wealthy family connection, involved in a manner the rehabilitation of a very dilapidated nobleman.

Matthew Bulbous was aware of all this, but regarded the whole matter as one of business, in which there must be advantages on both sides, and he was satisfied with the bargain. Knowing the views of Lord Polonius, therefore, it was no matter of surprise to him to receive a letter from that nobleman the morning after the occurrences related in the last chapter, hinting that

if Mr James Bulbous returned to England now there would be no insuperable difficulties in the way of the early realisation of their mutual wishes.

The letter came at an opportune moment, when the only obstacle to the marriage had just been removed; and Matthew Bulbous was able to regard the situation now with satisfaction. He shook off the disordered feeling which had kept him from his bed all night, and astonished his wife at breakfast by telling her that her son was coming home, and that his room must be aired and got ready for him.

Her request that he would unlock the door or leave the key, reminded him that the room was still locked up. Taking the key from a drawer in his study he went thoughtfully up the stairs, to see if by chance any memorial of the dead wife should be lying about the room. He found it just as he had left it. The photographs still lay on the table, covered with dust. One by one he picked them up again, and wondered if any of them represented the deceased woman. He concluded it would be best to burn them; and collecting them in his hands, he bore them down to the study and cast them on the fire. There was one which chanced to turn face upwards, and recognising it, he snatched it away before the fire caught it. The expression of astonishment and relief which filled his face as he looked at it again was remarkable. He remembered holding it in his hand the day he locked up the room, and it was marvellous to think that, after seeing it only once, the face should have so fixed itself upon his memory. The dark eyes and pretty face!—here, in truth, was the phantom which had been haunting his disordered brain—the face he had recognised, without seeing it, in his sleeping vision on Christmas eve, and which he had fancied beneath the heavy veil beside his son in the mourning carriage.

'There's no accounting for these tricks!' was his relieved reflection as he tossed the photograph contemptuously into the fire and watched it burn to ashes.

This incident, connected with the effect of Lord Polonius's letter, put Matthew into high spirits as he proceeded to London. He looked upon his worries as practically over; and as soon as his son returned to England, he would see that not a day's unnecessary delay interfered with the completion of the matrimonial project.

'The engagement has lasted long enough,' he said to himself, as he sat down in his office and wrote out the telegram recalling his son. That was how he regarded it. The matter had not been mentioned to James Bulbous yet; but the idea of his will being opposed by any person in his family was foreign to Matthew's thoughts. He did not even think it necessary to mention the matter to his wife again. He was sufficient for himself.

He expected a call from his brother, and decided that Joseph might as well emigrate at once, now his last duty was finished. Probably, however, he would not come over until after the interment of the child; and Matthew reflected with approval on the quiet and unobtrusive manner in which such rites were commonly performed at early hours of the morning. It was now eleven o'clock, and no doubt the child had

been lodged in the cemetery hours ago. That was the usual way.

He was just thinking that he would go round to Lord Polonius and arrange about fixing a date for the marriage, and was feeling altogether in an excellent frame of mind, when a telegram was brought to him. Carelessly tearing it open—for telegrams were coming to the office every hour in the day—the first glance caused him to start, and then he leaped to his feet. The message was from his brother—he knew this well, though there was no name to it—and had been handed in, not at Chelsea, but at Gravesend. This was what it said: '*Look out for yourself. I am off.*'

Matthew Bulbous was a man of very quick apprehension when there was sign of danger. He knew the meaning of this ominous message—he knew, at least, that he was in peril in connection with the death of the child. But what had happened? The child was dead. That was all he knew. Yes—Joseph warned him to 'look out for himself,' and had fled. There was enough in this to warn him what had happened; but his ignorance of the circumstances almost paralysed him. He dared not go to inquire.

One agency of intelligence he fancied, yet feared, might throw some light on his situation. The early editions of the evening papers were out—he could hear the news-boys' voices in the distance—but he dared not send any person from his office to procure one. He seized his hat, and pulling it as low as he could over his ashy face, proceeded to Charing Cross station, and, buying a paper, carried it to the farthest end of the platform, over the embankment, before he opened it.

The flaring headlines made him stagger the moment he opened the sheet. They announced an 'Alleged Child Murder in Chelsea—Arrest of the Baby Farmer—Startling Disclosures expected.' The authorities, it was stated, had had their eye upon the woman Griffon for some time past, their suspicions having been aroused by the frequency of the infant casualties at her establishment; and she would have been in the meshes of the law long ago but for the protection of medical certificates. It was hinted that several 'names, well known in business, political, and social circles,' were likely to be compromised in providing a sensation of no ordinary kind in the course of the inquiry into Mrs Griffon's affairs.

The significance of this ominous warning Matthew Bulbous, now thoroughly terrified, took wholly to himself. His limbs shook with fear. It mattered nothing to him who the others might be; he was himself certainly one, and the one in the worst plight, for it was he who was responsible for the victim whose death caused all the trouble. Others might be exposed and disgraced; but he, Matthew Bulbous, would to a certainty fare worse. There were the consequential penalties, too, often far heavier than the penalties of the law, and always more certain. There was the ruin of all his schemes, of his business, of his position in the world, of his character. His son would despise and repudiate him, his friends would drop him, his clerks would laugh at him, his enemies—he was conscious of having a good many—would exult over him. There was not one who would regret him.

Yes—there were two; he knew it now, with a pang; two despised and neglected women who would cling to him all the more. But of all the world there was no person's attitude which would cut him to the quick like the cool and deadly hauteur with which Lord Polonius would drop him, comforted by the possession of ten thousand pounds of his money. He had already felt the sting of being beaten by the wily old peer, but it was far worse now. Oh, how the misfortunes of Matthew Bulbous would have been lightened had it been possible to associate Lord Polonius with the disgrace! But the Earl had been too many for him.

With an ashy face and a heart that quaked at the sight of every policeman, Matthew walked to the cab-rank and jumped into a hansom, giving the man an address. In the course of his business Matthew Bulbous came in contact with professional men of shady character and sharp wit, useful in certain lines of work, and one of these he now thought of as best qualified to help him. He found the lawyer, and with business-like directness laid the case before him.

'It's ugly, Mr Bulbous,' said the lawyer, whose name was Mr Clove—'it's undeniably ugly. But isn't it just possible you may be exaggerating the danger?'

'I am exaggerating nothing,' replied Bulbous impatiently. 'But we must be prepared to meet the worst. If the worst does not come, so much the better; but we must be ready.'

'Very well. I'll do what I can. First of all, give me your brother's address.'

'He has cleared out.'

Mr Clove's face lengthened. 'That is unfortunate,' he observed. 'It would have been better in every way for you if he had stood his ground. I may spend money, I suppose, in case it should be necessary.'

'As much as you want.—I will only add,' said Matthew Bulbous as he took his hat, 'that if you manage this business successfully, Mr Clove, it will be the best piece of work for yourself that you ever have done.'

Mr Clove looked gratified when his client left him, not on account of the professional emolument which the case promised to yield—though this was no small matter to him—but from the more disinterested satisfaction which one rogue naturally derives from the embarrassments of another and more successful one.

Matthew Bulbous passed a bad afternoon. He was afraid to return to his offices, dreading what might have taken place there during his absence. He spent the time going from place to place on pretence of one business or another. He wanted the office to be closed before he returned, then he would steal in and sleep there; for he was determined not to go home again, and that his arrest should take place in London and not in his own house at Blackheath.

He felt weak and sick when he got back. There were two or three rooms furnished on the first floor, and it was his habit sometimes to stay there for the night when anything kept him late in town. So he went up-stairs, and lay on his back on a sofa, with the light turned down, to try to think.

He found thinking a painful and useless effort under the burden of suspense that oppressed his

mind. He bitterly regretted having despatched that telegram to his son, and forgotten to cancel or recall it. Jen would be home next day, or the day after—and Matthew Bulbous was afraid to meet him. Did they know anything about the baby yet, those two innocent and submissive women at Blackheath, from whose compassion and undeserved affection he shrank most of all? Had the police been there—and if so, what must his wife and daughter be thinking of him?

The housekeeper set forth on the table such dinner as she could manage on so short a notice. He tried to eat, but failed; then he mixed some spirits and water in a tumbler and left it untasted. So he lay down on the sofa again, with his face turned up to the ceiling, until presently a ring at the bell below made him leap to his feet. He listened, with quaking heart. After some delay he heard the housekeeper coming up the stairs, closely followed by a heavier foot-step. Matthew Bulbous went over to the hearth-rug and, resting his elbow on the mantel-piece, waited with rigid face and steady eyes fixed on the door. A desperate calmness came to him now that he felt the dreaded moment had arrived. His heart told him that the heavy step coming up the stairs was that of a police officer. But it proved to be Mr Clove.

'Oh, it's you, Mr Clove?' he observed, with perfect command over his countenance, and pointing to a chair. 'I can't offer you much to eat,' he added, 'or I would ask you'—

'A thousand thanks; Mrs Clove is expecting me to dinner. I was driving past when I noticed the light, and thought you might be here.'

'I sometimes stay here for the night when I am pressed with business,' said Mr Bulbous; and then he sat down and looked at the solicitor.

'I have been to Chelsea. The doctor has been arrested. You had no relations or correspondence with him, I understand?'

'No,' said Matthew, wincing. 'I know nothing about the man.'

'I'm very glad of that. It is one danger the less.'

'Well?' inquired Bulbous, after a pause. His face, stiffening in rigid, desperate lines, was that of a man who felt himself being driven to the wall.

'The inquest will be opened to-morrow'—

'What inquest?'

'The inquest on the child—the body.'

'Oh, of course; I forgot.'

'It will only be opened, and then adjourned for the post-mortem. It seems such a despicable little thing to make so much fuss about; however, there it is.'

'I know it is, Mr Clove,' said Bulbous; 'but will you please come to the point. Is there any possibility—say, that money can command—of my keeping out of the accused case?'

'There is none, Mr Bulbous. We must proceed on that certainty, and meet it as best we can. I want you to have a very clear recollection of your transactions with that woman. There was no witness, and no written agreement—so far so good. You paid her the guarantee of fifty pounds'—Mr Bulbous made a grimace—'in advance. In what form did you give her the money?'

'Cash—gold.'

'Very good. There is, then, no evidence of that transaction. And the assistant kept by Mrs Griffon—good heavens! what a place it is—is an idiot; she can give no evidence. Finally, you had no communication with the doctor.'

'I had!' said Bulbous, with a sudden stop, which the lawyer understood as a silent malediction. 'The fellow sent me a certificate yesterday, and he had a cheque for it.'

Mr Clove started, and after a moment rose and walked twice the length of the room. His looks showed what he thought of this part of the case. 'Then the police have possession of your cheque, as surely as the sun shines at noonday. The doctor had not yet left his bed, after a debauch the night before, when they arrested him. That cheque, I fear, will put them on your track.'

Matthew Bulbous, with silent curses, thought also of the two telegrams from his brother. He told Clove about them, and Clove was ready to curse likewise.

'Do you know,' Matthew asked, with dread, 'whether the police are—are looking for me?'

'Why, no. If they were, of course they would quickly find you. The warrant will not be issued before to-morrow; very likely, when the coroner has received some evidence—that is, in all probability,' said Mr Clove.

'Will they want me at the inquest?'

'I think not. I am afraid your attendance will be required in—ahem; in another place, Mr Bulbous, in a different capacity,' said Mr Clove, with professional delicacy. 'Your best course, meantime, will be to say nothing to anybody. We must simply wait and watch events, and take advantage of every point that presents itself in our favour. Silence at present is our only strength.'

After the lawyer left him, Mr Bulbous lay down again on the sofa, face upwards. The woman came by-and-by and removed the things from the table, leaving the whisky and the water, and placing a box of cigars beside them. Later on she came again with coffee, glancing nervously at the still and silent object on the sofa. The coffee became cold, the clock on the mantel-piece struck hour after hour, and he did not move. At ten she came again, and left his chamber candlestick, asking timidly if he should want anything more. There was no answer; and the woman, half-frightened, quickly retreated to the basement.

About two hours later she heard him descend the stairs and go out. He was too miserable to stay there alone with his thoughts. A greasy mist was falling. With a fur cap, which he found somewhere in the rooms, drawn over his eyes, Matthew Bulbous strode rapidly across the park, and up to the King's Road in Chelsea. The streets were deserted, for the public-houses had been closed some time. He halted at the top of the street in which his brother had lodged and ground his teeth. On the approach of a policeman he went on towards the Embankment. This is as dreary a place as London provides for the homeless and troubled at night. Once or twice he sat on one of the seats for a time, looking at the long lines of lamps, and sometimes he hung over the wall. Then he wandered on aimlessly, keeping by the water. At Westminster Bridge, where he eventually found himself, he halted

undecidedly, with the manner of one who knew not which way to turn for rest. He looked up at the dark sky, and the greasy drizzle poured down on his face. Then he went on the bridge, leaning on the parapet, and gazing down the river towards his home. He had never before thought of his home with such feelings as filled him now. When he thought—as, in his misery, he was forced to think—of the despised and neglected fidelity which existed for him there, the iron of remorse pierced the thick resisting crust that encased his heart. In less than three minutes he turned about quickly and crossed to the other side.

Resting his elbows upon the parapet, and looking down at the dark water, the beaten man was thinking, with a low heart, of the sensation his fall would cause amongst all who knew him. In that remote country parish, where his rise in the world was a perennial wonder; in London, where his character stood so high as a successful man; in Blackheath, where he towered head and shoulders above his neighbours; in his own house, down the river behind him; in his office, among the forty clerks who trembled at his glance. Excepting the wife and daughter, whom he had despised, there was not one of all who would pity him or regret him. Pity!—in that thought lay the bitterest sting; let all the world exult over his ruin, if it would, rather than one living creature pity him.

A homeless woman, shivering and wet, was gliding past like a shadow, when she suddenly halted and glanced at him with a manner of mingled curiosity and compassion. For he looked like a man lately brought down to the level of those who haunt the bridges at midnight. He resented the woman's observation, and as he turned his back to her she passed on.

A battle of all his forces of brain and character against this miserable result of his own folly had been silently raging for hours. At last he gave in—acknowledged himself beaten. But the spirit which had worked his success in the world and built his character revolted against submitting to the impending disgrace. He wished that, like the Hebrew giant, he could pull down all his enemies and rivals amongst the ruins of his own career. At least he could deprive them of the spectacle of his fall.

The tide he stared down at, from the bridge, rushing to its end swift and dark and defiled, was fit emblem of his life, his ruined career. They were so like, the two—the river and the life—why should they not go down together?

There was a sudden sound in the midnight air which gave him a start. 'Big Ben' was chiming the hour from the high tower of Westminster Palace. Matthew Bulbous listened under a hypnotic spell. What was it that he heard? The self-same message that he had listened to with exultation of spirit from the bells on Christmas eve; only it sounded like a knell now, with ominous mockery in its funereal vibrations. 'Jem's—wife—is—dead!' Four times it boomed down from the lofty and invisible tower, as from the depths of the sky. Then there was a long pause of suspense—such as may still the world's trembling heart between the last echo of the crack of doom and the blast of the archangel's trumpet—and then a single mighty stroke boomed

from the tower and rolled in deep reverberations over the silent city.

Matthew Bulbous was roughly roused from a dangerous mood by a passing policeman. 'Move on, my man. This is no place for you—move on.'

Fancy Matthew Bulbous having to slink away, with the constable slowly following, and the constable's eye watching his every movement, until he disappeared up Parliament Street. The mental paroxysm—which had nearly closed on a tragedy—had passed, and the outer forces were at work again as he strode fiercely towards Charing Cross. It was well for Joseph Bulbous that he was out of his brother's way that night.

OXYGEN AS A COMMERCIAL PRODUCT.

So rapidly has the consumption of oxygen increased of late in the many and varied purposes for which it has been found suitable, that the manufacture of oxygen on a commercial scale has not merely taken root, but is developing into a new and important branch of industrial enterprise. In view of the increasing demand for the gas under consideration, we now purpose laying before our readers some succinct account of a process now actively employed in producing oxygen, together with some brief notes of the method of distribution for consumption, concluding our remarks by a short allusion to the many arts, manufactures, and sciences in which this gas is now being extensively utilised.

Some thirty years ago, Boussingault, the eminent French chemist, discovered that at a temperature of about one thousand degrees Fahrenheit the monoxide of the metal barium would readily absorb oxygen from the atmosphere, and that on increasing the temperature to about seventeen hundred degrees Fahrenheit the oxygen thus absorbed would be given off. In view of such facts, Boussingault advocated the use of barium oxide for the economical production of oxygen on a large scale from the atmosphere. It was not, however, till recently that various difficulties which arose were overcome by the brothers Brin, and the process bearing their name became an industrial success.

Barium oxide is a mineral substance closely resembling lime in its properties. It is found combined in nature as 'heavy spar' and 'witherite,' and most frequently in lead districts. One of the most important salts formed from the raw material is nitrate of barium, commercially known as baryta, and used in the Brin process. After careful preparation, the baryta is stored in air-tight drums, ready for use.

Without unnecessarily describing in full detail the various minutæ of the Brin process for producing oxygen, we may briefly state that the discovery already alluded to of Boussingault is followed—namely, air is forced by pumps into retorts containing baryta, which absorb the oxygen of the air, the nitrogen of the atmosphere being allowed to escape. When sufficient air has been pumped in, the process is reversed after a suitable interval, and the oxygen yielded by the baryta is pumped into a holder. The oxygen thus formed is sent out to consumers in cylinders of steel, ranging in size from three and a half to

five and a half inches in diameter, and from one to eight feet in length. By means of special pumping machinery, the oxygen is compressed into these cylinders to a pressure of no less than eighteen hundred pounds per square inch, or, in other words, to a pressure of one hundred and twenty atmospheres.

It will readily be understood that great care is requisite in the manufacture of cylinders to withstand such high pressures; but the rigid system of testing enforced is an effectual safeguard, for every cylinder before being filled with oxygen is tested by water-pressure to about four thousand pounds per square inch. Series of severe tests have demonstrated the enormous strength of the cylinders employed, heavy weights having been dropped on them without producing leakage or damage. At the present time an enormous number of cylinders are daily in use, being delivered up and down the country, and then returned to the oxygen-works by consumers for a further supply of the gas, without accident or mishap of any kind.

The numerous purposes to which oxygen is now applied form a formidable list, and strikingly demonstrate the position this gas has already obtained as an article of commerce. In laboratories, oxygen is extensively used in conjunction with coal-gas for blowpipe purposes, in glass-working, platinum-working, brazing, &c. The medical faculty are now favourably regarding oxygen, and for a variety of complaints are recommending the gas. Oxy-aerated water is coming into favour, as possessing no lowering effects on the system, whilst acting as an agreeable stimulant. In cases of dyspepsia, diabetes, gout, and rheumatism, and kindred diseases, the new oxygen water is being prescribed with every success. For limelight purposes oxygen is being extensively employed, and projectors for ships, yachts, &c., for signals and communications by night are being supplied with the gas compressed in cylinders. The inhaling of oxygen is being prescribed now for patients, and the ready means by which a small cylinder of the gas can be procured and breathed greatly facilitates treatment by such process. Owing to its power of destroying disease germs, oxygen is strongly recommended for diphtheria and throat affections. Every one is familiar with the optical, or more popularly termed 'magic' lantern; and the introduction of oxygen compressed in cylinders has very greatly facilitated and safeguarded the extended use of oxy-hydrogen limelight in this excellent means of amusement and instruction.

A REGIMENTAL MYSTERY.

THE officers' mess bungalow of the Marlshire Regiment gleamed white and solitary in the silver beams of an Indian full moon. The last little knot of diners had left the bungalow at midnight. The only sign of life in the neighbourhood was the sentry, who paced steadily round and round the long low building, wondering when it would be two o'clock and time for him to be relieved. The mess bungalow stood on the edge of the great plain which on three sides surrounds the military cantonments of Meanpore. At the rear of the mess bungalow was a row of smaller houses, each

with its own compound of half an acre. These were the officers' quarters. Behind them stretched the parade ground, two hundred yards broad, backed in turn by the range of barracks—five great stone buildings, of two stories each—and behind the barracks lay, first, the so-called European bazaar, and then the teeming native city, which it was the duty of the British troops, in the Anglo-Indian sense, to 'protect.'

The welcome sound of a gong, struck twice at the distant mainguard, told the sentry that the hour of his release had come; and soon the advancing tramp of the relief caused him to stand to attention with shouldered rifle. The quick challenge and reply broke sharply on the stillness of the night; a young soldier stepped from the ranks of the relief and took the tired sentry's place; the sergeant mumbled the usual formula of instructions, and then marched his three files off to relieve guard at the magazine, half a mile away. The place was silent and deserted again, save for the tramp of the new sentry, who resumed the tour of the bungalow just where his comrade had left it off. But the new man did not seem to be possessed of the peripatetic inclinations of his predecessor. Scarcely had the measured tread of the relief died away in the distance when he came to a halt on that side of the bungalow which faced the open plain, and 'stood at ease.' Thus he remained for fully half an hour, looking straight to his front across the moonlit expanse, with his knee bent and his hands lightly clasped in the regulation attitude. A fine stalwart young fellow, he would have made a good study for a statue of the British soldier on guard in time of peace.

But while the sentry was giving a 'sitting' to some imaginary sculptor, a strange thing happened on the other side of the bungalow—that which faced, and was nearest to the row of officers' quarters. The door of the mess bungalow opened, and a man came quietly out into the veranda. He was clad in a long cloak, which gave the wearer a peculiarly bulky appearance. He looked this way and that; then he shut the door of the messhouse; and finally he flitted stealthily away in the direction of the officers' bungalows, round the corner of one of which he disappeared. From which proceeding a rather wide field of conjecture would have been opened up, had there been any one there to form it, as to the nocturnal wanderer's destination. This might either have been the officers' quarters, the barracks, the European bazaar, or the native city; but there was no living soul there to form any theory on the subject, much less to see where the man with the cloak really went.

A quarter of an hour later the statuesque sentry came smartly to attention, brought his rifle to the slope, and began his march again. Round and round the bungalow he paced till he had made the circuit exactly a dozen times; then, when he came to the side facing the plain—the spot where he had stood at ease so long—he paused once more. Drawing a ball cartridge from his pouch, he leisurely inserted it in the breech of his rifle, took a steady aim at the very centre of the placid moon sailing through the cloudless sky above, and fired. The bullet went soaring skyward to drop harmless in the desert a mile away, and the sentry sup-

plemented the sharp report of his rifle with a vigorous cry of, 'Guard, turn out!'

The mainguard was three hundred yards away on the barrack side of the parade ground, but in a few minutes a detachment of the guard came up at the double.

'Well, Golding, what is it?' said the sergeant as he halted his men in front of the sentry.

'A man came round the corner of the bungalow and ran away across the plain. I challenged twice, and he made no reply, so I fired,' was the sentry's report.

'Did you hit him, do you think?' asked the sergeant.

'No, I don't think so,' said Private Golding; 'he kept on running, at least.'

'What did he look like?'

'He was a native by his dress; he wore a white tunic and a red turban, and I am nearly sure his feet were bare.'

'Any signs of the mess being broken into?' asked the sergeant. 'Was he carrying?—Ah! here comes the officer of the day;' and the non-commissioned officer retailed the occurrence, as reported by Private Golding, to a young lieutenant who joined the group.

'The fellow must have been trying to break into the mess,' said Lieutenant Holbrook.—'Sergeant, you had better go and call the messman and tell him to bring his keys. Leave word at the Colonel's bungalow, too, as you pass; though I expect he'll be here directly; I saw a light in his window as I came along.'

Colonel Norman and the messman—the latter with his bunch of keys—arrived on the scene almost simultaneously. The Colonel, on hearing the sentry's story, at once gave orders to have the messhouse searched, to see if any traces of the mysterious visitor could be found inside the building. The door was unlocked, and Colonel Norman, with Lieutenant Holbrook and the messman, entered the bungalow, leaving the sergeant of the guard and his men outside. Private Golding resumed his walk round the house.

The rays of the moon shone through the windows, and made the interior of the bungalow almost as light as day. The anteroom was in just the same state as when the officers left, nor could any signs of the presence of a stranger be detected in the dining-room. But the search-party instinctively made for the small closet at the extreme end of the building where the regimental plate-chest was kept. Here there was no window and all was darkness.

'Better light a lamp, messman,' said the Colonel; 'this is where the damage will be, if the sentry really saw some one.'

The lamp was brought, and there, sure enough, was the regimental plate-chest with its lid wrenched off, and half the contents strewn on the floor around. Silver goblets and salt-cellar, costly trophies of quaint device, entrée dishes and cruet frames, were heaped up in glittering confusion.

'The gold centre-piece!' exclaimed the Colonel; 'I don't see it here. Whatever you do, don't tell me that *that* is gone.'

The messman knelt down and rummaged the chest. 'Yes, sir,' he said; 'it's gone right enough. It's big enough to be missed at a glance, and I

locked it up in the chest myself barely three hours ago.'

The three men stared at each other with deep concern. The gold centre-piece was the pride of the regiment. It was a large model of the farm of Hougoumont, which the Marlshire Regiment had defended so gallantly at Waterloo. The four corner-pieces represented officers in the different uniforms worn by the regiment since its formation in the beginning of the last century, and the whole of the ornament was wrought in the finest gold. Apart from sentimental considerations, the intrinsic value of the centre-piece could not be less than three or four thousand pounds. It was known throughout the army as the most costly piece of plate in use at a mess-table, and so greatly was it prized, that it was only brought out on guest-nights and other special occasions.

Colonel Norman was a man of prompt action. Leaving the messman to repack the ransacked chest, he strode to the door of the bungalow where the guard was waiting, followed by Lieutenant Holbrook. The sentry, still on his beat, just then approached the party.

'Sergeant,' said the Colonel, 'relieve that man at once, and put him under close arrest. Bring him up to the orderly room in the morning. A daring robbery has been committed, and the matter must be further inquired into before I can acquit the sentry of neglect of duty—or worse.'

Private Golding staggered, and almost dropped his rifle as he handed it to the escort which was told off to make him prisoner. His face was deathly pale in the moonlight, and he trembled so that he could hardly form his words. 'Robbery, sir!' he almost wailed; 'oh, don't say that! It cannot be; surely—surely there is some mistake. The mess robbed. Oh my God! I never thought of this.'

The Colonel looked at Golding curiously. 'Well,' he said, 'you ought to be the last man to be surprised at hearing the mess has been robbed. You say you saw a man come round the bungalow, and fired at him. People don't prowl about at night and risk being shot for nothing. However, I will deal with the matter in the morning.'

Colonel Norman and the lieutenant went back to their quarters. The messman locked up the bungalow, and the sergeant marched his prisoner to the guardroom, leaving another man in his place. Golding seemed dazed at what had happened, and it was not till the sergeant was locking him into the cell he was to occupy that he spoke a word. Just as the iron-barred door was being closed upon him, he said: 'Sergeant, I must see my Captain in the morning before I come before the Colonel; would you kindly let him know?'

'See your Captain!' replied the sergeant; 'of course you'll see your Captain. It's his duty to be present when any one of his men is brought up in the orderly room.'

'Yes, yes,' said the prisoner; 'but I want to see him here, privately, before I go before the Colonel.—Can you manage it for me?'

'Well, that's as your Captain likes,' replied the sergeant. 'I'll let him know, anyway.—What company are you in? Who is your Captain?'

'F company, Captain Strudwick,' said Golding; and then the door was shut with a clang and the ex-sentry was left alone to his meditations.

Captain Leonard Strudwick sat in his quarters on the morning after the occurrence just related. He had breakfasted at the mess, and had joined in the lamentations of his brother-officers over the loss of the gold centre-piece. Now he was smoking a quiet cheroot previous to attending the Colonel at the orderly room, and he was apparently lost in thought. Leonard Strudwick was young for a Captain, having been lucky in his promotions; but the careworn look on his face implied that he had perhaps 'lived' as much as men twice his age. He was the younger son of a not too wealthy baronet, and though he had expectations from a rich uncle, his means for the present were narrow—far too narrow, he thought himself—for a young man with expensive tastes in an expensive regiment.

The colour-sergeant of his company came into the veranda where he was sitting, and saluted. 'Private Golding would like to see you, sir, before he is brought before the Colonel,' said the sergeant.

'Certainly,' said Captain Strudwick. 'I will visit him at once. Let's see; he is the man who was on sentry when the mess was robbed—is he not?'

'Yes, sir,' replied the sergeant; and he went on, with the privileged out-spokenness of a tried and trusted old soldier: 'Rather severe of the Colonel to put him under arrest, sir, I think. He swears he saw no one about till he fired his rifle, and he couldn't be blamed for missing the man in that light. He's the most respectable man in the company.—You knew him at home, sir, I think, you told me?'

'Yes,' said the Captain; 'he comes from my village. I don't believe he is to blame, but you know what the chief is. Bound to go for somebody. However, he will have cooled by now, and I daresay I can make it all right for Golding. I'll come and see him at once.'

The sergeant returned to the barracks; and Captain Strudwick shortly followed him across the parade ground towards the guardroom where Golding was confined. He entered the prisoner's cell, and the moment the sergeant of the guard had retired, the private burst into tears.

'Come, man, don't take it to heart like that,' said the Captain. 'There's nothing for you to fear; the Colonel merely put you under arrest because he was in a rage. There's nothing against you: you're sure to be released.'

'It's not that, sir,' said Golding. 'Believe me, I'd bear anything if it would be of any use. Do you think I have forgotten little Sister Daisy and the burning house? No, sir; it's no fear of anything that is to happen to me. But, sir, robbery! They tell me the Waterloo centre-piece is gone. I never thought it was to be robbery, sir, so help me God, or not even the remembrance of little Daisy's danger would have made me agree to it. Don't say—don't tell me, Mr Leonard, sir, that it is too late. It can be put back; it must be found and put back somehow. Think of my lady, sir, and her so fond of you and praying for you over in England there; it would break her heart.'

'My dear lad, I wish you had mentioned my

mother yesterday,' said Strudwick; 'it might have prevented— But there, you thought, when I told you what to do, the whole thing was to be a joke, didn't you?'

'I did, sir—just a practical joke to pull Lieutenant Holbrook out of his bed. I'd never have done it else. Mr Leonard, you've dragged me into this unawares; but I don't ask anything for my sake—but for your mother's, sir, and your own. On your honour, sir, it shall go back—shan't it?'

'It shall, Golding,' said the Captain. 'I promise you that, whatever may be the consequences to me. It shall go back before twenty-four hours are past; and Sammy, my boy, thank you for saving me from a worse danger than ever little Daisy was in.'

Captain Strudwick wrung the private's hand and left the cell, first calling the sergeant of the guard to lock the door again.

'Your Captain is a good sort, Golding,' said the non-commissioned officer; 'he has cheered you up like one o'clock.'

'He has cheered me, indeed,' said Golding.

'That's right. I knew you were taking on more than the occasion required. You couldn't help the nigger stealing the plate.—Here comes the escort. Fall in the prisoners,' and in five minutes Private Golding was in the orderly room listening to a mild lecture from the Colonel to the effect that if he had kept his eyes about him he would have seen the robber entering the mess bungalow as well as leaving it. However, his Captain gave him a good character, and he would merely sentence him to be confined to barracks for three days.

After the proceedings before the Colonel were over, and Golding had been released from arrest on the understanding that he did not go beyond the confines of the parade ground till his three days were up, Captain Strudwick returned to his quarters. His bungalow was the last but one in the row, but he could see it plainly a long time before he reached his compound. Under the portico which abutted from the veranda stood a *shigram*, as the ramshackle four-wheel Indian cabs are called, and in the act of descending from the sorry conveyance were a couple of portly natives, whose rich turbans proclaimed them to be members of the *Baniah* or money-lending caste.

'Just as I expected,' murmured Strudwick to himself; 'the beggars are up to time; but I'll keep my word to Golding, let them do what they will.'

He mounted the steps to the veranda, and the two Hindus made low obeisance.

'Come in here,' said Strudwick, entering his sitting-room, whither he was followed by his visitors. The Captain threw himself into a low cane-chair and gloomily awaited their pleasure.

The eldest *Baniah* opened the campaign. 'The Sahib has procured "it" for us?' he asked with an oily smile.

'No; I have not,' said Strudwick shortly.

'The Sahib is joking,' replied the Hindu. 'We heard in the bazaar this morning that "it" had been removed from its usual place.'

'I can't help that,' said Strudwick. 'You shouldn't believe every lying bazaar rumour you hear.'

'But this was no rumour,' persisted the money-lender. 'The Sahib, who cannot have forgotten, knows that he arranged for us to have "it" as a set-off to the bill which he cannot meet. We will treat the Sahib honourably, and give him the balance over the amount of his bill.'

'I tell you I don't know what you mean,' said Strudwick. 'I only know this much—that I owe you two rascals twenty thousand rupees—nearly two thousand pounds English money—and that I can't pay you a halfpenny of it. You must do your worst.'

The Hindu's eyes glittered with rage and disappointment. He turned to leave the room, followed by his partner, both of them dispensing with the customary salaam. Strudwick moved wearily in his chair, and his eyes fell upon two letters lying on the table, hitherto unnoticed.

'The English mail, by Jove!' he exclaimed: 'one from the mother, and another from— No; I don't know the writing. I'll open it first, for luck.' He tore open the envelope, and read as follows:

LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS,
June 21, 1890.

DEAR SIR—We beg to inform you that your late uncle, Mr Michael Scarsdale, of whose death you will have been informed by your friends, has made you his residuary legatee. It is impossible at present to say what the various securities will realise, but the sum to come to you will not be less than £500,000. We enclose a draft for £5000 in case you have any matters to arrange, and should advise your speedy return to England to instruct us as to these large interests.—We are, dear Sir, yours faithfully,

TEMPLE, GRIFFIN, & Co., Solicitors.

Strudwick rushed to the door. The *shigram* with the two Hindus was in the act of starting. 'Come back here,' he shouted—'come back, and take your money.'

The *Baniahs* remembered their salaams when they re-entered Strudwick's room, this time. The Captain sat down to his table and wrote a cheque for the amount of the bill. 'If you take that to the branch of the Bank of India in an hour, it will be duly honoured,' he said. 'And now, hand me over the bill.—That is right,' he added, glancing at the dirty bit of stamped parchment which the *Baniah* produced.—'And now, clear out of this double-quick, and never let me see your faces again.'

The Hindus, with wonderment written large on their wily faces, made for the door, whispering to each other congratulations on their good luck, mixed with conjectures as to the whereabouts of the mysterious 'it.' When they were gone, Strudwick opened his mother's letter, which confirmed the lawyers' news about his uncle's death. It ended thus: 'You are a rich man now, Leonard dear, and I cannot be too thankful that it is so, knowing what temptations a poor man in the position you have filled has to face. But I am sure that my boy has faced them bravely, and that he will be able to look back upon his time of trial with pride. You must come home to us now, and when you come, mind you bring young Sam Golding with you. He will make an excellent servant for you, and he has always been

devoted to your interests since you saved his baby sister's life in that dreadful fire.'

Strudwick folded the letter and burst into tears. 'If she only knew—if she only knew!' he sobbed, rent well-nigh asunder with the mingled emotions of joy and repentance.

The next morning a score of the officers of the Marlshire regiment were sitting in the veranda of the mess bungalow, still bewailing the loss of the centre-piece. Suddenly a horseman appeared far out on the plain, galloping at full speed towards them.

'It looks like Strudwick,' said the Colonel. 'He's going uncommon fast, whoever it is.'

In two minutes the horseman reached the mess-house, his horse in a lather of foam. 'The centre-piece—the centre-piece!' he shouted half hysterically; 'I've found it—out on the plain yonder.'

'Where? How?' asked twenty voices.

'I went for a morning ride; and when I had got about a mile away, I saw the glitter of gold behind a sage-bush, and there, sure enough, was the centre-piece. It was too heavy to carry comfortably on horseback. We had better go and fetch it in at once.'

As the procession returned in triumph with the centre-piece proudly borne in their midst, the Colonel turned to his senior Major and remarked: 'The sentry must have hit the thief of a nigger and made him drop it, after all. And yet there are fools who write to the papers to say that our lads can't shoot straight.'

'Yes,' said the Major; 'it ought to be known that a Marlshire man fetched over his game at a distance of three-quarters of a mile.'

Private Samuel Golding promptly had the remainder of his three days' sentence remitted by the Colonel, and shortly afterwards sailed for England with his young master. But whenever he meets an old comrade disposed to talk about his wonderful shooting feat, he avoids the subject; and the true story of how the Waterloo centre-piece came to be found on the plain will always remain a Regimental Mystery.

QUAILS AND LOCUSTS.

THE French journal called the *Éleveur* (that is, Breeder) publishes an article about the 'Traffic in Quails,' which the writer criticises from an entirely new point of view. The correspondent of the *Éleveur* in a great measure attributes the enormous increase of locusts, from which the Algerian colonists have so fearfully suffered last year, to the cupidity and greed of gain of a few dealers in poultry. Since a great part of Northern Africa has fallen into the possession of the French, hunting and shooting have been practised there practically without let or hindrance of any kind. In consequence of this, the Sahara ostrich, the Carthaginian hen, and the smaller bustards, partridges, quails, and others have all become so scarce that, as a hunting-ground, Algeria—of which Generals Daumas and Marguerite, as well as Commander Garnier, have given us such glowing descriptions—has now dwindled down to a mere appendage or supplementary hunting-ground of Provence, in France. And yet people are sur-

prised at the vast and alarming increase of the destructive insect! The writer concludes with the following statistical remarks. 'A quail,' he says, 'consumes daily fifty to sixty grammes of food; and twenty tiny locusts of the size of a hemp-seed go to a gramme.' Hence it follows that, according to his calculations, one quail alone devours daily one thousand locusts, and therefore twenty to twenty-five thousand during the period in which these insects are small enough to be swallowed by a quail.

The Tunisian sportsmen who, on the 8th of May last year, shipped off 50,000 quails to France, are, then, in a great measure to blame for the fact of one hundred and fifty millions of locusts less than usual having been destroyed by these birds within the year.

In the stomach of an ostrich 4228 different substances were found, which consisted of remains of food, sand, small stones, &c. Now, even if we assume that among these there were only two kilogrammes of nutritive matter, yet a single ostrich would consume daily forty thousand locusts. These useful birds, which are often captured merely for the sake of their feathers, are so fond of locusts that they pick them out even from the dung of the camel.

WAITING.

I AM waiting alone while shadows grow,
And the light in the west departeth slow,
Waiting, while breezes come and go,
In the sunset glow.

A rosebud gleams through the failing light,
Just the ghost of a rosebud, pure and white,
In its heart a glistening dewdrop bright—
Will he come to-night?

'I will come to you when the sun gleams red
O'er the golden sea in the west,' he said;
Alas! the sun has already fled,
And the day is dead.

The sea gleams gray 'neath the twilight sky,
The seagulls homeward wheeling fly
To their nests on the cliff-side, bare and high,
And still wait I.

He is tarrying yet upon his way,
Tarrying he, while I wait and pray
At the garden gate, 'neath the rose's spray,
Where the moonbeams play.

Ah! how the perfume of that rose
Amid the silence heavy grows!
The wand'ring night-wind scarcely blows
In the dread repose.

'I will come,' he said. Ah! Love, come now,
For Time flies fast, I know not how.
I wait beneath the rose's bough,
But where art thou?

LYDIA M. WOOD.

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THE OSTRICHES AT THE ZOO.

By FRANK E. BEDDARD, M.A.

AT the moment of writing, all the different kinds of Struthious or Ostrich-like birds may be seen at the Zoological Gardens. It is not often, if indeed it has ever happened, that *all* these wingless birds are on view at once. Unfortunately, the exigencies of space forbid their being placed close together. If this could be arranged, they would form collectively one of the most striking exhibits in the whole Gardens. These birds live very well in confinement; and if visitors do not supply them with too liberal offerings of copper coins, to satisfy themselves of the truth of certain stories, there is no reason to prevent their living a good many years.

The reputation which, unluckily for the Zoological Society, the ostrich has of leaning towards pennies as an article of diet, has on more than one occasion led to the death of a valuable bird. From the stomach of one ostrich exactly fourpence-halfpenny was extracted. It is not surprising to learn that the creature died with symptoms of copper-poisoning. The real explanation of the alleged omnivorous tastes of these birds is the fact that they are obliged to pick up stones for their gizzard to help them in grinding their food. In civilised countries, other objects are frequently mingled with the pebbles; hence the very varied assortment of articles that are met with in their interior.

The ostrich itself is only represented by a single specimen; this is, however, somewhat of a rarity; it is not the common form, but the Somaliland species. This bird has never before been exhibited alive. Perhaps it is not altogether a misfortune for the ostrich that it has to lead a solitary life. Among ostriches, marriage does not always appear to be a success—at least among ostriches in confinement. When the Zoological Gardens were first opened, more than sixty years ago, there was a fine pair of the common form. The male bird had got a twist in the neck, owing, it was

believed, to a previous attempt at swallowing something too hard or too bulky even for an ostrich. His mate, instead of showing sympathy with him in his misfortune, persecuted and worried him to such an extent, that ultimately a judicial separation was decreed; the husband was literally henpecked. This incident does not seem altogether to fit in with the fact that the ostrich is often, if not as a rule, a polygamist. Perhaps, however, the male bird finds safety in numbers, and has taken to heart the saying, 'Divide et impera.' The traveller Levallant, whose veracity, it must be admitted, was not always on a par with his ability as a naturalist, distinctly allows that the bird may be polygamous. He also said, and this has been often confirmed, that the male takes a fair share of the duty of sitting upon the eggs.

In most birds, this is of course left to the hens. The ostrich is, however, by no means singular in this domestic habit; the Cassowaries and the Emus also relieve the laborious duties of their spouses. The cassowary is represented in the Gardens by several examples; this bird indeed is always well represented at the Zoo. The most curious points that strike the observer about the cassowary are the long spines upon the wings, and the bright colours—red and blue—on the neck. All the Struthious birds, without exception, have lost the art of flying; their wings have dwindled to tiny appendages, which cannot always be seen without a careful search. And yet the bones of the wing are there, and just as complete, except in point of size, as in the Frigate-bird, which represents the 'triumph of the wing.' The feathers of the wings have shrunk also in correspondence with the loss of flying power, but in various ways: in the ostrich, the rhea, the emu, and the apteryx, they have simply got smaller and smaller; in the cassowary they have not got smaller, but the branches of the strong feathers of the wing—the barbs, as they are called—have vanished, leaving behind only the quill. These quills are strong and sharp: useless to perform their original function,

they have become converted into organs of offence and defence; the cassowary makes use of them in fighting. We often find instances of this kind in the animal world; Nature is a great economist; when an organ, which was originally created for one purpose, has lost its usefulness, it is often—so to speak—patched up and altered to do duty in quite a different way.

The brilliant hues about the throat of these birds are very remarkable. The cassowary is so exceedingly sombre in its colouring—black or brown, brown when young—as to suggest that it reaps the reward of its scorn of a more brilliant dress, by remaining invisible to its foes in the darkness of its native forests. The structure of the cassowary—the wings particularly—proves incontestably that it is descended from a flying bird; possibly, therefore, the gaudy tints on the throat are the last reminiscence of former days when it was clad in more glorious apparel, like many tropical birds. On the other hand, the different species of cassowary, of which there are a dozen or so, present certain recognisable variation in the colours and wattles upon the neck; these differences not only enable zoologists to distinguish the kinds from each other; they may also permit the species to recognise each other, and so prevent infertile crossing. This is perhaps an illustration of a principle which, Mr Wallace thinks, is very general in nature: the existence of 'recognition marks,' which prevent an animal from making overtures to an unsuitable mate. The only objection to this is, that it endows the cassowary—a bird decidedly not remarkable for the brightness of its intellect—with powers of observation certainly not possessed by the average visitor to the Zoo, and even enviable by some naturalists.

If the cassowaries were provided with a larger pool of water, we might have a chance of verifying the truth or the reverse of a slightly incredible story which has been told about them. An Australian traveller happened to observe a cassowary from the opposite side of a 'creek,' with a view, no doubt, to ultimately getting a shot at it. The bird presently stepped into the water, and squatted down for a few minutes. This of itself was an unusual proceeding for so purely a land-fowl—*Cursores*, or runners, was the name given to this group by some of the earlier naturalists; but the sequel is stranger still. After quietly staying in the water for some moments, the bird stood up, and walked out on to the bank. Arrived there, it shook its wings, when out dropped a multitude of tiny fishes. These it proceeded to pick up and to eat. The idea is that the fishes mistook the stringy feathers of the bird for weeds; and only discovered their mistake when too late. It is necessary, however, to assume, whether there is evidence or not, that the cassowary can, on an emergency at any rate, take to the water. Cassowaries are found in some of the islands lying to the north of the Australian Continent. Now, these islands are, many of them, divided from the mainland by such deep channels that it is unlikely that they were ever connected. Besides, they are in great part or entirely volcanic in origin; so that there could not have been a bridge to allow the cassowaries to walk at their ease from one to the other. At one time or

another, therefore, these flightless birds must have voluntarily set out for a swim, and left their native shores. We cannot think that the separation took place before they had lost the power of flight, because in that case there would be greater differences between the species than there are. Isolation for such countless generations would have left its mark.

Close to the cassowaries are several examples of the New Zealand Apteryx. These birds, which are the representatives of the great extinct Moas, are next to them the most thoroughly degenerate of all the Struthious birds. Their wings are so tiny as to be quite hidden by the covering of feathers; and they have no counterbalancing advantages, such as size or strength. How they have managed to drag on an existence with such an unpromising equipment for the battle of life, would be a mystery if they inhabited any other country than New Zealand. New Zealand, however, is an excellent place for an unprotected creature of this kind to dwell in. Beyond a harmless bat or two, and perhaps a rat, there are no Mammals of any sort; the apteryx, therefore, has not to maintain an unequal contest with fierce carnivorous beasts, and attempt to dispute with them the right of existence. It has thus been able to lead a comparatively peaceful life, occasionally, perhaps, rendered exciting by a battle with an unusually large owl. The apteryxes at the Zoo are not often visible, by reason of their nocturnal habits. Only when the evening is well advanced do they issue forth, and commence their main business in life, which is to get as many earthworms as possible. Their long, soft, and sensitive bills enable them to probe deep into the soil in quest of their prey. A story was at one time current about the apteryx which fitted in with its antipodean habitat, where everything is supposed to be topsy-turvy. The bird, it was said, constructed a nest with a cavity below, into which it crept, and incubated the eggs from below instead of from above. But some apteryxes which constructed a nest at the Zoological Gardens effectually disproved this extraordinary tale.

The most graceful by far of all the Ostrich tribe is the American Rhea; and it is the least degraded of the lot; not, it should be explained, in manners and customs, but in structure. It is nearer to the flying ancestor than any of the others. The rhea is undoubtedly the most elegant of the Struthious birds in appearance; it is lightly built, of a pleasing gray colour, and graceful in its movements. The rhea is confined to South America, and inhabits the grassy pampas. In spite of its size and the bare character of the country which it prefers, the rhea is not at all a conspicuous bird. Mr Graham Kerr, who accompanied the ill-fated 'Pilcomayo Expedition,' told the Zoological Society a few weeks since of his experiences in hunting the American ostrich. The Indians who were with him without any apparent reason spread themselves out into a circle, intimating that one of these birds was in the midst of them; but it was not until the bird gave unequivocal signs of its presence by a movement that it was detected. Crouching down upon the ground, the grayish-brown feathers suggest a tuft of withered grass. If this is approached, the long neck and hissing head are

protruded, which possibly remind the assailant of a snake, or at least cause an involuntary recoil, during which the ostrich hastily takes its departure.

The last kind of ostrich-like bird is the Emu. This bird is literally a ventriloquist; for its long windpipe has a sac attached to it, which aids in the peculiar drumming sound which it makes. The emu, however, unlike the cicada, cannot be regarded as happy, through having a voiceless wife. The hen-bird no less than the cock makes the drumming sound, which is so difficult to localise. But the note is rather different in the two sexes; it is a sharper, more rattling sound in the male bird.

There are always examples of these birds at the Zoo; for they are particularly hardy. A few years since there was one in the Deer Park of Magdalen College, Oxford. Though a young bird, it could hold its own in the most satisfactory fashion with the largest and fiercest of the stags, who always gave it a wide berth. The emu agrees with the cassowaries in producing a dark-green egg; and it has the same development of bright-coloured patches about the neck. The ostrich, rhea, and apteryx lay a whitish egg.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XVI.—WHO IS EDMUND GRAY?

ATHELSTAN laughed on the first hearing of the thing—it was on the Tuesday evening, the day after the discovery, and George was dining with him. He laughed both loud and long and with some of the old bitterness. ‘So the notes were in the safe all along, were they? Who put them there? “I,” says old Checkley, “with my pretty fingers—I put them there.”’

‘As soon as this other business is over, the Chief must tell your mother, Athelstan. It ought to come from her. I shall say nothing to Elsie just yet. She shall learn that you are home again, and that your name is clear again, at the same moment.’

‘I confess that I should be pleased to make them all confess that their suspicions were hasty and unfounded. At the same time, I did wrong to go away; I ought to have stuck to my post. As for this other business, one thinks with something like satisfaction of the wise old lawyer losing forty thousand pounds. It made him sit up, did it? For such a man to sit up indicates the presence of deep emotion. Lost forty thousand pounds! And he who holds so strongly to the sanctity of Property! Forty thousand pounds!’

‘Well; but we shall recover the certificates, or get new ones in their place.’

‘I suppose so. Shares can’t be lost or stolen, really—can they? Meantime, there may be difficulty, and you must try to find the forger. Has it yet occurred to you that Checkley is the only man who has had control of the letters and access at all times to the office?’

‘It has.’

‘Checkley is not exactly a fox: he is a jackal:

therefore he does somebody’s dirty work for him at a wage. That is the way with the jackal, you know. Eight years ago he tried to make a little pile by a little forgery—he did not commit the forgery, I am sure—but he did the jackal; only he forgot that notes are numbered: so when he remembered that, he put them back. Now, his friend the forger, who is no doubt a begging-letter writer, has devised an elaborate scheme for getting hold of shares—ignorant that they are of no value.’

‘Well, he has drawn the dividends for four months.’

‘That is something, you see; but he hoped to get hold of thirty-eight thousand pounds. It is the same hand at work, you infer from the writing. You are quite sure of that?’

‘There can be no doubt of it. How could two different hands present exactly the same curious singularities?’

‘And all the letters, cheques, and transfers for the same person. What is his name?’

‘One Edmund Gray, resident at 22 South Square, Gray’s Inn.’

‘No. 22? Oh! that is where Freddy Carstone lives. Do you know anything about the *nommé* Edmund Gray?’

‘I have been in search of information about him. He is described by the landlord of the rooms and by his laundress as an elderly gentleman.’

‘Elderly. Checkley is elderly.’

‘Yes, I thought of Checkley, of course. But somehow the indications don’t fit. My informants speak of a gentleman. Nobody at his kindest and most benevolent mood could possibly call Checkley a gentleman.’

‘The word gentleman,’ said Athelstan, ‘is elastic. It stretches with the employer or the consumer of it. It is like the word truth to a politician. It varies from man to man. You cannot lay down any definition of the word gentleman.—Do you know nothing more about him?’

‘A little. He has held this set of Chambers for nine years, and he pays his rent regularly before the day it falls due. Also I called upon him the other day when his laundress was at work and wrote a note to him at his table. The room is full of Socialist books and pamphlets. He is therefore, presumably, a Socialist leader.’

‘I know all their leaders,’ said Athelstan the Journalist. ‘I’ve made the acquaintance of most for business purposes. I’ve had to read up the Socialist Literature and to make the acquaintance of their chiefs. There is no Edmund Gray among them.—Stay—there is a Socialist letter in the *Times* of to-day—surely—Waiter—they were dining at the club where Athelstan was a temporary member—‘let me have the *Times* of to-day.—Yes, I thought so. Here is a letter from the Socialist point of view, signed by Edmund Gray—and—and—yes—look here—it is most curious—with the same address—22 South Square—a long letter, in small print, and put in the supplement; but it’s there.—See; signed Edmund Gray.—What do you think of that, for impudence in a forger?’

George read the letter through carefully. It was a whole column long; and it was in advocacy of Socialism pure and simple. One was surprised

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that the editor had allowed it to appear. Probably he was influenced by the tone of it, which was generous, cheerful, and optimistic. There was not the slightest ring of bitterness about it. 'We who look,' it said, 'for the coming disappearance of Property, not by violence and revolution, but by a rapid process of decay and wasting away, regard the present position of the holders of Property with the greatest satisfaction. Everywhere there are encouraging signs. Money which formerly obtained five per cent. now yields no more than half that rate. Shares which were formerly paying ten, twelve, and twenty per cent. are now falling steadily. Companies started every day in the despairing hope of the old great gains, fail and are wound up. Land, which the old wars forced up to an extraordinary value, has now sunk so enormously that many landlords have lost three-fourths and even more of their income. All those enterprises which require the employment of many hands—as docks, railways, printing-houses, manufactories of all kinds—are rapidly falling into the condition of being able to pay no dividend at all, because the pay of the men and the maintenance of the plant absorb all. When that point is reached, the whole capital—the millions—embarked in these enterprises will be lost for ever. The stock cannot be sold because it produces nothing: it has vanished. In other words, sir, what I desire to point out to your readers is that while they are discussing or denouncing Socialism, the one condition which makes Socialism possible and necessary is actually coming upon the world—namely, the destruction of capital. Why have not men in all ages combined to work for themselves? Because capital has prevented them. When there is no capital left to employ them, to bully them, to make laws against their combinations, or to bribe them, they will then have to work with and for themselves or starve. The thing will be forced upon them. Work will be a necessity for everybody: there will be no more a privileged class: all who work will be paid at equal rates for their work: those who refuse to work will be suffered to starve.'

The letter went on to give illustrations of the enormous losses in capital during the last fifteen years, when the shrinkage began. It concluded: 'For my own part, I confess that the prospect of the future fills me with satisfaction. No more young men idle, middle-aged men pampered, and old men looking back to a wasted life: nobody trying to save, because the future of the old, the widows, the children, the decayed, and the helpless, will be a charge upon the strong and the young—that is, upon the *juvenes*, the workers of the State. No more robbery: no more unproductive classes. Do not think that there will be no more men of science and of learning. These, too, will be considered workers. Or no more poets, dramatists, artists, novelists. These, too, will be considered workers. And do not fear the coming of that time. It is stealing upon us as surely, as certainly, as the decay of the powers in old age. Doubt not that when it comes we shall have become well prepared for it. Those of us who are old may lament that we shall not live to see the day when the last shred of property is cast into the common hoard. Those of us who are young have all the more reason to rejoice in their youth, because they may live to see the

Great Day of Humanity dawn at last.—EDMUND GRAY, 22 South Square, Gray's Inn.'

'You have read this?' asked George.

'Yes; I read it this morning before I knew the significance of the signature. Letter of a dreamer. He sees what might happen, and thinks that it will happen. Capital is too strong yet.'

'Is this the letter of a forger, a conspirator—a thief?'

'It does not strike me in that light. Yet many great thieves are most amiable in their private lives. There is no reason why this dreamer of dreams should not be also a forger and a thief. Still, the case would be remarkable, I admit.'

'Can there be two Edmund Grays—father and son?'

'Can there be a clerk to Edmund Gray, imprudently using his master's name, and ready to open any letter that may come? Consider—Clerk is a friend of old Checkley. Clerk invents the scheme. Checkley does his share. However, we can easily find out something more about the man, because my old friend, Freddy Carstone, has Chambers on the same floor. We will walk over after dinner, and if Freddy happens to be sober—he is about this time pleasantly, not stupidly, drunk, as a rule—he will tell us what he knows about his neighbour.'

'I ought to see Elsie this evening, but this is more important.'

'Much more. Send her a telegram.—Waiter, we will take coffee here. So. You have got the conduct of the case in your own hands. What has Checkley got?'

'Nothing. I believe he is jealous of me. I don't know why. But it does not matter what an old man like that thinks.'

'Even an old man can strike a match and light a fire. Checkley is a malignant old man. He is quite capable of charging you with the job. I wonder he hasn't done it by this time. Remember my case, old man.' Athelstan's face darkened at the recollection. 'Dirt sticks sometimes. Look at me. I am smirched all over.'

'His manner was very odd this morning—insolent and strange. He began to talk mysteriously of the ingratitude of the forger.'

'Why, he's actually going to do it! Don't you see—he means that you are the forger?'

'Oh! does he? Very well, Athelstan'—George finished his coffee and got up—'the sooner we find out this mystery of this Edmund Gray the better. Let us seek your tipsy Scholar.'

They walked from Piccadilly to Holborn, turning the thing over and making a dozen surmises. Edmund Gray, twins: Edmund Gray, father and son—father wanting to destroy property, a Socialist; son wanting to steal property, individualist: Edmund Gray cousins—one the mild philosopher, rejoicing in the decay of wealth; the other a bandit, robber, and conspirator: Edmund Gray, father and daughter—the young lady of the advanced type, who has not only thrown over her religion but her morals also: Edmund Gray, master and clerk: Edmund Gray under domination of a villain: there was in every situation a noble chance for the imagination. George showed a capacity unsuspected: he should have been a novelist. The hypothesis was always beautiful and admirable: but it wanted one thing

—*vraisemblance*: one felt, even while advancing and defending one, that it was impossible.

They turned into the Gateway of the Inn and walked down the passage into the Square. 'Look!' Athelstan caught his companion by the wrist. 'Who is that?'

'Checkley himself. He is coming out of No. 22.'

'Yes, out of 22. What is he doing there? Eh? What has he been doing there?'

It was Checkley. The old man walking feebly, with bent head, came out from the entrance of No. 22 and turned northward into Field Court. They waited, watching him, until he left the Square. 'What is he doing there?' asked George again. 'Come. Edmund Gray must be at home. Let us go up.'

They found the outer door shut. They knocked with their sticks: there was no answer.

'What was he doing here?' asked Athelstan.

The Scholar's door stood open. The Scholar himself was for once perfectly sober, and welcomed them joyously and boisterously.

'We are here on business, Freddy,' said Athelstan.

'You are here to sit and talk and drink whisky-and-soda till midnight, till two o'clock in the morning. It is not until two in the morning that you can get the full flavour of the Inn. It is like a college then, monastic, shut off from the world, peaceful'—

'Business first, then. You know your neighbour, Mr Edmund Gray?'

'Certainly. We exchange the compliments of the season and the news of the weather when we meet on the stairs. He has been in here, but not often. A man who drinks nothing is your true damper. That, believe me, and no other, was the veritable skeleton at the Feast.'

'Our business concerns your neighbour, Mr Edmund Gray. We want you to tell us what you know about him.'

'Go on, then. Question, and I will answer, if I can.'

'Does Mr Edmund Gray live at these Chambers?'

'No. He may sometimes sleep in them, but I should say not often. He calls at irregular intervals. Sometimes in the afternoon, sometimes in the morning, sometimes not for several weeks together. He is most uncertain.'

'Do many people call upon him?'

'No one ever calls upon him.'

'Does he keep clerks? Does he carry on an extensive correspondence?'

'I have never heard the postman knock at his door.'

'Has he a son or a brother or a partner or anything?'

'I don't know. He may have these hindrances, but they are not apparent.'

'What is his occupation or trade?'

'He is a Socialist. He is athirst for the destruction of property. Meantime, I believe, he lives on his own. Perhaps his will be spared to the end. He is an old gentleman of pleasant manners and of benevolent aspect. The old women beg of him: the children ask him the time: the people who have lost their way apply to him. He dreams all the time: he lives in a world impossible. Oh! quite impossible. Why, in a

world all Socialist, I myself should be impossible. They wouldn't have me. My old friend told me the other day that I should not be tolerated. They would kill me. All because I do no work—or next to none.'

George looked at Athelstan. 'We are farther off than ever,' he said.

'Mr Edmund Gray believes that the Kingdom of Heaven is a kind of hive where everybody has got to work with enormous zeal, and where nobody owns anything. Also he thinks that it is close at hand, which makes him a very happy old gentleman.'

'This can't be Checkley,' said George.

'It would seem not,' Athelstan replied. 'Did you ever see another old man up here—we saw him coming out just now—one Checkley, a lawyer's clerk?'

'No; not up here. There is an elderly person—a Party—of the name who uses the parlour of the *Salutation* where I myself sometimes—one must relax—Porson loved a tavern; so did Johnson—I myself, I say, sometimes forget that I used to belong to the Combination room, and sit with Checkley and his companions. But I do not think he is a friend of Mr Gray. As well call the Verger the friend of the Bishop. Mr Gray is a gentleman and a scholar; he is a man of generous instincts and culture. He *could* not be a friend of the man Checkley.'

'Yet we saw Checkley coming out of this very staircase.'

They talked of other things. They talked till midnight; when they came away the Scholar was at his best: one more glass—which he took after they left—would have turned the best into the worst.

'We are as far off as before,' said George.

'No—we are so much the nearer that we know who Edmund Gray is not. He is not Checkley. He has no clerks. He has no visitors. He comes seldom. George, this looks to me suspicious. We met Checkley stealing out of the door. Why does Edmund Gray keep these Chambers? No business done there: no letters brought there: no callers: the man does not live there. The Socialism may be—must be—a blind. Why does the man keep on these Chambers?'

Meantime at the *Salutation* the usual company was assembled. 'I fear,' said the barrister, 'that we shall not have our friend the Scholar here this evening. As I came down the stairs I saw him opening his door to two gentlemen—young gentlemen. He will display his wonted hospitality upon them this evening instead.' He sighed, and called for the glass of old and mild mixed, which was all he could afford. Had the Scholar been with them, certainly there would have been a nobler and a costlier glass. He took up the morning paper and began to read it.

The conversation went on slowly and with jerks. A dull conversation: a conversation of men without ideas: a day before yesterday conversation: the slow exchange of short, solid sentences taken from the paper, or overheard and adopted. We sometimes praise the old tavern life, and we regret the tavern talk. We need not: it was dull, gross, ignorant, and flat: it was commonplace and conventional: because it

was so dull, the men were fain to sing songs and to propose sentiments, and to drink more than was good for them. Why and when do men drink more than is good for them? First, when and because things are desperately dull: there is nothing to interest them: give them animation, thoughts, amusements, and they will not begin to drink. When they have begun, they will go on. When they have arrived at a certain stage, let them drink as fast as they can, and so get out of the way, because they will never mend, and they only cumber the earth. Here is, you see, a complete solution—a short solution—of the whole drink question. It will not be accepted, because people like a long solution—a three-column solution.

The barrister lifted his head. 'There is a letter here,' he said, interrupting the ex-M.P., who was clearing the way for what he called an argument by an introduction in the usual form. 'While on the one hand, gentlemen,' he was saying, 'I am free to confess'—

'There is a letter here,' he repeated in a louder voice. The barrister was now old, but he could still assume at times the masterful manner of counsel before the Court, 'which should be read. It is a letter on Socialism.'

'Ugh!' said the money-lender. 'Socialism! They want to destroy Property. Socialism! Don't tell me, sir.'

'It is a dream of what might be—a noble—a generous letter.' He looked round him. In their dull and fishy eyes there was no gleam or sparkle of response. 'I forgot,' he said; 'you cannot be interested in such a letter.—I beg your pardon, sir.' He bowed with great courtesy to the ex-M.P. 'I interrupted your valuable observations. We shall listen, I am sure, with—the—greatest'—He buried his head in the paper again.

The legislator began again. 'As I was a-saying, gentlemen, when I was interrupted, on the subject of education and the ratepayers, being a ratepayer myself, as we all are, and having our taxes to pay, which is the only advantage we ever get from being a ratepayer, while on the one hand I am free to confess'—

'Why!' the barrister interrupted once again, 'this letter is from a man on our staircase, No. 22'—Checkley started—'an acquaintance of mine, if I can call him so, and of our friend the Scholar. A very able man, now somewhat in years. By name Edmund Gray.'

'What?' said Checkley. 'Edmund Gray? You know Edmund Gray?'

'Certainly. I have known him this nine years. Ever since he has been in the Inn.'

'W-w-what sort of a man is he?' Checkley stammered in his eagerness.

'A very good sort of a man. Why do you ask?'

'I want to know—for his advantage—oh! yes—yes—for his own advantage.'

'Yes.' The barrister retreated to his paper. 'Oh yes,' he added. 'Quite so.'

'For his great personal advantage,' Checkley repeated.—'Robert, I think the gentleman would take a tumbler, if you will bring it—hot, Robert—strong—with lemon and sugar—a large rummer, Robert.'

The ancient barrister's head behind the paper was observed to tremble.

Robert returned with his rummer, the glass spoon tinkling an invitation. Dinner had been but a sorry affair that day—a stop-gap—insufficient in bulk; the tempted man felt a yearning that could not be resisted. He stretched out his hand and took the glass and tasted it. Then turning to Checkley.

'You have purchased my speech, sir. You were asking me about Mr Edmund Gray. What do you wish to know?'

'Everything—his business—his private life—anything.'

'As for his business, he has none: he is a gentleman living on his means—like myself; but his means are larger than my own: he has a residence elsewhere—I don't know where: he uses his Chambers but little: he has a collection of books there, and he keeps them for purposes of study.'

'Does he call there every day?'

'No. Only at irregular times. Sometimes not for many weeks together.'

'Has he got any friends?'

'I should say that he has no friends at all—at least none that come to the Inn. I have never heard or seen any one in his room. A quiet man. No slammer. An excellent man to have on the staircase. No trampler; doesn't tramp up and down like an elephant. Isn't brought home drunk.'

'What does he look like?'

'He is a man advanced in years—perhaps seventy—a good-looking man—very cheerful countenance: tall and well set up still—wears a long frock coat. And that I believe is all I know about him.'

'That's all you've got to tell me, is it?'

'That is all, Mr Checkley. Except that he has written a very remarkable letter to the *Times* of this morning.'

'Well, sir, if that is all, it isn't much for your rum-and-water, let me tell you.'

The barrister rose and poured the half-glass that remained into the ciders. 'Then let me drink no more than my information was worth,' he said; and at the sight of so much magnanimity the broad earth trembled and Mr Checkley sat aghast.

The ex-statesman cleared his throat and began again. 'After the third interruption, gentlemen, I may hope for a hearing. While, therefore, on the one hand'—

(To be continued.)

CAIRNGORM IN WINTER.

THE Caledonian 'Alps' afford ample scope for the exhilarating exercise of mountaineering during the summer months, and are not without charm to some during the winter season. Indeed, mountain excursions in mid-winter have now almost become fashionable, and the interest in Scottish hills is yearly increasing. For our New-Year holidays of 1892 Cairngorm was resolved on, that popular mountain having, according to our programme, to be crossed from Nethy Bridge, in Speyside, to Braemar, in Deeside. The weather was to be ignored, the arrangement being that, should the then prevalent snow-storm leave open

the railway route from Aberdeen to Nethy Bridge, the journey should be attempted.

As the train slowly made its way along the Spey from Craigellachie, the condition of the weather became a matter of no small interest to the little party of mountaineers who had equipped themselves for the occasion. For as darkness set in, fleecy flakes seemed at times to envelop the train, presaging soft snow on the mountains. When Nethy Bridge station was reached at 8.40 on the evening of the last day of 1891, Strathspey looked wintry enough, while the freshness of the weather bespoke a stiff day's work on the morrow. Our arrival seemed not altogether unexpected, a little crowd of villagers having assembled to discuss, among other things, our appearance and the probability of the success of our attempt. It was afterwards satisfactory to us to learn that we passed the scrutiny, the general remark being 'that fouk'll gang.' Our critics were men not given to unnecessary mountain-climbing in summer, and as for such feats in winter, they regarded them as a form of madness.

Dinner over, enjoyed as hillmen can, our plans were finally arranged, the alternative routes to Braemar, which the weather might necessitate, being carefully discussed. Tales of old battles with wind and snow, former ascents of the hills in the vicinity, and mountain-talk generally, drowned the death-moan of 1891, and swelled the birth-cry of 1892.

We had proposed starting at five A.M., but the vagaries of an alarm clock delayed us till seven. We contented ourselves with a biscuit and a tumbler of milk, being due for breakfast at the keeper's at Glenmore Lodge, at the upper end of Loch Morlich—the very base of Cairngorm. The weather was most unmistakably fresh, the snow being quite soft. Crossing the bridge over the Nethy, one could not avoid a look at the dark hurrying stream below, as the thought struck us, 'We have to trace you to your fountains ere our day's work is half done.' The forest of Abernethy entered, the snow became deeper, rendering walking proportionally difficult and slow. Forest Lodge passed, the road and the forest became more and more alike, sometimes indistinguishable. Wreaths were now numerous as Rynettin—not yet awake to the New Year—was neared; and that house behind us, a virgin road lay before. Our upward climb temporarily ended at Rebhoan, snow-wreath rapidly succeeding snow-wreath. Rebhoan, always lonely, seemed then a very centre of desolation, the only living thing visible being a wretched rabbit that made haste to hide itself. Here we left Strath Nethy, entering Glen More by the gorge known as 'the thieves' pass.' The upper part of this glen is much admired for its picturesqueness in summer; in mid-winter we found it magnificent. On our left were the steep slopes and crags of the northern base of Cairngorm; on the right, Meall a' Bhuachaille (the herd's hill), with its precipitous tree-clad side, where we observed a big herd of deer in search of food. It was not till after four hours' stiff steady walking that Glenmore Lodge was reached. A much shorter time under similar circumstances would have been sufficient to give a keen enough relish for breakfast. That meal over, the situation was considered anew. Noon approached; the weather was still

fresh, the almanac promised us no moon, and, judging from our rate of walking, the ascent of Cairngorm would consume the remaining hours of daylight. This would leave the more dangerous part of the journey to be traversed in darkness. The risk was deemed too great, and reluctantly it was decided to remain overnight at Glenmore Lodge. To put ourselves in better condition, we took a walk to Loch an Eilan—noted for the ospreys that nest in its ruined castle—some six miles distant. The route taken was by Auldrue, the Luineag being crossed by the sluice where that stream leaves Loch Morlich.

As we returned from our twelve-mile walk—thus making about twenty-four through soft snow, not bad training for the morrow—we heard the bagpipes playing at Glenmore Lodge. They 'made melodie' for a little band of dancers, who footed it with that fervour which characterises Highlanders when stimulated by the 'skirl' of their favourite musical instrument. We were treated to an excellent Gaelic song; it numbered about forty verses, but fortunately the singer remembered only about three-fourths of them. As we retired to bed, we could hear the snow falling from the roof, but the drone of the pipes soon lulled us to sleep.

We left Glenmore Lodge at 8.45 on the morning of the 2d. The weather was still fresh; about a foot of snow lay in the glen, 'silent as solitude's self.' All was white save dark Loch Morlich and the firs of Rothiemurchus and Glen More. A beautiful sunset the previous afternoon had augured well, and we had little apprehension of anything more severe than a toilsome trudge of some two dozen miles. True, the summit of Cairngorm was not visible—two thousand feet appeared to be the *upward* limit of vision—but that gave us little thought, as it is only during a sharp clear frost that mountain views may be looked for in winter. From Glenmore Lodge—the last 'fire'-house on the Inverness-shire side of Cairngorm—a capital path leads halfway up the mountain, but then it was of doubtful utility, heaped up as it was with snow. The nearest house on the Aberdeenshire side of the range is Derry Lodge, a shooting-box of the Duke of Fife's in Mar Forest. The path keeps for some distance by the Allt Mor—the principal feeder of Loch Morlich—which is crossed twice, the second time by a pony-bridge at a height of about fourteen hundred feet, and there the ascent really begins. On our departure from the Lodge the aneroid marked 28'8, the height being about eleven hundred feet; an hour after it showed 28'275, the altitude being sixteen hundred feet with the thermometer at thirty-eight degrees. At this height the fierceness and persistence of the storm had swept the mountain ridge almost bare; it looked indeed as though some giant sweeper had applied his broom rather carelessly over the hillside. Walking was therefore comparatively easy here. It may be incidentally mentioned that Cairngorm is the easiest of ascent at all times of any of the mountain tops of the range to which it gives name. The view upwards had gradually narrowed to about a hundred yards; but northwards and Speywards the prospect was magnificently Alpine, the range on the left bank of the Spey, known as the Monadh Liath, standing out in bold relief. The group of

mountains in the vicinity of Kingussie attracted attention, their white mantle rendering them particularly noticeable. Their death-like pallor was a strong contrast to the beautiful rose-tints they displayed at the going down of the yesterday's sun.

Attention, however, had now to be concentrated on personal matters, for, ere the two thousand-foot line—temperature thirty-seven degrees—was reached we were knee-deep in snow, and a strong westerly wind had to be reckoned with. Blowing on our right cheek, it necessitated considerable exertion and watchfulness to preserve the proper angle of ascent. When a height of two thousand six hundred feet was attained the thermometer had fallen another degree, and the wind had grown to a hurricane, steadily forcing us to the left. The prospect now was almost blank, for nothing could be seen beyond a few yards' radius. Deep as was the snow generally, the hurricane had cleaned the more exposed portion of the ridge almost bare, the heather peeping through and the larger stones being quite visible. We reached a height of three thousand feet in two hours, the aneroid marking 26·8; but the thermometer was gone. Suspended at a shoulder-strap, it had fallen an unobserved prey to the tempest.

At this stage, less experienced but more prudent mountaineers would probably have considered the advisability of retreat; but we had only one thought—to reach the cairn that marks the summit. We had anticipated striking it directly, but we had not sufficiently allowed for the deflection which the wind had forced us to make to the eastward. The cairn was therefore unconsciously passed on the right, and the descent begun towards Loch Avon before our blunder became apparent. There is no mistaking the summit of Cairngorm; so, after a brief retracing of steps, the cairn loomed out through the mist, and was reached at 11.40, about three hours after leaving Loch Morlich. We had reckoned on requiring four hours or so. The aneroid was back to 25·4, and showed on the mountain scale four thousand four hundred feet, while the height of Cairngorm is only four thousand and eighty-four feet. The barometer, we afterwards calculated, had fallen no less than three-tenths of an inch during the last hour, apart from the natural fall caused by the increasing altitude. This perhaps will give some slight idea of the weather on the summit—the wind blew pitilessly, and the cold was intensely penetrating. It was utterly out of the question to make any stay at the cairn; a halt of ten minutes there would have chilled away the whole natural caloric of our bodies. It need scarcely be said that there was no view; nothing could be seen save the cairn.

The fury of the weather left only one practicable route for the descent, for the blast could not be faced, tearing up as it did the icy crust of the snow and driving it in angular pellets against our faces. Turning our backs, therefore, to the wind, we made for the Garbh Allt, as the upper part of the Nethy is called—a rather ticklish route in winter. The slope of Cairngorm towards the Garbh Allt is steep, and, with hard snow, is impracticable without an ice-axe. With the snow soft, however, the descent was safe enough for experienced hillmen. Yet extreme caution

had to be used for the first seven hundred and fifty feet or so of the descent, as a very slight divergence in the mist might have been attended with serious consequences. By straying too far to the left, the terrible precipice known as the Eagle's Cliff would be encountered; while on the right there are the almost equally dangerous rocks that overlook 'the Saddle.' The descent, in Indian file, was necessarily somewhat tedious, frequently up to the knees in soft snow. 'The Marquis's Well' on the summit was of course not visible, and even that great mass of rock known as 'Margaret's Coffin' was passed unobserved. Ben Bynac is separated from Cairngorm by the Garbh Allt, and the deep gorge between these two mountains was the first natural feature recognisable. Then the sun struggled with the mist, giving us peeps of the summit of Beinn Mheadhoin, a huge mass, three thousand eight hundred and eighty-three feet in height, on the right bank of Loch Avon.

Now that our *mauvais quart d'heure* was over, we could feel grateful and indulge in a little conversation. We then held to the right for 'the Saddle,' where a short halt was made, the better to enjoy one of the grandest views among the Cairngorms—the great hollow that holds Loch Avon. The loch was covered with ice, except opposite the point where a burn, rising on the Loch Etchachan plateau, joins it on the right near the top. Loch Avon lies at a height of about two thousand four hundred feet, and is one of the most secluded sheets of water in Scotland. Far from all human habitation, it is girt about on three sides with giant mountains that, 'dark sentinels of the waste,' rise from its lonely shores. On the left is Cairngorm itself; on the right, Beinn Mheadhoin; and at the upper end is Ben Muich Dhui, the monarch of the range. The mountain-born torrents that feed it were all ice-bound and snow-covered and silent as the very grave. The universal stillness was a marked contrast to the storm raging above, and to the fierce tempests, that often, even in summer, tear through this gigantic gorge. Yet even here life appeared possible, for a mountain hare scudded before us on 'the Saddle,' and not a few ptarmigan winged their flight lazily along.

The heaviest part of the day's work had now to be faced—a toilsome walk round the head of the loch, and the steep ascent, in very soft snow, from the Shelter Stone to the Loch Etchachan plateau. A mile and a half an hour had latterly been counted good progress; now we could not manage more than a mile in the hour. An attempt was made to cross Loch Avon on the ice, and so save a considerable detour; but it was not sufficiently firm. The ice even on the Garbh Uisge (Rough Water, appropriately named), which enters the loch at the upper end, would not bear, so that burn had to be crossed about half a mile up by the aid of a wreath which sufficed as a bridge. This landed us near the Shelter Stone, through a wilderness of boulders and mountain-chips known in Gaelic as 'the Dairymaid's Field.' He must have been a Celt of peculiar humour who first applied the name. As the Shelter Stone was approached, a flock of nine ptarmigan quietly *walked* ahead of us at a distance of about half-a-dozen yards! The interior, if one may use the expression, of the

Stone was mostly filled up with snow. We partook of a little lunch inside, a stay of a quarter of an hour being sufficient in the circumstances. The ascent to Loch Etchachan was commenced at 2.45; and as it is at an altitude of about seven hundred feet higher than Loch Avon, it was found covered with bearing ice. The loch was almost indistinguishable from the plateau, the thick ice being roughly covered with snow. Here we were again in the storm; but fortunately it blew down Corrie Etchachan, which accordingly we took at a run, and so entered the well-known Glen Derry.

Oh weary, weary Glen Derry! How many tired and ready-to-faint young mountaineers have cursed you bitterly in their hearts, and vowed to avoid you in the future! Familiar as was the ground, the falling darkness and the treacherous snow kept every sense on the *qui-vive* for nearly two hours, as we carefully picked our way to Derry Lodge. The Lodge was a welcome sight, and a cup of tea from the 'guidwife' was much appreciated. After a halt of an hour, we resumed our walk to Castletown of Braemar. We had now a carriage road; but the first part of it was a good deal blocked up with snow. Our destination was reached in good form at 9.45 P.M.—thirteen hours after leaving Glen More.

Such winter ascents have a peculiar piquancy, and, perhaps not altogether without some little danger, offer great inducements to trained mountaineers, especially to those with some knowledge of the Swiss Alps. Only those who can thoroughly enjoy a long and severe tussle with the elements need, however, attempt these excursions; in a word, one must be in the best of health, and, moreover, some of the party must have an intimate knowledge of the ground to be traversed. Under any other circumstances, disaster would certainly be the result; but, with sound mind and sound body, a winter ascent of a mountain such as Cairngorm is the very pink of Scottish mountaineering.

A BOYCOTTED BABY.

CHAPTER V.—JEM'S WIFE AGAIN—HER LAST APPEARANCE.

THE agony of this suspense was wearing him out, and Matthew Bulbous felt, next morning, as if another twenty-four hours of it would drive him mad—unless, in self-preservation, he rushed off to the nearest police station and gave himself up in anticipation of the action of the law.

The house was intolerable, and he could not bear the disgrace of being arrested in the presence of all his clerks. So he made away from London by way of Victoria Station, unconsciously leaving the train when it stopped at Penge; and giving up his ticket at the gate, crossed the wooden bridge over the line, which he remembered crossing on the day of the funeral of his son's wife—Christmas Day. It seemed so long ago now.

Matthew Bulbous walked slowly down the street of Penge, heedless of pelting sleet and of the fact that he was without an umbrella. His head was bent in abstraction; but his feet, unconsciously, were bringing him step by step

towards the house in Croydon Road where, with most unchristian feeling, he had seen the hearse waiting for the dead woman. If it had to be done over again, he knew now how he would do it. Condone that marriage he could not, nor forgive his son for the act of defiance. But he recognised the hand of the good-fortune which had always attended his undertakings in the event which had first put an end to the matrimonial scheme between Lord Polonius and himself. Had he only recognised it at the time, he would never have suffered himself to fall into the Earl's hands again. He would have left things as they were. The baby would probably have died in any case, and he should be free of this terrible burden which crushed him now.

Then he went on to speculate as to what was probably at that very moment going on at the inquest. From this he proceeded further to speculate on the sentence he should be likely to receive—the ruin and shame he realised sufficiently well. It would be imprisonment with hard labour; for a year, or two years; or perhaps penal servitude for a longer term. And then? It was the coming to life again, rather than the imprisonment, which he dreaded most; and it is very likely that it would have been a relief to him to be assured, as he walked drenched and insensible to wet and cold down the dull suburban street, that he should be shut away from the world for ten or twenty years. What would not ten or twenty years wipe out? He might reappear in the world, at the end of that period, forgotten, and therefore less ashamed. But to come back soon—while the thing was still fresh in all men's minds—would, he knew, be the worst part of his punishment—a calamity that would be killing to a man of his unresting energy, who could not sit still and corrode in inactive obscurity.

At the bottom of the main street of Penge village there is a police station, at a corner where Croydon Road crosses at right angles. Matthew Bulbous stepped quickly off the pavement in front of the station, stooping his head against the driving and blinding sleet, in order to cross to the other side. He had gone but three paces when a shout from the door of the police station paralysed him, and heavy feet leaped down the stone steps and followed him. As the policeman's grasp was on his shoulder he turned his white face to his captor—was struck in the head and chest with tremendous force, and flung back senseless on the pavement.

For weeks after this occurrence, Matthew Bulbous was knocked out of the world more completely than he had been gloomily anticipating just before it happened, and by a much more summary process. The world he was shot into proved to be a strange and bewildering one, and held masterful grip of his raving fancies. It was a kind of world manifest enough, from his hallucinations, to those about him; but much of it was wholly incomprehensible, and almost all of it very dreadful.

How many times he was pilloried in the dock for that crime of folly, it would be impossible to say. The wretched man was being for ever put on his trial, with not a word of defence to

utter. Mr Clove sat by, silent and powerless; the loathsome Griffon, smelling of gin, with vile moisture glistening on the bristles round her mouth, supported him on one side; the doctor, on the other; and now and again he caught sight of the distressful, pitying faces of his wife and daughter, and tried to avoid them. But when he beheld Lord Polonius on the bench beside the judge, his rage was fearful; they had to hold him down on the bed; until, behind the justice-seat, appeared the face against which he had no power to hold up his head—and then he always collapsed, moaning and burying himself in the pillows. How vividly he remembered her warning on Christmas eve: 'According as you are kind and just to it, I will be merciful to you!' He had murdered it, he and those two vile confederates on each side of him; and seeing the dead mother behind the judge, with her white face and dark eyes fixed upon him, he knew that he had no mercy to hope for.

When the dreadful trial was over, and sentence passed, the worst punishment came, because, instead of the merciful seclusion of the prison, he was condemned to undergo his degradation before all the world. His wife and daughter beheld him, linked to his detested fellow-malefactors the Griffon and the doctor; all the clerks from his office came daily during luncheon hour to stare at him; business friends stood afar off, contemplating his condition with pity; ragged women jeered and hooted him; and Lord Polonius drove round daily in a slashing tandem in order to turn his head away with lofty abhorrence.

Matthew Bulbous possessed an iron constitution or he could not have survived all this—half of it would have killed an ordinary man. It was in the early twilight, one wintry afternoon, that he came back to the world once more. The amazed effort to realise where he was, or what had happened to him, was of course a failure. It was some dim but wondering reassurance to him presently to see his wife by the bedside, signing to him to be still, and gazing in his face with the unselfish devotion of a loving heart. Then a doctor came, examined his pulse and temperature, and silently disappeared again; and as, opening his eyes after a few minutes, he found himself alone and the room was darkening, there was nothing for it but to go to sleep, with some vague hope that when he awoke again he might be able to understand something.

When he opened his eyes next the room was very silent, and a shaded light stood on a table in a distant corner. Not being able to call, he tried to think. The effort proved in vain, for he could get no farther than an overshadowing fear that something very dreadful—the very worst, perhaps—had happened, and that he was only going to realise it now. It was painfully perplexing. Could a room like this belong to a prison hospital? Hardly—and he recollected having seen his wife. Convicts are not usually allowed to be nursed by their wives. Perhaps he had got off, by some trick of Clove his solicitor, and they had taken him away from the scene of his disgrace. Perhaps—worst of all, and the fear of it made him wish he had died rather—his trial had yet to come off.

Presently his wife came in and kissed him.

She had not for many years been wont to venture on that act of affection. Then some one came to the other side of the bed and also kissed him—this was his daughter Agnes. In the sudden fullness of heart brought on by this demonstration of pure and ill-merited affection, tears welled from the broken man's eyes, and he struggled to say: 'Mary—Agnes—I don't care now what I have lost—or what has happened—if you stay with me!'

'Dear, dear, we will always stay with you. You have lost nothing; you have been wandering in your illness.'

'Am I—at home?'

'No, dear; you soon shall be, when you get strong. Now sleep again; we will stay with you.'

'Yes, yes, stay; but I cannot sleep now. Tell me everything.'

'No, Matthew. To-morrow you will be stronger. You must not talk or think to-night.'

'Very well!' he said with a sigh; 'but I can't help trying to think.'

He dreaded to put that question which was uppermost in his anxious thoughts—whether he was still awaiting his trial. Trying to think, however, was of no avail, and at length he slept. Exhausted nature had much lost ground to make up before the balance was even again, and he did not wake until ten next morning.

A bright gleam of sunshine rested on the side of the window, and was the first thing he saw. In a while the doctor came, looking cheerful, and pronounced him to have safely landed on that happy shore where the patient has only to get well as fast as he can. Matthew Bulbous took all the nourishment they gave him, and enjoyed it; and then he learned, to his great wonder, where he was, and the nature of the accident that had befallen him. Simultaneously with the warning shout from the door of the police station—which was the last thing he remembered—a runaway horse and trap dashed round the corner and struck him senseless. Searching his pockets, the police found his card, and recollecting that some person of the same name lived a short way up the Croydon Road, they made inquiries. This was how it came to pass that Matthew Bulbous was nursed through his illness in his son's house; though it puzzled him greatly to imagine why James Bulbous should be keeping the house on, his wife and child being dead, and he himself having gone abroad after the wife's death.

When the doctor went away, Matthew began to question his wife. All about the accident she knew and told him; but when he tried to approach the dread subject of the death of the baby, cautiously feeling his way, as fearing what might have to be told him, Mrs Bulbous grew puzzled and distressed, for she apprehended that he was again relapsing into that delirium which had been so terrible to witness.

'Dear Matthew,' she suddenly said, 'would you like to speak to Jem?'

'Ay,' he answered, drawing a deep breath. 'Is he here? Very well; send him to me.'

The interview would have to come sooner or later, and he might as well get it over. Matthew Bulbous was not now his old self—of rock-like strength and inflexibility of character, but a

broken-down man—broken down first by misfortune and next by sickness. His son might be as stern as he liked with him; he was at his mercy now.

James Bulbous, however, did not look stern when he came to the bedside and took his father's hand. 'I am glad to see you better, father.'

'Well, Jem?'

The son regarded him a moment attentively, still holding the weak hand.

'Jem!' said Matthew Bulbous, gathering all his strength, 'if you will listen to me—patiently and forgivingly—while I confess how I have wronged and injured you'—

'Father, you need not go into all that,' said his son quietly.

'I must, Jem—I must! I have been a fool. I have ruined myself, and disgraced you all by my folly. Oh, Jem, Jem!' he exclaimed with all his soul, 'I wish it were all undone, and that I had the chance again of taking another course. I won't say I could approve your marriage to that—to your wife; but it doesn't become any one to be hard on what he thinks another's folly; and I might, when she was dead, have had more Christian feelings. It was all done for sake of—Jem!' he exclaimed, gaining sudden strength from the thought of Lord Polonius, 'upon my soul! I would rather see you married this day to an even worse case than to that old villain's daughter.'

This burst of feeling did him good. The son waited for him to cool before he spoke again.

'Did you ever see my wife, father?'

'See her? Why, of course—— Well, no; I can't say I did, Jem; but let her be. Joe told me all about her. Never mind, now. Tell me what has happened—about the—the baby,' he said, shutting his eyes. 'You will never forgive me that, Jem. Oh! I have been so unnatural! If I could only get your full forgiveness, Jem—and have satisfaction out of that wily old thief—I think I could die in peace.'

'I have something to tell you about him presently, father. But about my wife and baby'—

'Jem, Jem, Jem—spare me! If you knew how I have suffered—how your wife has haunted me'—

'But you have never seen her, father; how could she haunt you?'

'It wasn't the real one; but all the same, Jem, she has haunted me—about that baby.'

The perspiration was on his face; there was real suffering there.

'Poor father!' said James Bulbous, 'you have been under a terrible delusion. Before I tell you what has happened, will you promise to nurse no ill-feeling against others on account of it?—to let bygones be bygones?'

Matthew reflected. This was a serious proposition. But he was in a weak state of mind and body propitious to virtuous impulses, and after a while he answered: 'Very well, Jem; I promise—always excepting Lord Polonius!'

'We will leave out his lordship, then,' said the young man, smiling. 'And now, father, I will tell you how it was.'

James Bulbous related the story of his wife and child. Matthew was simply stupefied. The whole thing had been a malicious scheme of

Joseph Bulbous, intended to punish his masterful brother, and humble his pride by administering to him the biggest fright it was possible to give him. Joseph knew his man to the bone, as no other living person knew him, and the autocratic and self-sufficing brother had played into his hands with stupendous blindness. It was difficult to realise it.

'Joseph deceived you, father. He deceived me also. Why, father,' said the young man gravely, 'if you had only made inquiry of me even once—if you had only allowed me to speak that day you saw me at my chambers—if you had not implicitly put yourself in Joseph's hands as you did—all this could not have happened.'

'Then, your wife—your child'—Matthew commenced, fearfully.

They were both alive and well. Joseph, after leaving England—provided with the money intended for James Bulbous's continental trip—addressed a letter to his nephew recounting the whole plot. At the same time he despatched the telegram to his brother as a parting shot. The unfortunate child belonged to some one else—for it was a plot between Joseph and the woman Griffon, which paid the latter sufficiently well. The infant would have died in any case, in the course of nature—or business.

'So Joe is gone, then?' said Matthew regretfully. 'I gave him four hundred pounds for you.'

'He is half-way to New Zealand now.—I know, father,' the young man added, penitently, 'I ought not to have been so stiff-necked. I ought to have written to you and explained. But my pride prompted me to work and be independent. I am sorrier now than I can tell you.'

There was no deception here; his son's face was too honest. The Griffon and all the rest of that horror passed away like a nightmare—hideous, and as yet hardly comprehensible—and the relief was indeed deep beyond fathoming. What a terribly realistic actor Joseph had been through all the horrible business! And what a terribly realistic fool Matthew had been himself! But Joseph knew him to the bone, and the conviction of this fact covered Matthew with humiliation, which it is to be hoped did him good.

The fear of ruin and disgrace was gone now; and what remained? The wife and baby! These dread images were still in his mind, and he had been doing his best for the last few minutes to think of them with grateful resignation. But for all he could do, while thanking Heaven with one half of his heart that they were alive, the other half sank with the thought of them living and his wife and daughter in the same house with them. It was more than melancholy. The woman might reform; he was doubtful, very doubtful as to this—but the taint would cling to her for life—and he recoiled from the thought of her coming in contact with his own wife and daughter, whose value to him now was beyond all riches. And then the baby!—such things, as though in mockery of human vanity and pride, were terribly tenacious of life, and, as Mrs Griffon had pointed out, endowed with marvellous powers of endurance and survival.

The son did not understand the grief which he saw deepening in his father's face. Presently

he fancied he discovered its cause, and laughed quietly.

'Don't laugh at me, Jem; I'll bear it as best I can; but for the Lord's sake don't laugh at me!'

There was a soft rustle at the door, and James Bulbous made a sign to some person there.

'Father, my wife and baby,' he said gently.

Matthew shivered, and turned his pale face round to see. 'What is this?' he cried, starting up.

'My wife and child, father. Gertrude has been nursing you, as well as mother and Agnes.'

As he spoke, he quietly slipped from the room and left them together.

That pretty blushing face—how well Matthew Bulbous knew it!—the face that had been with him on Christmas eve, and had been haunting him since! Richly indeed did the pleasant look of Jem's wife this morning—and of her bright-eyed baby—repay him for what he had suffered. He drew them both to his breast and held them there, tenderly, thanking God for a mercy he had done so little to deserve.

That was a profoundly happy hour that followed, with Jem's wife sitting on the bedside and Jem's baby climbing over him. No person interrupted them; they were left quite alone, and it is hardly too much to say that under this new influence Matthew Bulbous unconsciously floated into a life he had never known before.

He was soon back at Blackheath with his family. The last stimulus to his recovery came from the information that Lord Polonius had gone into the City with his money and had there come to ignominious grief, finishing his financial career in the Bankruptcy Court. Matthew Bulbous was profoundly pleased; but still, he could not help a feeling of pity for Lady Jessalinda. Her father had been a blight upon her. Should it ever come in Matthew's way to do the poor lady a friendly turn in the way of business, he will probably be tempted to do it, provided it is absolutely certain that Lord Polonius reaps no benefit thereby.

Matthew read with deep and peculiar interest the report of the trial of Mrs Griffon and her accomplice the doctor, and the painful revelations which were made. It still made him turn cold to imagine what might have been.

He has abandoned the idea of entering Parliament, and is taking steps to sell Kirby St George. To the general world he is still the same man he always has been; but his eyes have been opened to one or two important facts. He knows the value of his domestic ties now, and the pleasure of coming home in the evening. After dinner, instead of shutting himself up in his study, as he used to do, he now sits by the drawing-room fire with pretty Mrs Jem (and the baby) always near to him. Agnes is to be married to the curate very soon. Jem, who has been called to the bar, works as hard as though his living depended on it; and his father has privately assured the young man's mother that one day Jem will be Lord Chancellor of England.

'Gertrude,' said Matthew one night to his pretty daughter-in-law as the fact struck him for the first time, 'for whom are you in mourning?'

She looked up with innocent surprise—not having the least knowledge of the fraud that had

been played on Mr Bulbous—and replied: 'For a little sister of mine, who died at Christmas.'

'Ah—of course, my dear,' he said with a slight start. 'Now I remember. That illness has played the mischief with my memory.'

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

IN a very interesting lecture on Art Metal-work, delivered recently at the South Kensington Museum by Professor Roberts-Austen, F.R.S., attention was called to the addition of lead to the other constituents of bronze (copper and tin) for the purpose of conferring upon the metal that beautiful velvety appearance known as 'patina,' which was induced by the after-effect of atmospheric exposure. The lecturer pointed out that it was quite hopeless to look for this effect upon any bronze-work exposed to such an atmosphere as that of London, and as an example referred to the recently-erected bronze equestrian statue of Lord Napier. Here there was no trace of that brown oxide, or rich green and blue carbonate, which was so valued by artists; but instead, there was gathering over the figure a black pall of soot and sulphide of copper, such as already enshrouded most of the London statues. The lecturer stated that modern workers made little use of the fine alloys which the metallurgist had placed at their command; but one British sculptor, Mr Alfred Gilbert, who was doing splendid work, made use of these alloys, and in his direction must we look for advance.

The adhesion of a limpet to its native rock has always been ascribed to atmospheric pressure, and, as every schoolboy knows, the action can be very well imitated with a disc of wet leather and a yard of string. But the limpet has recently been made the subject of certain tests, the results of which would seem to imply that it exerts a power far greater than pressure of the atmosphere would confer upon it. The experiments were made by Mr P. A. Aubin of Jersey, and are detailed in a letter by that gentleman to *Nature*. A delicate spring balance was fastened to the limpet shell, and a pull exerted upon it until the little creature was detached.

Some uneasiness may probably arise from the statement made by Professor Boys with regard to the explosive nature of certain buttons on a lady's dress, which appear to have become rapidly ignited when she stood near the fire. Many buttons and other fancy articles, even billiard balls and piano keys, are now made of celluloid, or artificial ivory, and although this substance is inflammable, it will certainly not ignite unless a flame be actually brought into contact with it. The explosive buttons were evidently composed of some substance of a different composition altogether, and may possibly have been the result of some crude experiment. True celluloid, under various names, has now been manufactured for about forty years, and if it had been dangerous to use or store, the world would have long ago been made acquainted with the fact.

A curious story was related at a recent meeting of the San Francisco Microscopical Society concerning an animal concretion which had been presented to that body. This specimen, which

had been removed from the kidney of a cow, was of the size of a large walnut, and had a peculiar lustrous golden appearance, due, like that of mother-of-pearl, to laminated structure. But the notion had got abroad that this foreign body was largely composed of gold-dust, which the animal had taken in with its food. Interest now therefore centred upon a particular hill, where the animal had been pastured, and which came to be regarded as probably teeming with gold; nor did the excitement subside until an acre of the ground had been sold for about fifty times its original price. These 'biliary calculi,' as they are called, are not unfrequently found in the liver and other organs of animals, and in ancient times were valued as a drug, and were administered powdered in wine, as a sure preventive against 'calculi' in man.

A terrible new form of advertising is foreshadowed in a patent which has recently been applied for. The idea is to throw words and other devices upon the clouds by means of a kind of magic-lantern search-light apparatus. Happily, there are very few occasions when the meteorological conditions would render such an exhibition possible, for clouds must be of a certain density and have a very definite surface in order to make the experiment successful. Rainy nights as well as cloudless nights would give no opportunity of exhibiting, and the enterprise would also be stopped by fogs. We may therefore feel comforted by the assurance that not just yet will any one be able to turn our skies into hoardings for his advertisements.

Chloride of ethyl has lately been well spoken of by certain continental doctors as a good substitute for ether as a local anæsthetic. When ether is used it is sprayed on to the part to be rendered insensitive to pain, and the evaporation induces such a reduction of temperature that the part is actually frozen. With the chloride of ethyl, which is a colourless liquid with a pleasant odour, the same result is brought about without any special apparatus. It is sealed in small glass tubes having at one end a very fine point; and when this point is broken off and the orifice directed to the part to be anæsthetised, a fine stream of liquid is driven out by the heat of the hand which holds the tube. The method is said to be extremely useful in tooth extraction and similar minor operations.

The good people who live in the vicinity of Cape North, the headland which is a noticeable feature of the eastern entry to the Gulf of St Lawrence, have recently met with a windfall in the shape of thousands of seals. These creatures have not been known to visit this locality for the past eighty years, and it is supposed that their coming now is involuntary. It is believed that, owing to the mild weather, huge ice-blocks have broken away on the coasts of Greenland, and that the seals have drifted with them to this place. All other occupations have been given up for the profitable business of seal-hunting, and great catches have been made.

The works and buildings for the forthcoming Exhibition at Kimberley are now in active progress, and it is believed that this will be the most important enterprise of the kind which has ever been projected in Cape Colony. The Government are supporting the scheme, and have arranged with

the railway departments to carry all goods intended for the Exhibition to and from Kimberley free of charge. They have also decided that the Exhibition shall take the position of a bonded warehouse, so that no duty will be payable on unsold goods. Full particulars relating to this enterprise will be found in an interesting paper which was brought before the Society of Arts, London, by Mr Lewis Atkinson, and subsequently published in their *Journal*.

In the paper just referred to, Mr Atkinson, in noting a statement attributed to Lord Randolph Churchill to the effect that he could find no other motive for the diamond industry than woman's vanity and its gratification, affirms that diamonds have been of far wider benefit to the Colony than most persons are aware. This industry, he asserts, has helped civilisation, brought capital to the country, developed the railway system, and, better than all, has attracted new blood and fresh life from every part of the world. There are four principal diamond mines; and since the year 1883 accurate official returns of the exact weight and value of the diamonds produced in the several mines have been compiled. It is known that, notwithstanding the severe punishment inflicted in case of detection, many diamonds are hidden by the workers, and never reach their lawful owners. The total value of the diamonds produced in the Griqualand West Mines since their discovery to the present time reaches the enormous sum of fifty-seven million sterling! The value of the diamonds exported last year was considerably more than four million sterling.

The New York legislature, following the laudable example of certain European States, have under consideration an Act to prohibit public exhibition of hypnotic experiments, and to prohibit hypnotic treatment by any one except duly licensed physicians.

In view of the more general adoption of the one-pound note in this country, Sir Henry Bessemer has made a suggestion. He proposes that instead of a note engraved on paper of the usual kind, which has several disadvantages in that it is readily destroyed, can be easily counterfeited, is a medium for the transmission of dirt—possibly disease, think some—&c., the new note should be made of aluminium. This metal is not much heavier bulk for bulk than paper, will not tarnish, and by suitable alloys can be made hard enough to resist ordinary wear and tear. The proposed note would indeed take the form of a coin or token, of little intrinsic worth, but fully answering the required purpose. We fancy that the chief difficulty in adopting the suggestion will lie in providing safeguards against forgery. The exact reproduction of the most elaborately engraved design on metal is a matter about which there is no difficulty whatever, and a process which is carried out daily by electrotypers in every town in the kingdom. Nor can the Government obtain the monopoly of any particular kind of metal, as they can of paper of special make, as in the case of the present bank-notes.

A paper was recently contributed to the Bombay Natural History Society by Mr Inverarity, entitled 'The Mammalia of Somaliland.' The author of this paper, who by profession is a barrister, could speak of personal acquaintance with

his subject, for last year he went on a shooting expedition to the district named. Like every other animal, he tells us, the lion will endeavour to avoid man until wounded. It is only in exceptional cases that they will charge when tracked, and then they come on at great speed close to the ground, and certainly not bounding in the air, as they are commonly represented in pictures. On one occasion Mr Inverarity was seized by a lioness, who luckily expended her fury on his gun instead of on himself. As an instance of her terrible strength, he says that although the jaw of the beast was broken, she scored deep grooves in the barrels of his rifle with her teeth.

A correspondence has lately been published in the *Kew Bulletin* relative to instruction in horticulture. A well-known authority there expresses his opinion that the cultivation of plants is an art that can only be acquired by practice, and that it cannot be taught in the lecture-room. There is no royal road to it: the learner must begin at the bottom and go through every operation from the most elementary to the most difficult and refined. The mere reading of books and attendance at lectures is of little use.

According to a medical authority, the reports concerning ether-drinking in Ireland are much exaggerated, and instead of the whole north of the country being affected, the vice is confined to half-a-dozen small towns. It is said that the practice of ether-drinking originated in the time of cholera, more than forty years ago, when a quack doctor sold drams of ether as a preventive against the disease. Finding the intoxicant a pleasant one, the people continued its use after all need or excuse for it had disappeared. The same degraded habit of ether-drinking has, says a German medical paper, spread to such an extent in Russia, that the Government have forbidden its sale except under the same restrictions which affect the sale of powerful poisons.

An alarming statement was made recently by one of the witnesses called before the Labour Commission with reference to the packing of chlorinated lime, or bleaching powder. The gas given off by this compound when freshly prepared is so deleterious in its action on the face and lungs, that the workmen wear a kind of muzzle, which envelops the mouth and nostrils, but which leaves the eyes just visible. The wearers, as a further precaution against the action of chlorine, soak their nostrils and eyelashes with oil, besides taking other precautions, which indicate that the occupation as at present carried on must be one of the most harmful and disgusting which it is possible to conceive. Employers in such trades should be compelled to furnish their workmen with artificial breathing apparatus, such as has been proved to be efficient in the exploration of mines full of choke-damp, and in other situations where an irrespirable atmosphere is present.

It is reported that an archæological discovery of an extraordinary kind has been made at Helsingfors, in Finland. This consists of a huge chest with iron fastenings, which on being opened was found to contain a roll of parchment, and several pieces of ancient ironwork curiously fashioned. The roll of parchment is said to date from the twelfth century, and to contain a com-

plete and detailed treatise on steam as a means of power, and its applications; while the ironwork is a rudimentary steam-engine with cylinder, piston-rod, &c. The work is presumed to be that of a Gallican monk. This discovery, if true, will set aside the claims of our countrymen Savory, Newcomen, and Watt, to be the originators of the machine which has wrought such changes in the world. On the other hand, it may turn out to be a cleverly-concocted hoax.

Messrs Ransome of Chelsea, the well-known makers of wood-working machines, have just constructed the largest band-saw machine which has ever been made. The saw itself is an endless ribbon fifty-four feet in length, and eight inches wide, which travels at the rate of seven thousand feet per second over wheels or pulleys, which are no less than eight feet in diameter. The entire height of the machine is twenty feet, and it weighs as many tons. The saw has been made for a company in New Zealand, where the timber—mainly blue gum-trees—grows to an enormous size, and can only be dealt with by exceptional appliances.

Many references have recently been made to the statement that sea-water contains a certain proportion of gold, and the assertion has been made that the quantity of the metal present amounts to as much as one grain per ton of water. Now it stands to reason that as sea-water covers about four-fifths of the earth's surface, and can be had in any quantity for nothing, any one who could invent a process for catching up and turning this gold to the metallic state would quickly reap a large fortune. Such machines, for abstracting both silver and gold from sea-water have, we understand, been patented. But the proportion of gold in the liquid is certainly very much less than the amount stated, perhaps too small to be estimated by the means at present available. There is a wide difference between a qualitative and a quantitative analysis.

A writer in the *Times* asserts that after a sharp frost in the middle of March last a dabchick, or little grebe, was found caught by her foot in the ice at St James's Park, London, and that six or seven couples of these birds breed regularly in this Park year after year, coming generally at the end of March, and disappearing in October. He also calls attention to the fact that wood-pigeons, which until recent years were somewhat rare, can now be found in dozens in all the London Parks.

Many of our readers will be interested in hearing that the various curling clubs in New York and its vicinity have for want of sufficient accommodation banded themselves together, and have built a large hall where indoor curling can be carried on all through the winter. The floor of this curling-hall measures one hundred and fifty by one hundred feet, and is made of narrow strips of yellow pine one inch in thickness; the whole being raised four feet from the ground. There are trapdoors below each window round the sides of the hall, through which the outer cold is admitted when it is required to freeze the water which is sprayed over the floor. This spraying is constantly renewed, so that when the end of the winter approaches, the layer of ice is from two to three inches thick. The circles at each end of the rink are painted black on the

bare floor, and can easily be seen through the transparent layer of ice. An illustrated description of this novel curling hall is published in the *Scientific American* for February 27th.

The sunflower in Russia has something more than an æsthetic value; indeed, its cultivation represents a very important industry. According to a Report by the United States Consul-general, its cultivation was begun in the year 1842, for the purpose of obtaining oil from the seed. There are two kinds of sunflowers cultivated—one having small seeds, used for the production of oil; and the other with larger seeds, which are consumed by the people in great quantities as a delicacy. After the oil is extracted, the residue, in the form of cakes, finds a ready sale as food for cattle, not so much in Russia as in Germany and Britain. The refuse of the flowers with their shells is used as fuel, and the seed-cups are used as food for sheep. For the purpose of oil-making, the seeds, after being thoroughly cleansed, are passed beneath mill-stones to free them from their shells. Pressure is next applied, and the resulting compact mass is passed into vessels heated by steam. The paste is next enclosed in bags made of camel-hair, and again pressed to extract the oil, which runs into tanks. This oil, if made with proper care, is said to equal the best olive oil in colour, flavour, and taste.

It is a curious fact, says a writer in the *Mediterranean Naturalist*, that different birds have a preference for certain trees; and still more curious is it that the circumstance seems to have attracted little notice on the part of naturalists. The oak-tree harbours jays and rooks; finches prefer lime-trees; while black-caps are found chiefly among the laurels. The thrush has a preference for the birch and the ash; the beech is the carpenter's shop of the woodpecker; while the sweet nightingale sings in the nut-groves.

OF OLD LICENSES.

IN 1603, King James I. was thus apostrophised in the Poor Man's Petition: 'Good king, cut off their paltry licenses and all monopolies! Fie upon close biting knaveries!' It was a wasted prayer. Oppressive as the grievance had grown to be, the practice of granting royal licenses conferring exclusive manufacturing and trading privileges to individuals, either out of court-favouritism, as a reward for services rendered to the Crown, or in return for a monetary consideration, was too convenient and profitable to the royal grantors to be readily abandoned out of regard for the general good. We do not purpose, however, to dilate upon the mischief caused by the ordinary run of such abuses of the royal prerogative, but simply to note some of the more curious and interesting examples of the licensing system in vogue in old days.

Says Glaphorne in his play *Wit in a Constable*: 'The Dutch younker took her up into a what do you call it—a sedan.' The word, like the thing, was then new to town's-folk, the sedan having just been introduced into London streets by Sir Sanders Duncombe, under a license he obtained in 1634, giving him the sole privilege of using, putting forth, and letting on hire, in

London and Westminster and their suburbs, certain covered carriages, the like whereof being used in foreign countries, prevented the unnecessary use of coaches, with the multitude of which the streets were so pestered and encumbered, that many of His Majesty's subjects were exposed to much peril and danger; and the use of carts and carriages for the provisions of the two cities much hindered. Duncombe provided some fifty specimens of the sedan for the use of the public, who took quickly and kindly to the novel conveyances; although, when the Duke of Buckingham, a few years before, imported one for his own personal convenience, he was subjected to hearty vituperation for making beasts of burden of his fellow-creatures.

In 1671, Prince Rupert obtained the exclusive right of using an invention for converting into steel all sorts of iron wire, and all manner of edged tools, files, and other instruments forged and formed of soft iron; for preparing and softening cast and melted iron so that it might be filed and wrought like wrought iron; and likewise for tincturing copper upon iron in such a manner as seemed meet in his discretion. Supposing the processes Prince Rupert desired to employ were of his own devising, no injustice was entailed in so privileging him for fourteen years.

There was similar justification, too, for Queen Anne securing Robert Pease, of Kingston-on-Hull, against others reaping the fruits of his ingenuity in concocting a soft soap for bleaching linen, which had the additional merit of being eatable; as it may have been good policy to encourage native industry by giving William Corr the sole right of making 'lamb-black, not made before in England, much cheaper and better than any brought from abroad;' and allowing Jane Tasker the monopoly of working her own invention for making flask-cases, and covering flask-glasses with flags, rushes, and straw, in imitation of those brought from Florence.

The pluckiest of modern promoters would flinch at attempting to float a company for whaling on the English coast; but very early in the last century, Arthur Kemp, Robert Corker, and Valentine Ennys, believed they could make a good haul that way. Accordingly, in 1707 they prayed for the royal leave and license to fish and take whales, crampoes, bottle-nosed whales, and other large fish belonging to Her Majesty by virtue of her royal prerogative, on the north and south seas adjoining the counties of Devonshire and Cornwall; Her Majesty to retain the power to cancel the license at the end of two years, if they neglected to carry out their undertaking, or failed to succeed therein. The sanguine three got their license; whether they got their whales and other large fish is not recorded.

In 1706, Robert Aldersey was licensed to construct a floating dam to carry barges, lighters, and other vessels over the greatest flats and shallows of navigable rivers, his dam having received the approbation of several of the most eminent mathematicians. At this period the provision of lighthouses and beacons appears to have been left to private speculators, for in 1711 we find James Everard and his wife Rebecca the recipients of a license which was to endure fifty years—empowering them to newly erect, alter,

maintain, and improve certain lighthouses and beacons upon Hunston Cliff, Norfolk, with lights to be kept continually burning therein in the night season, for the security of seafaring men passing that way. By way of recompense, the Everards were authorised to demand and take eightpence for every twenty chaldrons of coals, and every twenty tons of other goods in and upon all English ships; and one penny per ton of all foreign vessels passing by their lighthouses, and trading to and fro between King's Lynn and Boston.

In 1709 the readers of the *Tatler* were informed that a new sort of light, called a Globe Light, which enlightened the street and all parts near it with a bright steady light, noway offensive to the eyes, was to be seen at St James's Coffee-house, near St James's Palace, where the person who contrived and set it up might be heard of, he having obtained Her Majesty's patent for the same. Probably this was the new kind of light, quite different from any yet used, composed of one entire glass of a globular shape, with a lamp giving a clearer and more certain light, without any dark shadows or anything else confounding to the sight, for which, a year before, Michael Cole of Dublin obtained a license, with the proviso, that the invention must not be used within the city of London until the expiration of the year 1715, to the prejudice of the proprietors of the public lights then in use, called convex lights. Whether this proviso handicapped the Globe Light too heavily, or whether the patentee expired before the proviso, we do not know, but we can find no further trace of it.

Perhaps the most curious license issued in Queen Anne's reign was the following: 'Anne R.—Whereas we are fully sensible of the fidelity of John Ker, of Kersland, by and of the services he hath performed to us and our Government. We therefore grant him our Royal Leave and License to keep company and associate himself with such as are disaffected towards us and our Government, in such way or manner as he shall judge most for our service.—Given under our Royal Hand at our Castle of Windsor, the 7th of April 1707, and of our reign the sixth year.'

Englishmen were not always free to go beyond the seas when inclination suggested a change of scene or climate. It was only by the favour of the Lord Chamberlain that Bulstrode Whitelocke, in 1634, obtained a license from the Privy Council to go to France, and this when the two countries were at peace. Even in time of war it was not, of course, possible to prevent people travelling in friendly lands from finding their way into France; but those who so ventured found coming home not so easy. William Stonor, Esq., having entered the dominions of the French king without leave from his own sovereign, had to sue for a license permitting him to return and abide in his 'ain countrie.' Wishing to reside in France, Lady Elizabeth Hatcher received the necessary permission conditionally that she did not pretend to the liberty of coming into any part of Her Majesty's dominions again without first obtaining license to do so under the Privy Seal—on pain of incurring the several penalties the law could inflict. In 1707, a merchant named Collins contracted to supply eight thousand feet

of black marble 'for the rebuilding of St Paul's Cathedral.' He shipped six thousand feet at Dublin in the *Unity* of London, which ship was captured by a French privateer and taken to Havre. As soon as the untoward news reached Collins, he petitioned for permission to go to Havre and repurchase his property. His petition was referred to the Attorney-general, who returned it with the declaration that the voluntary embarking in any vessel to visit a country at war with England was high-treason, unless the parties obtained a royal license. Collins obtained one, authorising him to go to France and fetch a certain quantity of black Irish marble, to be applied towards the rebuilding of St Paul's Cathedral, he giving security that all persons employed by him in the service should return to Great Britain within six months, bringing with them only the marble, and no other goods or merchandise whatsoever.

EVENING.

DIM falls the light o'er all the dreaming woods;
Athwart the distant western sky are gleams
Of gold and amber; pearly rose-edged clouds,
Looking so passing fair, one almost dreams.

The opening gate of Paradise hath lent
Some tinge of glory to the dying day;
And earth-bound souls, with longing, ling'ring gaze,
Would fain rise up and move along that way.

A stillness sweet and solemn all around;
The song of birds is hushed; there falls no quiver
Of rustling leaf, or shaken trembling reed,
Upon the fair faint brightness of the river.

The crescent moon gleams coldly, dimly, forth;
And in the deep'ning blue of heaven, afar,
A tender watcher o'er the troubled world,
Shineth one solitary glitt'ring star.

The shadows deepen on the distant hills;
The highest peaks but touched with ling'ring light;
And down their purpling sides, soft misty clouds
Wrap all the valleys in a dusky night.

And far away the murmur of the sea,
And moonlit waves breaking in foamy line.
So Night—God's Angel, Night—with silvery wings,
Fills all the earth with loveliness divine.

GRAHAM.

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CHAMPAGNE GOSSIP.

It has been said that if it were not for the wines, the country of Champagne would be the poorest province in France. There is doubtless some exaggeration here; for even the chalk hills of the Marne Valley are not so intractable as the basaltic and scoriaceous mountains of Auvergne and the wildernesses of the Lozère. But for the sake of emphasis, the utterance may be received. It is to the inimitable wines that the gay-looking little towns of Epernay, Ay, and Château-Thierry owe their prosperity. True, there is plenty of fruit in the valley through which the lazy Marne wends its way with broad barges as comfortable as yachts on its spacious bosom. But man does not live by fruit alone, or mainly. The grain is not good in this part of the world. The light chalky soil does not agree with it.

Nor at a casual glance does this soil seem to suit the grapes themselves in an uncommon degree. The vines are of no particular height or density; and the bunches of fruit are not very large. But the crushing tells another tale. They are very prolific of juice, and even a third or fourth pressure will give a wine called Champagne, which a stranger with an uneducated palate and a patient stomach may pronounce sufficiently toothsome. This is the Champagne so boldly shown in the inferior shops of Rheims, and offered to the eager tourist at a shilling and fivepence the full-sized bottle. The ladies do not find much fault with it, because of its sweetness. But to a man of mature age and judgment it is nothing less than horrible. It is as apt to torture the stomach as to please the tongue—'for though good Champagne is one of the wholesomest of wines, the bad is more than commonly pernicious.'

The visitor to Champagne must not expect to buy good Pommery or Mumm much cheaper than he could buy it in England. Somehow, notwithstanding import duties, there is no difference between the wine lists of a good London hotel and the best hotels in Rheims. Nor is the *vin*

ordinaire of the country the familiar sparkling beverage which exhilarates by its mere appearance. It is an indifferent still red wine, not to be named with the *vin ordinaire* of the Burgundian towns. I felt the disappointment keenly when I sat to my first meal in the centre of the Champagne country. This was at Epernay, where the hostess of the hotel herself played the part of waitress. For fellow-guests at table I had divers comfortable-looking merchants, one of whom, in contrasting the wages of the labourer in different parts of France, told of a lace factory in the neighbourhood where the girls earn five halfpence a day and no more. A franc and a half a week does not seem much even in France, where the necessities of life cost considerably less than they cost with us.

Work in the Champagne vaults of Rheims and Epernay is much better remunerated than are these poor factory girls. It is not altogether the most pleasant occupation in the world. The smell of Champagne is very strong. I have heard of men who, after simple inhalation of it, for a time showed signs of slight intoxication. But such an experience is of course quite innocuous. We have it on good authority that no one ever suffers in the after-results caused by Champagne: conditionally, however, upon the Champagne being of undoubted quality. You may, in fact, drink a quantity of Pommery's 1884, and you will the next day feel better than if you had taken but a few spoonfuls of the highly effervescent stuff in the shop-windows at one franc seventy-five centimes the bottle, or threepence the long glassful. Even the idea that gout could be caused by Champagne has been seriously dissipated by medical men in conclave. Among the hundreds of men and women who find employment in the cellars of Moët and Chandon, Geisler, Mumm, Heidsieck, Pommery, Goulet, and the other famous firms of Rheims and Epernay, you will not see any signs of gout. To be sure the workpeople are not allowed to drink Champagne *ad libitum*. But they are human beings with ordinary liability to

yield to temptation; and with thousands of bottles bursting in the cellars month after month, it were manifestly as easy to pour a little of the wine down their throats as to turn it into the gutter which traverses the miles of galleries in which the bottles are racked.

These people have to work in a temperature uniformly wintry. In the dog-days it must be trying to some constitutions to descend after the dinner interval from an air hot enough to melt butter into an atmosphere only about fifteen degrees above the freezing-point. It is so damp too. The walls of the chalk are green and trickling; and in an hour or two the coat you are wearing will feel as if you had been in a shower. Remember, too, that it is exceedingly gloomy in these caverns, so damp and cold, and that you are about a hundred and forty feet below the street pavements. Then you will probably not think good pay at all too generous a concession to the men who spend nine or ten hours daily thus interred out of sight. It is not a healthy existence. Even with the added privilege of drinking as much red wine as inclination desires, the temptation to enter the service of Messrs Heidsieck of Rheims need not be irresistible. There is also a certain peril from the bursting bottles which ought not to be forgotten.

Upon the whole, it is better to be a vine-grower than a wine-maker, at least in the subordinate branches of the two industries. 'The culture of the vine,' we are told by French authorities, 'is not only the richest of industries; it is also the most salubrious. The people who devote themselves to it are the healthiest and most prolific. Among fifteen conscripts in a vine-growing district ten will be found fit for service: elsewhere, the proportion is ten in twenty-five.' An old proverb is still current in Languedoc which says, 'The vine begets many leaves and more pence, but more children than leaves and pence put together.' It is, in fact, enough merely to look at the blue-smocked workers among the dry soil of the vineyards on the slopes of the mountain of Rheims, to realise that they are fine fellows. They carry themselves admirably: and the same may be said of the women and girls who help them in their labours.

One half expects, upon arrival in Rheims, to see Champagne bottles littering the streets, and to hear the popping of corks every minute in the day. But this is, of course, a very fanciful estimate of the effect of the industry. Rheims is really a tranquil old place, with nothing in it so exciting as its fame. The cathedral is not at all suggestive of Champagne. It is a wonder of Gothic art, and transports one far, far away from thoughts about 'Dry Monopole' and the wine-lists in general. The jackdaws continue to wheel about the chipped and scarred statues which bedeck its noble façade; and the sober music of its bells sounds at dawn over the old

red roofs and the new red roofs of the city, much to the discomfort of those who have been bold enough to engage rooms in the hotels within but a stone's-throw of its portals. Rheims is the seat of the first ecclesiastic in France. The archiepiscopal palace adjoins the cathedral upon the south side, and an imposing porter guards the entrance to it. The contrast between a Christian dignitary and Champagne is extreme; and yet it is not so very unfit that the first churchman and the noblest wine of France should be found in the same town, when one remembers that it is just to the patience and cultivated palate of the old monks that we owe not only the beginning of Champagne but the origin of most other of the choice wines of the land. These old recluses devoted themselves to their wines as other men devoted themselves to their leather-selling and bread-baking. They learned the capabilities of their soil, and improved their grapes by careful grafting and the most zealous of tending. And afterwards experience and the leisure to continue to experiment taught them how the wine might best be made and stored so as to mellow it to perfection.

It must not be supposed, however, that the sparkle of Champagne is due to external aid. It is not an affair of drugs. This, and this more than aught else, is the specialty of the Champagne grapes. And the treatment of the grapes at the picking fosters the quality. The fruit is picked with the utmost care—bruised or over-ripe grapes being rejected, and they are pressed immediately while still cool. There are no secrets in the cellars of Rheims, like those of the Benedictines at the Chartreuse. You or I might set up a Champagne factory to-morrow with fair hope of being able to do well—the only requisite being capital of about a quarter of a million sterling and a vast deal of patience. But it would be hard now to find cellars unclaimed like those which Messrs Pommery, Goulet, and others have inherited from the Romans, and which are the very thing for so capricious a wine as Champagne. This should be kept 'where no motion can affect it, and as far as possible from the vibration or rather trembling of the earth from the traffic over granite pavements.' At a depth of more than a hundred feet such security from disturbance may well be thought complete. Manifestly, however, miles of excavations of this kind are not to be made without much expense. Besides, it is necessary to have staying-power at one's bankers, in other words a good balance to withstand the adverse strain of adverse years. The following is as applicable to merchants as to private consumers: 'Good wine is most frequently to be found among capitalists who can afford to buy up large quantities in favourable years, the cheapest mode of purchase, who can bottle as it may be deemed most fitting for the contents of their cellars, and who have a reputation to lose.' The last condition is as potent as

any. Of itself alone it is enough to terrify the aspirant towards the establishment of a new brand out of a city in which the existing merchants' grandsires or predecessors of the third and fourth generation began to build the fame they enjoy to-day. Much courage is required to enable a man and his heirs to hold on in confidence through ill report as well as good report for nine or ten decades. That is why, it seems, the old houses of Champagne are in no fear of the effects of competition.

Of the various show-cellars in Rheims, perhaps those of Messrs Pommery will most excite the admiration of the visitor. The establishment occupies a large enclosed area on the skirts of the city, and its bright red buildings have a suggestion of the opulence that has come from Champagne-making. The carts with their burdens of cases bearing directions to all parts of the civilised world meet you in the courtyard to hint at the immense growth of the appreciation of Champagne during this century.

About five hundred and fifty persons find employment on these premises. It is employment of a very varied kind. The courteous old cellarer-in-chief who receives the visitor in the great hall is to the young hands of the factory a personage of immense regard, and as much above them as the President of the Republic himself. Yet to the eye he is just such a one as the man who takes you in hand as a guide and gives you a candle to illumine the way as if you were descending into a coal-pit. He wears the traditional blue smock. But very little conversation with him enables you to judge that he is a man of culture. Indeed, the surroundings of his office are of themselves a mild education. On the walls are two or three notable pictures which have won esteem in the *salons* of Paris. Besides, is he not called upon day after day to entertain people of some distinction? His visitors' book proves this to you. Capitalists from America, statesmen from England, princes from Russia, and smart journalists from Paris, are among his weekly guests. And he is equal to the task of amusing them for half an hour at least; though, to be sure, he is likely to be much aided by the bottles of Pommery which are opened as a matter of course to add to the visitor's pleasure.

The bloused Englishman who offers himself as cicerone in the great hall may whisper to you as you leave the worthy cellarer that this gentleman's income is about two thousand pounds a year. It seems astonishing; but you have no time to wonder over so small an affair. You are at the head of a long flight of steps which lead you from the ground-level into the bowels of the earth, where there are miles of bottles of Champagne. The great model of a Chinese pagoda in the hall, which you pass on your way, has no occult connection with wine-making or even wine-drinking. It is merely a decoration of the establishment, like the *salon* pictures and—if the old gentleman will pardon the words—the excellent cellarer-in-chief himself.

Of the like nature are the surprising tableaux

in stone which meet the eye in three or four of the galleries. These are the work of a Rheims artist named Narlet, and all done within the last decade. They have a very realistic effect, indeed, in the half-darkness. You might fancy that the Bacchus upon the wall would, at a summons, descend and share a bottle of the clear primrose-hued liquor at his feet. The banquet scene, too, in which ladies and gentlemen of the last century are toasting each other in a condition of extreme animation, and of course drinking Champagne, is admirably designed and well executed. It is nothing in detraction of the artist to be told that he was paid by the hour for his work like a mere stamper of corks.

From one gallery we pass to another with bottles ever alongside. Here and there we come upon a broad beam of light which streams down a spacious vertical shaft in the rock. These shafts are not to be found in all the cellars of Rheims. They are a strong spectacular feature. Also they may be said to have a sanitary value for the workers themselves. Messrs Heidsieck's underground premises seem more insalubrious for the lack of such inrush of drier air. It is possible enough that the wine does not require them, since coolness and damp suit the maturing Champagne; but even in this nursery of great brands, one cannot altogether forget the welfare of the men who spend the best part of their lives among the bottles.

The operatives themselves are seen faintly in the corridors, some at work turning the bottles to tilt the sediment towards the cork; others carrying baskets of the matured wine to the packing-house up-stairs; and yet others engaged in the *dégagement* of the sediment, which may be said to have all come to the surface in the second year of the wine. This last is a nice performance. Not every man is a born 'disgorger,' as the operator is termed; some men are so clumsy, that in freeing the cork and the sediment they spill a measurable quantity of the transparent wine also. With one bottle in fifty that would not matter. But there are about fifteen million bottles in this great series of cellars, and each bottle has to undergo this process. The skilful disgorger is therefore a valuable servant. He cuts the string, expels the accumulation, and passes the bottle to the next man, to refill with sweet Champagne liqueur, all in a moment or two. Then the bottle is corked by machinery—for the last time—transferred to the wirers, who also have a machine which cuts wires of uniform length; and from them it is duly conveyed up-stairs to be beautified with gay tinfoil, labelled, and sent to its destination. It is fitting that the fair sex should have charge of the æsthetic stage in the life of a bottle of Champagne. The corks, the tinfoiling, and the labelling are their province.

A conscientious study of vaults as spacious as Messrs Pommery's exacts several hours; that is, if you are a wine-merchant and anxious to thoroughly understand the genesis of Champagne. But the ordinary visitor will obtain a sufficiently broad idea of the industry and its methods in an hour or two. That also will be time enough to make him long for the upper air. But before he leaves the establishment, the hospitable chief-cellarer will account him absurdly ascetic if he

will not consent to drink a glass or two of the wine with the bottles of which he has become so familiar. There need be no difficulty about obliging him in this particular.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XVII.—THE VOICE OF DUTY.

ELSIE in her studio was at work. She was painting a fancy portrait. You have seen how, before her interview with Mr Dering, she transformed him from a hard and matter-of-fact lawyer into a genial, benevolent old gentleman. She was now elaborating this transformation. It is a delightful process, known to every portrait-painter, whereby a face faithfully represented becomes the face of another person, or the face as it might be, so that a hard and keen face, such as Mr Dering's, may become a face ennobled with spiritual elevation, benevolence, charity, and kindness of heart. Or, on the other hand, without the least change of feature, this hard keen face may become, by the curve of a line or the addition of a shadow, the face of a cruel and pitiless Inquisitor. Or, again, any face, however blurred and marred by the life of its owner, may by the cunning portrait-painter be restored to the face intended by its Maker, that is to say, a sweet and serious face. Great indeed is the power, marvellous is the mystery, of the limner's art.

'Now,' Elsie murmured, 'you look like some great philanthropist—a thoughtful philanthropist, not a foolish person: your high forehead and your sharp nostril proclaim that you are no impulsive gusher: your kindly eyes beam with goodness of heart: your lips are firm because you hate injustice. Oh my dear guardian, how much I have improved you! Something like this you looked when you told me of my fortune—and like this when you spoke of your dream, and your illusions—something like this—you looked.'

She went on working at her fantasy, crooning a simple ditty, composed of many melodies running into one, as girls use when they are quite happy. The afternoon was hot. Outside, Elsie's windows looked upon a nest of little London gardens, where nasturtiums twisted round strings upon the walls; hollyhocks and sunflowers, which love the London smoke, lifted their heads; and Virginia creepers climbed to the house-tops. The little London gardens do sometimes look gay and bright in the yellow glow of a July afternoon. The window was open, and the room was almost as hot as the street outside; we get so few hot days that one here and there cannot be too hot. On the table lay a photograph of her lover; over the mantel hung her own drawing in Pastel of that swain: on her finger was his ring: round her neck lay his chain: all day long she was reminded of him, if she should cease for a moment to think of him. But there was no need of such reminder. It was Friday afternoon, four days after the great Discovery. Elsie had been informed of the event, the news of which she received after the feminine manner, with an

ejaculation of surprise and an interjection of sympathy. But one cannot expect a girl on the eve of her marriage to be greatly distressed because her guardian, a rich man, is annoyed by the temporary loss of certain shares. And as to finding the criminal and getting back those shares—it was man's work. All the troublesome and disagreeable part of the world's work belongs to man.

It was nearly five o'clock. Elsie was beginning to think that she had done enough, and that, after tea, a walk in the Gardens might be pleasant. Suddenly, without any noise or warning of steps outside, her door was opened and her sister Hilda appeared. Now, so swift is the feminine perception, that Elsie instantly understood that something bad had happened—something bad—something bad to herself. For first, the door was opened gently, as in a house of mourning; and next, Hilda had on a dress—lavender with heliotrope, costly, becoming, sympathetic, and sorrowful—a half-mourning dress—and she stood for a moment at the door with folded hands, her classical head inclined a little downward to the left, and her eyes drooping—an artistic attitude of sadness. Hilda not only said the right thing and held the proper sentiments, but she liked to assume the right attitude and to personate the right emotion. Now, it is given to woman, and only to her when she is young, tall, and beautiful, to express by attitude all or any of the emotions which transport or torture her fellow-creatures. Hilda, you see, was an artist.

'Come in, dear,' said Elsie. 'I am sure that you have got something disagreeable to tell me.'

Hilda kissed her forehead. 'My poor child,' she murmured. 'If it could have been told you by anybody else!'

'Well—let us hear it. Is it anything very disagreeable?'

'It is terrible. I tremble—I dare not tell you. Yet I must. You ought to know.'

'If you would go on. It is much more terrible to be kept in suspense.'

'It is about George.'

'Oh?' said Elsie, flaming. 'I have had so much trouble about George already, that I did think—'

'My dear, all opposition of the former kind is removed, as you know. This is something very different. Worse,' she added in a hollow voice—'far worse.'

'For Heaven's sake, get along.'

'He has told you about the dreadful robbery. Of course you have talked about nothing else since it happened. I found my mother full of it.'

'Yes—George is in charge of the case. He says that everything must be recovered, and that Mr Dering will in the end suffer no more injury than the trouble of it.'

'That may be so. Elsie—I hardly dare to tell you—there is a clue. Checkley has got that clue, and has told Sir Samuel everything. He is following up the clue. I shudder to think of it. The man is as relentless as a bloodhound.'

'Does that clue concern me?' Her cheek became pale because she guessed—she knew not what.

'Sir Samuel, against his will, is convinced that

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Checkley has found the clue. He has told me the whole. He has consented to my telling the dreadful story to my mother and to you—and now I am afraid. Yet I must.’

Elsie made a gesture of impatience.

‘Go back, Elsie, eight years, if you can. Remember the wretched business of our unworthy brother.’

‘I remember it. Not unworthy, Hilda. Our most unfortunate brother. Why, they have found the very notes he was charged with stealing. They were found in the safe on the very day when they made the other discovery. Have they not told you?’

‘Checkley told Sir Samuel. He also remembers seeing Athelstan place the packet in the safe.’

‘Oh! Does he dare to say that? Why, Hilda, the robbery was proved to lie between himself and Athelstan. If he saw that, why did he not say so? He keeps silence for eight long years, and then he speaks.’

Hilda shook her head sadly. ‘I fear,’ she said, ‘that we cannot accept the innocence of our unfortunate brother. However, Athelstan was accused of forging Mr Dering’s handwriting and signature. In this new forgery, the same handwriting is found again—exactly the same. The forger is the same.’

‘Clearly, therefore, it cannot be Athelstan. That settles it.’

‘Yes—unfortunately—it does settle it. Because, you see, Athelstan is in London. He is said to have been living in London all the time—in some wretched place called Camberwell, inhabited, I suppose, by runaways and low company of every kind. He has lately been seen in the neighbourhood of Gray’s Inn, apparently passing under his own name. Checkley has seen him. Another person has seen him.’

‘Have you come to tell me that Athelstan is charged with this new wickedness?’

‘The forger must have had an accomplice in the office; a man able to get at the safe: able to intercept the post: acquainted with Mr Dering’s ways: such a man as—say—Checkley—or—the only other possible—George.’ Hilda paused.

‘Oh! This is too absurd. You are now hinting that George—my George,’ she said proudly, ‘was the confederate of Athelstan—no—of a forger.’

‘They have been seen together. They have been seen together at the house from which the forger addresses his letters. Has George told you that he has known all along—for eight years—of Athelstan’s residence in London?’

Observe how that simple remark made in the *Salutation Parlour*, that Athelstan must have been living in Camberwell, had by this time grown into a complete record of eight years’ hiding, eight years’ disgraceful company, on the part of one; and eight years’ complicity and guilty knowledge on the part of the other. Hilda had not the least doubt. It was quite enough for her that Checkley said so. Half the contents of our newspapers are conducted on the same confiding principle.

‘If George has not told me,’ Elsie replied, ‘it must be for some good reason. Perhaps he was pledged to secrecy.’

‘My dear’—Hilda rose impressively with fateful face—‘the hand that forged the letters is the hand that forged the cheque—your brother’s hand. The hand that took the certificates from the safe’—she laid her own upon Elsie’s hand—‘the hand of the confederate, my poor sister is—your lover’s hand.’

‘I knew,’ said the girl, ‘that you were coming to this. I have felt it from the beginning.’

‘Remember, the thing was done in the months of February, March, and April. First of all, Athelstan was then, as now, desperately poor: the life that he has led for the last eight years—the life of a—a—Camberwell profligate’—she spoke as if that respectable suburb was the modern Alsatia—‘has certainly destroyed whatever was left of honour and of principle. There comes a time, I have read, in the career of every wicked man when he hesitates no longer whatever means are offered him of making money. Athelstan it was—so they believe—who devised this scheme, which has been as successful as it is disgraceful. My dear Elsie, this is the most terrible disgrace that has ever befallen my family: the most dreadful and the most unexpected calamity for you.’

Elsie caught her sister by the wrist. ‘In the name of God, Hilda, are you telling me what is proved and true, or what is only suspected?’

‘I am telling you what is as good as proved. More than suspected.’

‘As good as proved. Oh!’ Elsie drew a long breath. ‘As good as proved. That is enough. Like Athelstan’s guilt eight years ago,’ she flared out suddenly, springing up again and walking about the room. ‘Oh! it is wonderful!’ she cried—‘wonderful! What a family we are! We had a brother, and we believed that he was an honourable gentleman, as the son of his father must be. Then there was a charge, a foolish charge, based upon nothing but may—have—been and must—have—been— We believed the charge’—

‘Because we had no choice but to believe, Elsie,’ her sister interrupted. ‘Do you think we wanted to believe the charge?’

‘We should have believed him innocent until the thing was proved. We did not. We cast him out from among us; and now, after eight years—he has come back poor, you say, and sunk so low that he is ashamed to see his people, and we are going to believe another charge based on may have been and must have been. No, Hilda. I will not believe it—I will not.—And then there is George. If I cease to believe in his honour and his truth, I cease to believe in everything. I cannot believe in Heaven itself unless I believe in my lover. Why, his heart is light about this business: he is not concerned: he laughs at that old man’s ravings. Ravings? If Athelstan is right, then his is the hand that has done it all—his—Hilda—Checkley is the man concerned with both crimes.’

Hilda shook her head. ‘No, Elsie, no. The old man is above suspicion.’

‘Why should he be above suspicion more than George? And you ask me on the first breath of accusation to treat George as you treated Athelstan. Well—Hilda, I will not.’

‘I make every allowance for you, Elsie. It is a most dreadful business—a heart-breaking

business. You may misrepresent me as much as you please—I will continue to make allowances for you. Meantime, what will you do?

‘Do? What should I do? Nothing, nothing, nothing. I shall go on as if this thing had never happened.’

‘Sir Samuel ordered me to warn you most seriously. If you consent to see him again’—

‘Consent? Consent? Why should I refuse? In a fortnight he will be my husband and my master, whom I must obey. He calls me his mistress now, but I am his servant. Consent to see him?’ She sat down and burst into tears.

‘If you see him again,’ her sister continued, ‘warn him to leave the country. The thing is so certain that in a day or two the proofs will be complete, and it will then be too late. Make him leave the country. Be firm, Elsie. Better still refuse to see him at all and leave him to his fate. What a fate! What madness!’

‘We allowed Athelstan to leave the country. He ought to have stayed. If I advise George at all I shall advise him to stick to his post and see the business through. If he were to leave the country, I would go with him.’

‘You are infatuated, Elsie. I can only hope that he may fly the country of his own accord. Meantime, there is one other point’—

‘What is it? Pray, don’t spare me, Hilda. After what has gone before, it must be a very little point.’

‘You are bitter, Elsie, and I don’t deserve your bitterness. But that is nothing. At such a moment everything must be pardoned and permitted. The point is about your wedding. It is fixed for the 12th of next month, less than three weeks from to-day. You must be prepared to put it off.’

‘Indeed? Because you say that a thing impossible is as good as proved! Certainly not, Hilda.’

‘I have come here to-day, Elsie, by Sir Samuel’s express wish, in order to soften the blow and to warn you. Whether you will tell—that unhappy young man or not, is for you to decide. Perhaps, if you do, he may imitate our unworthy brother and run away. If he does not, the blow will fall to-morrow—to-day—the day after to-morrow—I know not when. He will be arrested: he will be taken before a magistrate: he will be remanded: he will be out on bail. Oh, Elsie, think of marrying a man out on bail! One might as well marry a man in convict dress. Oh! Horrible!’

‘I would rather marry George in convict dress than any other man in fine raiment. Because, once more, the thing is impossible.’

‘You carry your faith in your lover beyond bounds, Elsie. Of course a girl is right to believe in a man’s honour. It makes her much more comfortable, and gives her a sense of security. Besides, we always like to believe that we are loved by the best of men. That makes us feel like the best of women.—But in this case, when I tell you that Sir Samuel—a man who has always lived among money—so to speak—and knows how money is constantly assailed—is firmly convinced of George’s complicity, I do think that you might allow something for human frailty. In the case of Athelstan, what did Mr

Dering say? Everything is possible. So I say of George Austin, everything is possible.’

‘Not everything. Not that.’

‘Yes, even that.—What do you know of his private life? Why has he concealed the fact of Athelstan’s residence in London? Why has he never told us of his friendship with that unfortunate outcast?’

‘I don’t know. He has his reasons.’

‘It is a most dreadful thing for you,’ Hilda went on. ‘And after getting to believe in the man and—well—becoming attached to him—though such attachments mean little and are soon forgotten—and after going the length of fixing the day and ordering the dress and the wedding-cake and putting up the banns— Oh! it is a wretched business—a horrible misfortune. The only thing to be said is that in such a case, the fact being known to everybody, no one can blame a girl; and perhaps, in the long run, she will suffer no injury from it. Our circle, for instance, is so different from that of this young man’s friends, that the thing would not even be known among us.’

‘I believe, Hilda, you will drive me mad.’

‘My dear, one must look ahead. And remember that I look ahead for you. As for the young man, I dissociate him henceforth from you. What he does and where he goes I do not inquire, or care about any more than I trouble myself about a disgraceful brother. Some acts cut a man off from his mistress—from his sisters—from the world.’

‘Do not talk any more,’ said Elsie. ‘Let the blow, as you call it, fall when it pleases. But as for me, I shall not warn George that he is to be charged with dishonesty, any more than I will believe him capable of dishonesty.’

‘Well, my dear, there is one comfort for us. You may resolve on marrying him. But a man charged with a crime—out on bail—cannot marry any girl. And he will be charged, and the evidence is very strong.’

‘No doubt. As good as proved—as good as proved. Poor George! Who never had ten pounds in the world until he was made a partner’—

‘True. And there we have the real motive. Seek the motive, Sir Samuel says, and we shall find the criminal. Here you have the reason of the secret partnership with Athelstan. Poverty is the tempter—Athelstan is the suggester.’

Elsie shook her head impatiently.

‘Mr Dering was to give you away. Who will now? Athelstan? How can we—Sir Samuel and I—assist at a wedding where the bridegroom lies under such a charge? by one so near to us as Mr Dering? How can your mother be present? Oh, Elsie—think!’

Elsie shook her head again, with greater impatience.

‘Think what a fate you may be dragging upon yourself! Think of possible children with such a brand upon them!’

‘I think only of an honourable and an innocent man.’

‘I have just come from my mother, Elsie. She says positively that if the charge is brought, the wedding must be put off until the man is cleared. And for the moment she does not feel strong enough to meet him. You can receive

him here, if you please. And she desires that there may be no disputes or arguments about it.

'It is truly wonderful!' Elsie walked to the open window and gasped as if choking. 'Wonderful!' she repeated. 'The same fate—in the same manner—threatens George that fell upon Athelstan. And it finds us as ready to believe in the charge and to cast him out.—Now, Hilda, go to my mother and tell her that though the whole world should call George—my George—a villain, I will marry him. Tell her that though I should have to take him from the prison door, I will marry him. Because, you see, all things are not possible. This thing is impossible.'

'We shall have trouble with Elsie,' Lady Dering told her mother. 'Call her soft and yielding? My dear, no mule was ever more stubborn. She will marry her convict, she says, even at the prison door.'

THE EVERLASTING HILLS.

It is not surprising that the Hebrews and others of old time should have looked upon the hills as 'everlasting'—at least in the sense of lasting as long as the world itself. But to the present age they have at last told something of their story, and have declared themselves to be but temporary phases in a landscape which has been and ever will be undergoing slow but continual change. The beautiful hills of our own native land have the same doom of decay and death written upon them. They have not ever been where we now see them—in Scotland, Wales, or Cumberland. Nor will they ever remain. Like other things, they 'come and go,' and cannot be said to be 'everlasting.' It will be our endeavour in the present paper to expound this important truth, and to show in simple language how mountains are made, how they get their varied outlines, and how they finally suffer destruction—in fact, to trace the cycle of changes through which they pass, and to point out that, like living things, they have a life-history of their own.

Mountains play a very important part in the economy of the world, purifying the air, supplying soils for the plains, and creating streams and rivers, which bring life and fertility with them. But on this aspect of the hills we cannot dwell now. Enough if we can briefly trace their birth, growth, and death or destruction. Our Poet-laureate has aptly expressed the truth we wish to expound, in the words:

The hills are shadows, and they flow
From form to form, and nothing stands;
They melt like mists, the solid lands,
Like clouds they shape themselves to go.

In dealing with the geological aspects of the subject—that is, with the origin and mode of formation of mountains—we find that the subject naturally falls into three divisions: (1) We must consider how the stony rocks of which mountains are composed are brought together and compacted. (2) How mountains reach their present elevated positions; and (3) How they assumed their present outlines, and were carved out into all those wonderful details which afford us so much joy in beholding, of valley and peak, of crag and pinnacle and precipice. A simple illustration will

make this quite clear. Suppose we were standing in front of a great and beautiful cathedral, such as Amiens, and trying to picture to ourselves how it was created. We should have to consider how the separate stones of which it is composed were brought together; how they were elevated to their present positions; and lastly, how their graceful outlines were given to them. Thus the work divides itself into three divisions—transportation, elevation, and ornamentation. A little reflection would convince us that the transportation was effected by a system of carts and horses hauling stone from quarries far and near; that the elevation was effected by men working with ropes and pulleys to get the stones into position; and that the ornamentation was accomplished by masons armed with hammer and chisel, who day by day carved the rough blocks into tracery, finials, figures, &c. To make the comparison complete, we should suppose that *all* the carving was done after the stones had been put in their places; but this, probably, was not the case. Let us take each of these operations in turn, and endeavour to trace their workings, in order to gain a clear idea of the history of Nature's cathedrals, not made with hands, and far more wonderful and beautiful than those earthly temples to which we have compared the mountain masses of the world.

First comes the work of transportation, or bringing together of the vast amount of rocky material contained in a mountain chain. It is evident that they have been brought together; for one of the first facts to be learned by examining almost any groups of mountains would be that their rocks are composed of layers, called 'strata' by geologists, and that the layers themselves, when closely looked into, prove to be made up of particles or grains of various sizes. We are not speaking now of volcanoes, which have quite a different origin; or of volcanic rocks, such as granite and basalt, which are frequently to be found in mountainous districts; but of mountains generally it may be said that they are built of stratified materials, such as clays, sandstones, and limestones, in some form or other. These materials may have been altered by heat and pressure—when deeply buried below the earth—into their respective metamorphic forms—namely, slates and schists, quartzites and marbles; but that does not affect the general statement just made. Now it is proved beyond doubt that all such rocks, with very few exceptions, have been formed or put together under water. Some were deposited in ancient seas, others in lakes and estuaries, mostly by a simple process of settling down or a deposition. This, however, does not apply to the limestones, which are chiefly built up of the remains of marine calcareous organisms; it is hardly necessary to add that the layers or strata thus formed are horizontal. This constitutes an important axiom in geology, and whenever we find strata in inclined or elevated positions, it may be safely concluded that some subsequent influences have been at work to raise them from their native horizontal. Hence it is clear that all mountains, except volcanoes, have been raised up. The rocks of our continents must also have been lifted up out of the seas wherein they were formed. But in their case the disturbance

has been comparatively slight compared with the violent flexures and foldings to which the highly bent and contorted strata of mountains testify.

Let us now inquire into the source of the great supplies of material necessary to keep up the work of rock-building which is still going on, as it went on throughout geological time. Of the limestones we have already spoken; to explain their origin would require a separate paper; but we may briefly consider the case of the clays and sandstones. They are derived from the wear and tear of continents and islands. All lands are more or less exposed to atmospheric influences, and the destructive effects of rain and rivers. Any old weather-beaten building will serve to show that even hard stone can be corroded and worn down by rain and wind, &c. This illustrates on a small scale what Nature does on a large one. 'Nothing stands.' All, even the most stubborn rocks, must in time suffer decay at the hands of the elements. It would take too long to describe how this is accomplished; but to put it briefly, the atmosphere, by means of the oxygen and carbonic acid it contains, exerts a decaying influence on all rocks, and so facilitates their further destruction. Changes from heat to cold will often cause rocks to split. When water gets into the joints and freezes, it acts like a powerful wedge—on account of expansion—and so breaks off portions of rock, mountain tops, and peaks; the sides of the cliffs must be greatly broken by this means, and the sides of mountains frequently show masses of loose angular débris which has fallen from above. Then come the mountain streams running down their valleys, and carrying with them the débris of rocks higher up, rubbing off their corners and wearing them away, till finally nothing but tiny grains of mud and sand are left, like the sandy mud formed on a grindstone after using it. As fast as the mountain sides and crags split up, their débris is thus ground up and carried away. Streams, rivers, and glaciers are all great transporting agents, bringing down these materials—as well as the soils which represent decayed and broken rocks—from higher to lower levels, from the mountains down to lakes and seas. Again, the streams, rivers, and glaciers are all powerful agents of erosion as well as of transportation. Even a small stream can, if its fall is rapid, cut a deep ravine out of solid rock. With a sufficient velocity, it may in time accomplish a vast amount of rock-cutting. The grandest examples of this kind of action are the cañons of Colorado, from three to six thousand feet deep!

Thus we see that the débris of the land is finally swept into the sea: these are the agents that 'draw down Æonian hills, and sow the dust of continents to be.' Thus the sea is the great workshop where all these land-derived materials are brought together, and slowly settle down in horizontal layers, thus forming new strata out of old ones. They will in turn suffer elevation, be converted into dry land, and some day be again brought under the destructive influences of denudation. There is thus a never-ending cycle of operations taking place; and just as Cairo has been built of stone derived from the Pyramids, and the lost city of Memphis,

which the Arabs used as quarries, so the lands of one age are used by Nature to build up the continents of the future. If some of her actions are destructive, others, again, are constructive; and thus one set of operations is balanced by another, and harmony is the result.

We have now to consider the second stage in the life-history of a mountain chain or mass—namely, elevation; in other words, how did the strata get raised up, in some cases to heights over twenty thousand feet?

That they have been raised up follows as a consequence from the proposition that they were deposited in seas, lakes, &c.; and if further evidence were needed, in the numerous contortions, crumplings, and foldings—the last often on a prodigious scale—exhibited in the strata themselves; and it is probable that at times they have been convulsed in their upward struggle. For we often find that they have been fractured by the crushing and upheaving forces to which they have been subjected. In fact, fractures are numerous in all disturbed regions, and perhaps each fracture gave rise to an earthquake! But still Lyell's theory of Uniformity in all geological operations has so greatly advanced the science of geology, that some have carried it too far, and we must admit that occasionally even quiet processes may become violent. Thus, we may imagine the gentle upheaval of a mountain range to continue quietly for a long period, until at last the tension of the rocks becomes more than can be borne, and they snap violently; and then a considerable disturbance would result.

There is abundant evidence to show that slow movements both of elevation and subsidence are now taking place, and have been going on in every geological age, as well as within the human period; but to account for such movements is another matter. At first, the attempt seems rather hopeless. Where are we to look for a force sufficient to raise continents, throw up and crumple the rocks into mountain chains? But I think we shall be able to offer a reasonable explanation, and to find a force sufficient even for this task. Until recent years, it was usual to ascribe this work to the energy which displays itself in volcanic phenomena, or in other words to heat. But this was a false theory. Heat has much to do with both volcanic action and the upheaving of rocks; but the energy of volcanic eruptions must be attributed to highly-heated and compressed steam—supplied by the water contained in deeply-buried rocks—whereas the earth-movements we are now considering cannot be shown to be due to the same cause, but rather to one of an opposite kind—namely, loss of heat.

Let us bear in mind that the earth is a cooling globe. Modern science teaches that it was once red-hot, and has been slowly cooling through subsequent ages. Few will dispute this theory when they look into the evidence. Taking this supposition for granted, let us inquire into the consequences following from it. We know that nearly all solid bodies contract on cooling. So does the earth; and the hotter portions below the surface—although solid—contract faster than the cooler and more rigid external crust. The consequence is that the outer shell of the earth

is in some places left unsupported. Its weight, which must be prodigious, soon begins to tell, and it gradually sinks, in order to adapt itself to the smaller surface below. Now it cannot do this without becoming wrinkled and thrown into numerous folds. We see this well illustrated in the case of a dried apple, the skin of which, owing to shrinkage below, has become creased. An old person's hand or face shows the same thing. And so we must regard mountain chains as wrinkles on the face of Mother Earth, telling us that she is no longer in the freshness of youth. We have in this process a very powerful force let loose, as it were—namely, gravitation acting upon great masses of strata. This is great enough to account for all the phenomena. Even in coal-mines the unsupported strata of the roof will 'creep' or slowly settle down. Now the result of the subsidence on a large scale will be lateral pressure at right angles to the chief folds, drawing the strata up in ever-increasing folds towards the main chain, so as to get them into a smaller horizontal space. The elevation will of course be greatest where the folds are greatest; and the folds on either side of the mountain range will get less and less as we pass from the range, until we come to a kind of arch, or a slight upheaval constituting a continent. Mountain ranges, then, are the backbones of continents.

This very acceptable theory, thus briefly explained, seems to account for all the facts, and shows that the same agency—namely, secular cooling of the earth—crumples strata into mountain chains and heaves up continents. The big downward folds beyond the continents will be the troughs of oceans, for there must be downward as well as upward folds. This theory will also account for volcanic and earthquake action. It seems to harmonise and bring into definite relations a mass of facts otherwise unintelligible. In most mountain chains the strata show that they have undergone considerable changes in their mineral composition and general state. Clay-slates, quartzites, mica, schists, and gneisses are but altered forms of ordinary clays and sandstones. And perhaps even granite is but a highly altered form of clay-slate which has been melted and slowly cooled under pressure. These and other facts connect volcanic action with the upheaval of mountain chains, and so with metamorphism. But whether the heat necessary to accomplish all this was supplied by the crushing force thus brought into operation—according to Mr Mallet's view—or is part of the earth's internal heat, it is hard to say. But all those who are familiar with mountains will have noticed the crystalline character of the rocks of the elevated axes, and will admit a close connection between rock-crumpling and metamorphic action. The most beautiful gems and most valued mineral ores are generally found in mountainous countries. We do not look for silver and gold in the chalk downs of Surrey, or for tin and lead in the London Tertiaries; but we may find them in crumpled rocks of Cornwall, Wales, or Scotland.

It now only remains to consider the third question of ornamentation, and to explain briefly how mountains get their rugged and varied outlines. And first, it is necessary to remark that

in no cases are the outlines of mountains due directly to the folds and crumpings of which we have spoken. Of some minor folds, such as the Jura mountains, that is true; but these are exceptions. We must look not to internal structure but to external influences to account for the forms of mountains. Their sloping or rounded sides, towering crags and pinnacles, their precipices and deep valleys, are all due mainly to those atmospheric and denuding influences to which we have already alluded. Atmospheric decay, frost, heat, and cold, all play an important part in carving away at the more exposed parts of mountains, and help to carve them out into their wonderful shapes, which will be partly determined by the directions of their natural divisions, and partly by the nature of the rocks themselves; the positions of the strata also have an influence in determining shapes. An arch or 'anticline' will be worn away, being somewhat broken open and loosened; while a trough or 'syncline,' being more compact, and held together by lateral pressure, will more readily withstand denudation. Hence, single mountains are often synclines, while valleys are often broken and denuded 'anticlines.' Sometimes the highest peaks consist of strata standing right up on end, so that their destruction is less easily accomplished, and they last while other parts go. The joints and planes of stratification, &c., are the lines along which denuding agents work, just as quarymen do.

But rain and rivers, snow and ice, are the chief agents at work carving out mountains and making the larger features. They are the masons continually at work on rocks; and their tools are streams, rivers, and glaciers. Streams and rivers carve out glens and valleys, thus making important features among the hills. Moreover, they bring down the rocky fragments which roll down mountain sides, rubbing off their corners, rounding them, and grinding them down to pebbles, and finally even into sand and mud. Thus the mountains are once more reduced to dust, from which they came. In mountains like the Alps, glaciers exert a considerable influence in deepening their valleys and transporting débris from higher to lower levels. They have formerly scratched and rounded the mountains of Wales, Cumberland, and Scotland, and their moraines are in many cases still left.

But water is the great denuding agent. We little think as we see the clouds hanging over the hills, that, soft and innocent and beautiful as they look, they yet are the instruments of destruction; for they contain the water, in the form of tiny suspended globules, which will in time work such wonders when they go together to form raindrops, and these are impelled by the winds or driven by gravitation down a rocky glen! The words of the Ettrick Shepherd express a scientific truth:

Who was it scooped those stony waves?
Who scalped the brows of old Cairngorm?
And dug these ever-yawning caves?
'Twas I, the Spirit of the storm.

It is almost incredible to what an extent some mountains have suffered at the hands of the various agents of denudation. In many cases thousands of feet of solid rock have been removed

from off the tops of mountain ranges, so that they are often mere stumps as to what they once were. Now, as before pointed out, all the *débris* goes into the seas, or lakes and estuaries, there to be reconstructed into rock. Thus we see that there is a continual cycle of change taking place, destruction being balanced by construction, and the two going on side by side. Thus we have shown that mountains go through a cycle of changes, and that the title at the head of this article is but a poetic fancy, and that the hills must as inevitably pass away as a flower must fade and die. But in their death and destruction we see that Nature is but laying the foundations of future hills, islands, &c., that even for them there is a kind of resurrection. In the words of Mr Ruskin, who has taught many true lessons from Nature to this generation: 'Death must be upon the hills, and the cruelty of the tempest must smite them, and the thorn and the briar spring up upon them; but the tempests so smite as to bring their rocks into the fairest forms, and the flowers so spring up as to make the very desert blossom as the rose.' As of the hills, so of ourselves we may say: 'Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.' So it is with the whole earth and with the heavens: 'They all shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed.'

MAJOR RANDALL'S WARNING.

BY JESSIE MACLEOD.

IN THREE PARTS.—PART I.

ONE wintry evening, Major Mark Randall, of the 14th Regiment of Hussars, home on leave from Madras, descended from the train bound to York at a small station on the line to Boston, Lincolnshire. Although a tolerably fine day when he left London, it soon after began to rain, and increased to a steady downpour. In that retired country district it was dark as if late at night. The Major, carrying a small portmanteau in one hand, a stout stick in the other, was well protected by a thick ulster; and lighting a cigar, he set off on a cross-country walk he had known well enough in bygone years. He was bound to an old mansion at about four miles' distance, on a few days' visit to his maiden aunts, whom he had begged not to send a carriage to meet him at the station, as, having business matters to transact in London, the hour of his arrival would be very uncertain. Probably he now repented of this decision, for, after proceeding some yards, he turned back towards the station.

'I suppose it would be impossible to procure a conveyance over to Cressing Hall?' he called out to the porter, who was watching him from the door.

'Yes, sir. Unless bespoke, you'll not get nothing on wheels to-night. If you're bound to the Miss Ingestres', you'd better not go by the footpath. We've had so much rain of late, the drains is overflowed, and the waters is out.'

'But the road takes such a turn; it is nigh three miles longer,' said the Major.

'Better go a long tramp than take a short-cut to get drowned,' returned the porter.

Major Randall laughed; but having lived too long in the world to despise local advice, he took the road. Even that was by no means safe; the drains, as they are called in that county, are in reality very deep canals, skirting the roads, with unprotected sides, and very easily walked into by a person ignorant of the locality.

The officer started at first briskly; but the rain fell so fast that the atmosphere was blinding as a curtain, and he deemed it most prudent to proceed at a footpace. Even on a black night, there is a faint earth light on country roads; it was just sufficient for him to see the stones in their centres. He often lighted a fusee, but, unfortunately, they were soon exhausted. Occasionally, he saw the glimmer of a distant light, probably from a cottage window; but knowing that he was in the Fen county, he did not venture to seek it. The roads were perfectly open and unsheltered; if trees bounded them, they were tall poplars, affording no screen. And now the rain descended like a waterspout.

'A pleasant night this to be out in,' exclaimed a voice at his elbow, and he heard feet splashing through the slush beside him.

'Perhaps we may reach a road-side cottage,' said the Major.

'There are none. But I'll tell you what there is a little farther on—Bertoft old church; it has a porch.'

'That will do,' said the officer; and the two quickened their pace.

'Here it is,' cried the newcomer, presently darting to a lichgate, that, being painted white, stood out ghostly through the gloom. A short gravel path led across the ancient churchyard, bordered with tombstones, to the ample porch, with oaken seats on either side, and well protected from the rain.

'This is a famous shelter,' said the Major. 'If you have a fusee, I will offer you a cigar.'

'Thank you,' replied his companion; 'I never smoke.—Listen! There is the cry of a bittern; this must be the clearing-up shower; they do not cry unless the rain's going off. I shall not be sorry to get home, for I missed my train, and have a long walk to reach Boston.'

'I hope you know the roads well?'

'By heart,' answered the other. 'It's a pity that we have so much water in these parts; it gives Lincolnshire a bad name; and there's not a nicer county in England in summer-time; it smells of nothing but hay and clover; and the variety of grasses is wonderful to them as understands them.'

At this instant the church clock in the old tower above deliberately struck the quarters and then the hour of seven.

'It's getting late,' continued the stranger, whose voice was cheery and pleasant. 'I suppose I must be going on, bad as it is. I've had nothing but ill-luck to-day. It did not rain when I started to call on a person at Roby I particularly wished to see; but he was out. Then I missed the train; and am almost drenched to the skin; though that can't hurt me: we Lincolnshire folk are said to be half-frogs, you know;' and he laughed merrily.

'If I remember rightly,' said the Major, 'this road divides at Bertoft.'

'Yes. One goes to Boston, the other to Spald-

ing. We are about a mile from the village. Bless you ! watery as it is hereabouts, it's nothing to what it was once. In this churchyard they only dug the graves just in time for the funerals, for they filled with water directly ; and as for Bertoff, I've heard my grandfather say he and another rowed through the village to the general shop to buy their stores ; and shot wild-ducks in the fields close by ; so that their boat was laden with provisions on the road home. My grandfather was a good shot ; he'd been a soldier, and went through the Crimean War. These parts must have been bad in his day ; them drains has done a sight of good.—And now, I'll wish you good-night, sir.'

'Good-evening,' said the Major ; 'and I hope, for both our sakes, it will soon cease raining.'

He heard his companion, whose voice and words seemed those of a young man, walk quickly to the gate and his splashing footsteps die away in the distance. The darkness was such that he never saw him, therefore, had no idea of his appearance. The conversation they held together was short and trifling, yet destined to be words of intense importance to one of them.

After waiting some little time, the rain abated, and the Major resumed his journey, reaching his destination at half-past eight o'clock, tired with his long tramp, and very wet. His arrival caused quite an excitement, for the Miss Ingestres had given him up.

How familiar yet how different did these ladies appear to him—welcoming the bronzed, bearded soldier with the same voices, in their former affectionate manner, standing in the identical places in the entrance hall as in bygone years, when he visited them regularly at the vacations. Nothing had changed save themselves ; the fine middle-aged women he had left were now two thin, wrinkled, old ladies—kind as ever, but more fussily so. As for himself, the gay heedless youth was now the tall experienced soldier of many battles, who had more than once been wounded.

After the first surprise at his changed appearance was over, they soon forgot it, and he was the 'dear boy' of former years. Seated at the hospitable table, where an admirable impromptu dinner was got up for him, adorned with its silver and crystal, also flowers brought in from the conservatories, surrounded by luxury, a splendid fire on the hearth, the red velvet curtains closely drawn, the carved oak furniture as he remembered it, and old family portraits on the walls—it was difficult to realise that he had been absent seventeen years, living what seemed a lifetime of change and peril. Here was unaltered peace. All he missed were the silver-haired butler, who had served his maternal grandfather, and the old hound Toby, who had been his companion in many a ramble.

'And have you been going on the same life here all these years?' he asked.

'Yes, dear boy—as you left us, so you find us. We have been several times to London just to get food for the mind, as I may say—new books, new music, to hear famous preachers, and to attend a few lectures at the Royal Institution, and a concert or two. But there is no place like home. When we are away, things go wrong, and the poor people miss us. We lead quiet lives.

Your letters were a great delight to us, and sometimes caused us much anxiety. We have followed you all through your career, dear Mark.'

'I feel as if I had never been away ; and awakened from a long sleep full of dreams,' said the Major.

'You will not know Caroline when you see her,' said Aunt Lydia. 'She was a bride when you left ; now, her eldest boy is at Eton ; and as for her husband, who was such a waltzer, he cannot get a hunter strong enough to carry him.'

'Time brings its changes,' said the Major. 'I have a few visits to pay when I leave you ; then I shall run down to Worcestershire and have a look at them.'

This referred to Major Randall's only sister, after whose wedding he had left for India.

There was no rain the following morning ; and the Miss Ingestres, well wrapped up, insisted upon marshalling their long-absent nephew about the grounds to see the improvements. On returning through the gardens, they were met by the head-gardener, who stopped touching his hat.

'Beg your pardons, ladies, but there's such shocking news.'

'Indeed !' cried Miss Ingestre, looking startled.

'Yes, mum. Mr Twyford, the miller at Roby, was shot dead as he was riding home from Merstoke last night.'

'Shot ! Old Mr Twyford shot !'

'What a dreadful thing !' cried Miss Lydia.

'He was coming home along the high-road, it seems, on Gray Dobbin, an old hoss as could find the way blindfold. It was a bad night, we know ; but through the noise of falling rain, a woman in a cottage heard two shots fired. She ran to the door just in time to see the hoss galloping away skaired ; so she fetched a lantern, and found Mr Twyford lying in the road. She got help ; but the pore old gentleman was dead—shot through the heart.'

'Was he robbed?'

'No, mum. That's the strange part of it ; his puss and pocketbook was untouched. There's a regular hue and cry through the county to find the murderer, folks is so sorry. Old Mr Twyford was as well known as Boston Stump.'

'You remember him, dear Mark, do you not?'

'I had forgotten his name ; but I recollect going several times with the Vicarage boys to be weighed at the mill. He was a tall man, I think. His wife used to bring us out cowslip wine. There was a daughter too—a young, timid, slip of a girl,' said the Major, turning his thoughts backward.

'Ah ! she grew up the beauty of the county. People would ride past the mill to try and get a peep at her. I have seen many beautiful girls, but never one so perfectly lovely as poor Elizabeth.'

'Why do you say poor ? Is she dead?'

'She may be ; there has been no news of her for some years. Mrs Twyford died, though ; and perhaps Elizabeth had too much her own way. She went on a visit, and became acquainted with a showy man who called himself a gentleman. No doubt he was an adventurer, for it was well known the miller's daughter would have a good fortune. He paid his addresses to her ;

but Mr Twyford forbade him the house. Sad to say, Elizabeth eloped with him.'

'No doubt the unprincipled man counted on the father's forgiveness, for he doted on his daughter. She might have married well, for all the young men in these parts were in love with her, she was so amiable. Anyhow, the miller defeated him, for he disinherited Elizabeth. It nearly broke his heart, though, for he seemed to become an old man all at once,' said Miss Lydia, taking up the thread of the narrative. 'It was very undutiful of her; but I suppose she was led away by the man's good looks.'

'The old, old story,' remarked Major Randall. 'I wonder how often it has happened, and will happen again.'

'It will be the same as long as there are serpent tongues,' said Miss Ingestre with asperity.

THE LATE EXPEDITION TO LABRADOR.

EARLY in the spring of last year a party of scientists, under the direction of Professor Lee, of Bowdoin College, left the United States for the purpose of exploring the interior of Labrador, and to study the geology of that interesting region, after the example of Professor Hind, who geologically 'did' a large part of that peninsula some years ago. Lost to sight for many months, and without even the pen of a newspaper reporter, the scientists seem to have passed through many exciting experiences and some trials. They have just returned to the haunts of civilisation again, bringing with them rich stores of new information pertaining to the geology of sterile Labrador, which is therefore no longer to be considered the *terra incognita* it has hitherto been, and which, strange to say, its neighbour, Newfoundland, is even at the present moment. In addition to other matters of interest, Professor Lee's party claim to have made two discoveries, which are not discoveries at all in the commonly accepted sense of that term. There is first the waterfall which the travellers found somewhere not far removed from Ungava, and which they represent to be a far bigger thing in all respects, as we have no doubt it is, than Niagara. It is unquestionably a matter for gratulation to have looked on this magnificent cataract, and to be the first to give to the world some idea of its vast proportions; but its existence has been known of for years past, though not perhaps by many outside of Labrador itself. Falling in with a party of Indians some eight years ago, while cruising on the coast of Labrador, we heard about it from them, though they could give us no idea of its size save that which 'big' would convey to our minds. Later, it formed the subject of a very interesting conversation between ourselves and an agent of the Hudson's Bay Company who had been living on the coast for more than seventeen years. He had not seen the cataract, but had frequently heard of it from the Indian trappers in the company's service.

Again: a correspondent of the *Graphic*, of October 3d, credits the members of the Lee expedition with the noteworthy achievement of

discovering, amid the wilds and solitudes of Labrador, a tribe of Indians of whose existence even ethnologists have hitherto possessed no knowledge. If this be so, the fact is of great interest, though we are convinced that these supposed unidentified red men can be no other than a remnant of the once powerful and numerous Beothic tribe, the aborigines of Newfoundland, who were driven from their own country by the malevolence and wanton cruelty of the early settlers from Britain, and the jealous Mic-Macs from Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia. The following facts give considerable colour to our conjecture. A tradition still lingers among the settlers of Northern Newfoundland, with whom we lived for some years, that the last of the Beothics, a mere handful, passed across the Strait of Belle Isle in two canoes early in the present century, and having landed somewhere on the south coast of Labrador, had disappeared. This tradition is materially strengthened by the testimony of the late Dr Mulock, Roman Catholic Bishop of St John's, Newfoundland. He says: 'I have slight reason to think that a remnant of these people [the Beothics] survive in the interior of Labrador. A person told me there some time ago that a party of Montagnais Indians saw at some distance—about fifty miles from the sea-coast—a party of strange Indians, clothed in long robes, or cassocks of skins, who fled from them. They lost sight of them in a little time; but on coming up to their tracks, they were surprised to see the length of their strides, which proved them to be of a large race, and neither Mic-Mac, Montagnais, nor Eskimos. I believe,' he concludes, 'that these were the remains of the Beothic nation; and as they never saw either a white or red man but as enemies, it is not to be wondered at that they fled. Such is the only trace I can find of the Beothics.'

Early in the present century, but a short time before their supposed extinction, a few individuals of the Beothic tribe were captured by explorers in the Exploits River regions in Newfoundland and taken to the capital. But after spending a few months there, they either returned to their tribe or died of consumption. About that time, too, several proclamations were issued by the British Government to restrain the barbarity of the settlers towards the Beothics. The earliest official notice of the aborigines is in the form of a proclamation by the governor bearing date of 1760. This proclamation seems to have been repeated on the accession of each new governor. The document sets forth that His Majesty had been informed that his subjects in 'Newfoundland do treat the savages with the greatest inhumanity, and frequently destroy them without the least provocation or remorse. In order, therefore, to put a stop to such inhuman barbarity, and that the perpetrators of such atrocious crimes might be brought to due punishment, His Majesty enjoined and required all his subjects to live in unity and brotherly kindness with the native savages; and further enjoined all magistrates to 'apprehend persons guilty of murdering the native Indians and send them to England for trial.' Owing to the scattered nature of the settlements and the lawless habits of the early trappers and fishermen, these proclamations were systematically disregarded. But

a short time after, the only traces that were visible in their native country of the unfortunate Beothics were a few grassy mounds, decaying deer-fences, and ruined wigwams.

A MESSAGE FROM THE FLOOD.

It was a curious sight to Portside eyes, such a sight as the younger generation had never seen before. Three miles below lay Portside itself, the cathedral tower looming misty through the hazy January afternoon, while black cold night crept up from the stern frosty east. For five weeks the earth had lain under a canopy of snow; for five weeks work had been at a standstill; and now the river Swirle had frozen over, and for three miles a solid sheet of ice stretched away, and the ring of steel blades echoed in the bare woods. For thirty-seven years the Swirle had defied the grip of King Frost, and even in the terrible winter of 1854 there had only been some few hundred yards of firm ice; whilst now the river seemed to be frozen solid. Where the current ran a little more freely, the ice had been tested at fourteen inches, so that the thousands of skaters passed over the swift flood in perfect safety. The darkness commenced to fall, and the moon grew brighter in the clear sky, while on either bank, lights began to flash in the windows of the cloth-mills along the valley; there was some little work in progress, though even the vale folks were feeling the terrible weather. For ten miles the Swirle Valley was a curious mixture of town and country, rural enough but for the clusters of workmen's cottages, and the smoke from tall chimneys drifting over the cornfields.

Watching the skaters, now fast disappearing in the misty gloom, like jovial demons skimming noiselessly along the frozen stretch, were two countrymen, Swirle Valley-men, as their slow speech and broad keen faces denoted. They were both comfortably clad, and each after the manner of his kind smoked his pipe with the solid grave silence often observed between old friends, when lack of speech does not necessarily mean embarrassment from lack of ideas.

'I mind no such sight as this, and, man and boy, I've worked in Swirle Valley for nigh on fifty year,' remarked the elder at length. 'Fifty-four was pretty hard, but then the ice only bore from Portside Stone Bridge up to the old boat-house. That was half a mile as near as no matter. And when the flood came down, it carried part of the bridge away. A sudden thaw now, with all that snow on the hills, would sweep all the bridges away as if they were made of card-board.'

Jacob Strahan nodded solemnly. All the cottages and the mills whereat Jacob and his companion, Benjamin Attwood, acted as foremen, were situated far above range of any flood, and the notion of disaster for those below was not without a comfortable sense of personal satisfaction.

'I went up last week as far as Maindee,' Strahan replied deliberately; 'and there's ice, ice, nothing but ice, 'ceptin' on the streams, for close on thirty mile. If Portside Stone Bridge should stand the break-up, there'll be a flood along the upper valley such as no man ever see before.'

'Like the one I mind my grandfather speak of in '97,' said Attwood. 'The ice formed a dam at Portside, and the water burst the embankment at Wareham close by Foljambe's mill, and made a new course down the valley. Right behind us it ran in a stream bigger'n the Swirle is now, as you can see by looking behind you at these ruined cottages.'

The speaker indicated the course of the disastrous flood, the memory of which still lives in the Portside district. A few hundred yards above them the Swirle turned suddenly to the right, the bank being strengthened artificially; and below this bank was a broad ravine, running for some miles in the direction of Portside, the roadway from that place to Maindee traversing the gorge half-way up its side. It was a wild and desolate spot, filled with bracken and brambles and large boulder-stones washed up by that terrible flood; while at the head of it stood Foljambe's factory, almost within rifle-shot of the house of the great manufacturer in question. Very few people passed that way at night, since it was a place of evil repute, though Attwood traversed it frequently, as the ravine was a short-cut from the factory to his own house on the other side of the dip.

'We should be safe enough, if anything was to happen,' Strahan remarked with the same comfortable assurance. 'I never liked that valley, Ben, especially this time of year when the snow lies so deep in places. I don't know why I should think so, but I feel main certain that when the frost goes, we shall find your old master somewhere in the ravine.'

'I wish we could find him,' Attwood replied with an impatient sigh. 'He left my house that night just as it was coming on thick, and laughed at me when I warned him against crossing the gorge. When morning came, he was nowhere to be found, and the snow lying twenty feet deep in some places down there. And when he is found, my George's name will be cleared.'

'Let's hope so,' Strahan replied more cheerfully. 'He's a good lad; and though appearances are against him, I firmly believe he'll come out right yet.—And now, unless we're going to stay here all night, it's time to think about a cup of tea. Another hard frost, I see.'

The two old men turned away together, parting finally on the brow of the hill. With the confidence of one who knows his locality, Attwood crossed the ravine, and slowly climbed upwards to the summit, where the cheerful lights shone out from his own comfortable cottage. A weird feeling came upon him as he carefully skirted the great heaps of snow, below one of which, for all he knew, lay the body of his missing employer, Godfrey Foljambe, concerning whose disappearance every Portside individual was still talking, though the mysterious event was five weeks old.

If there was trouble at the great house on the hill, there were equally sore hearts in the foreman's more humble abode. The missing manufacturer was a just and kind employer, with a keen eye for merit; and that keen eye had looked favourably upon young George Attwood, with the result that six years with Foljambe & Co. saw him cashier to the firm. At this time, however, certain strange defalcations had taken

place; there had been a series of investigations, with the result that the younger Attwood had lost his situation. It was a keen blow to employer and employed alike; but the evidence was terribly clear, and the manufacturer had no alternative, though he declined to prosecute.

So things had drifted on till the night before the great snow, when Mr Foljambe had presented himself at Attwood's cottage in a state of great excitement. George was away from home; hearing which, his late employer refused to disclose his business, contenting himself with leaving a message for his quondam cashier to call upon him on urgent business the following morning. It was dark, with a heavy snow falling, as he departed homewards, laughing to scorn the advice tendered by his foreman as to avoiding the treacherous ravine. By morning the snow lay to the depth of three feet; while, in the gorge below, the white wrack had drifted into huge banks and valleys till even the ruined cottages had disappeared. But worst of all, Mr Foljambe was missing. The last person to see him was George Attwood, who, returning home along the road, was cheerfully accosted by his late employer with the information that good news awaited him on the morrow, with which he plunged into the darkness, to be seen no more of men.

'A bitter night,' Attwood cried, as he stamped across the flagged kitchen and warmed his numbed hands at the grateful blaze. 'A night as makes us thankful to know as we've a roof over our heads.—Come, lass, let us have some tea, for I've been standing by the mere till I'm nigh frozen.'

An extremely pretty girl, seated knitting in the ingle nook, rose from her seat and placed a metal teapot on the white tablecloth. Rose Attwood was, after George, the apple of her father's eye—a cottage Venus, clear-eyed and ruddy of complexion, as most of the hands in the valley knew, to the confusion of their peace of mind. But Rose was no coquette; and, moreover, the handsome, taciturn head-clerk at Foljambe's appeared to have monopolised the belle of the district, though, be it said, the course of true love had not hitherto run with the smoothness Rupert Vaughan could have wished.

He rose up from the other side of the fireplace, where he had been contemplating Rose in his usually moody fashion, and joined the party at their evening meal. Latterly, his presence seemed to be an understood thing, though a grim watchful silence, his natural manner, seemed to check all attempts at cheerfulness. Who he was and whence he came were mysteries to the Swirle Valley people, who resented his cool dogged appropriation of the prettiest and most popular of their maidens.

It was a more than usually silent party as George Attwood sat moodily in the most secluded corner, and Vaughan was more watchful and cat-like than usual. Rose, demurely knitting, listened to her father's well-meant attempts at conversation, interpolating a few remarks now and then.

'Heard nothing of Mr Foljambe, I suppose?' He addressed Vaughan. 'I hear that the *Port-side Chronicle* says something about foul-play.'

'Just like those newspaper fellows,' Vaughan

sneered. 'Never mind what lies you invent so long as you sell your papers, is their motto.'

George Attwood looked up with sudden interest, and with far more attention than he had hitherto paid to the desultory conversation. 'I don't know so much about that,' said he. 'The night before Mr Foljambe disappeared, he came here specially to see me. And what did he tell me when I met him afterwards? That he had some good news for me in the morning; and the only good news I could hear was that my name was cleared. Suppose the real culprit had discovered that his crime had come out, and followed my employer across the ravine. He was an old man and feeble. I don't suggest anything, but the task would have been easy.'

'Why not have done it yourself?' Vaughan returned, with a deeper scowl. 'You were the last man, on your own confession, who saw him alive; you met him in a lonely spot; and, for all we know to the contrary, he might have come here that night with fresh proofs against you. Goodness knows, I believe you innocent; but the theory of foul-play is a dangerous one—for you.'

'How rapidly you draw your deductions,' George replied, striving in vain to speak calmly. 'It would be equally sensible to point to you as the murderer. You have the place I held, the place you coveted. Before Smithson went to America, you and he laid your heads together to convict me. By some means or other, Mr Foljambe discovers the truth, and, by some means also, you know that he has done so. Then you follow him, and— Well, the rest is easy. Circumstances soon multiply themselves, suspicion once aroused. Here is one ready made: Why did you miss coming here for the first time in three months on the very night that my late employer had disappeared?'

'This is a poor jest,' Vaughan said hoarsely. 'I did come.'

'Yes, close on eleven o'clock. Still, I do but jest, though you take it so seriously. Still, you insulted me first, and'—

With an authoritative wave of his pipe-stem, Benjamin Attwood put an end to the argument. 'It is a sore subject, and gains nothing by discussion,' he observed sententiously. 'You are both talking nonsense, and dangerous nonsense, too. Change the subject.'

But with this expiring effort, the flickering conversation went out altogether. Vaughan rose, and taking up his hat, wished his friends an early good-night as he passed out, Rose rising to open the door for his departure. In his own masterly way he took her by the shoulder and led her out into the moonlight. 'You will forget all that,' he said fiercely. 'This pain I get at my heart makes me almost mad at times. —Rose, how much longer are you going to keep me waiting?' He bent down as if to kiss her; but the girl drew hastily away. A thin haze crossed the moon, and a puff of wind from the west brushed her cheek. It was as well that she did not see the lurid light in her companion's eyes.

'Very well,' he said. 'Good-night; and remember that the time will come when I shall make you love me.'

Rose felt an almost wild sense of relief as her

impetuous lover disappeared. She did not care for him; her heart told her that, though she shrunk from giving pain by a direct refusal. She lingered a moment in the open, conscious of a milder breath in the air, and listening to the sough of the wind in the woods. Presently, as the clouds seemed to thicken, she felt the rain-spray on her cheeks.

'There is heavy weather on the hills,' Attwood said, as he drew his chair nearer to the wood-fire. 'I thought it seemed warmer.—Bless me, is that rain?' A burst of wind dashed the sheeted water against the casement, and caused the feathery ashes to dance and swirl on the hearthstone. 'A sudden change,' the old man continued. 'There will be no skating on the Swirle to-morrow. A night of rain with all this snow, and before morning we shall see a flood the like of which Portside people have never witnessed before.'

As the cottage lay still and silent, with the heavy downpour roaring on the roof, the groaning and creaking ice on the river rose higher and higher. Morning was still struggling with night as a crash louder than the rest roused Benjamin Attwood, who hastily assumed his clothes, and wrapping himself in a heavy mackintosh, walked towards the river. The vast sheet of ice like a thing of life trembled and vibrated, and then, with a report like the roar of artillery, broke into a million pieces. Suddenly released, the rushing flood-water rose with marvellous speed, creeping up the banks, till within the hour the erstwhile solid plain was a creamy seething mass of green foam and floating ice-floes.

'Eight feet in an hour,' exclaimed Strahan, who had also come out to watch the wonderful sight, 'and thirty miles of ice to come down yet. No chance of that getting through the Portside Stone Bridge. What with the rain in the night and the snow on the Black Mountains, there'll be twenty feet of flood-water, not reckoning the ice at all.'

As the day went on, it seemed probable that Strahan's prophecy would be fulfilled. With alarming rapidity it rose, bearing great fields of ice, until, almost imperceptibly at first, the current began to slacken, while the water itself rose with still more alarming rapidity. The most sinister prophecies had been fulfilled, and the ice had jammed about Portside Bridge.

Along the embankment by Foljambe's factory the immense mass began to collect, pressing in an inclined plane against the bank, over which presently the water commenced to flow into the ravine below. Almost instantly the serried masses moved with irresistible force against the crumbling embankment; and before the astonished eyes of the spectators, it seemed to meet and disappear as, a few moments later, the swollen waters of the Swirle were thundering down the new channel of the ravine.

'Thank Heaven there are no houses there!' Attwood said fervently, his voice utterly drowned in the fearsome din. 'The flood will just waste itself on the broad meadows below Portside without doing much harm. Surely it is a wonderful sight, if a terrible one.'

The sullen waters rolled away, and by the end of three days a few huge boulders and uprooted

trees only remained as evidence of the great flood. The sandy floor of the ravine was firm and hard when Attwood and Strahan, under the direction of Frank Foljambe, commenced to thoroughly search that wave-washed region for the missing manufacturer. The whole face of the gorge was changed; the brambles and bracken had disappeared; while the huge rocky boulders alone remained. The great stones were piled up in fantastic confusion, forming pyramids and caverns into which half-a-dozen men could creep. Vaughan, looking moodily on at the work, seemed uneasy as Strahan turned over the sand under an overhanging rock where some soft substance occupied his attention.

'Why waste your time?' he asked impatiently. 'I tell you there is nothing here.'

Strahan did not reply, as he hurriedly scraped the sand away under the ledge with his spade. There was something yielding there—a scrap of sodden cloth, the toe of a boot, and presently the cold clammy semblance of a human hand came in view. An exclamation of horror and surprise broke from him, hearing which, the rest of the search-party turned to the spot, and carefully assisted the old man in his melancholy task.

The corpse was that of Mr Foljambe, without a doubt. Preserved by the frost and snow, and protected from the violence of the beating waters by the great rock, the body was singularly free from marks of violence, save that there was a livid mark on the neck, and the hands were clenched as if in a convulsion of pain.

'There has been something more than misadventure here,' the dead man's son said with a shuddering respiration. 'And I thought my father was without an enemy in the world.—See, some of you, what is clasped in the right hand, for I dare not look.'

With some difficulty, Attwood opened the stiff fingers, and drew from their clasp a fragment of torn silk. The pattern was dull and faded, but as the searcher laid it on his open palm, he gave a cry of astonishment.

'Great heavens, this is Vaughan's!' he cried. 'He was wearing a scarf of similar pattern when he came to my house on the evening of my poor master's disappearance. It was all pulled-up and disarranged, and Vaughan was always ridiculously neat in his dress. I remember Rose asking him how it happened, and he made some excuse, I forget what.'

All eyes were turned in search of Vaughan, but he had disappeared. There was an ominous silence as the little group bore the body away up to the great house on the hill, where they found the police inspector for the district waiting to hear the result of their search. Another body had been found far down the ravine, and the police had come over for the sake of identification. With a curt gesture of dismissal, the inspector signified that he would be alone with Mr Foljambe, and with a few stern words as to the necessity of perfect silence, the searchers gradually dispersed.

The afternoon wore on slowly, and the factory clock gave out the hour of three before Rupert Vaughan found himself standing in Mr Frank Foljambe's office, confronting that gentleman, who was supported by the police inspector and the two Attwoods. There was, despite the young

employer's marked distress, a stern expression of features, which seemed to paralyse the newcomer's faculties, and to set his heart beating with alarming palpitations.

'I have sent for you,' Foljambe said distinctly, 'on a very painful errand. You are aware perhaps that the body of my unhappy father has been found. That he died by violence there is no possible reason to doubt. We are not without a clue to the murderer, since, in the right hand of the body, we found a fragment of a scarf which has been identified as yours.'

Vaughan suddenly raised his hand to his throat with a choking cry.

'We have discovered in your rooms the missing article to which the torn fragment fits exactly. In my father's pocket-book we have also discovered a letter from America, in the handwriting of your accomplice Smithson, in which he confesses the plot between you, whereby your defalcations and robberies were artfully traced to young Mr Attwood. This information he was probably conveying to the injured young man, who, unfortunately, was not at home, when he met you in the ravine or near it and taxed you with your crime. The letter from America only arrived by the afternoon post, or probably you might have heard of it earlier. We do not ask you to say anything in reply, only I thought it right that you should know of what you are accused.'

'And of what am I accused?' Vaughan asked unsteadily.

'Of the murder of Mr Foljambe on the night of December 28th last,' the inspector put in quietly. 'You will consider yourself my prisoner.'

Vaughan bowed helplessly; he saw no hope in the ring of faces, felt no consciousness save the fluttering pain at his heart. A strange sensation of coming death was strong upon him; he knew too well the terrible consequences to a hopelessly diseased heart likely to arise from the excitement of such a moment. 'I did it,' he said in a faint low voice—'yes, I killed him. I followed him up to Attwood's house, and directly I heard him speak, I knew what he had heard. But I did not care for myself. I might have been beyond arrest before morning, had it not been for my love for that old man's daughter. I am half a Spaniard, and only they know what love means. Blind and mad, I followed my employer. I heard his conversation with George Attwood; and I—I killed him. I strangled him in the ravine, and hid the body under a great flat stone, piling others upon it till the snow drove me away. I dared not keep away from Attwood's, though I had forgotten my torn scarf, which has betrayed me. I did not intend to wrong George here; but we—Smithson and I—had been speculating, and some one had to suffer. —Bah! you are wondering why I am so foolish as to make such a full confession. I know, because'— He paused, as a horrible pain, keen as a knife, shot through his heart. Presently, with white ashy face and pallid lips, he continued painfully: 'I am not afraid. I shall never leave this room alive. I have been solemnly warned against any sudden shock, and this has overpowered me. I killed Foljambe; ay, I would have killed him twenty times, and suffered all the agony I have gone through a

hundred times, rather than lose the love on which I had set my life. And when you think you have me in your grasp I cheat you—thus.' With a gesture of despair and defiance, he threw up his hands, falling prostrate upon the floor with a resounding crash.

Forgetful of his wrongs, Benjamin Attwood raised the motionless form, so still and silent. 'He has fainted,' he said. 'The excitement has been too much.'

'He is dead,' said the inspector solemnly, as he laid his hand upon the pulseless wrist. 'The prisoner has gone before a higher tribunal than ours.'

There is a new partner in the house of Foljambe & Co. now, whose name is Attwood; and a new resident in the great house on the hill, whose name is Rose. Society and her equals were disposed at first to envy the social promotion of the valley beauty; but as she bears her honours so meekly and sweetly, the sore feeling is rapidly subsiding. But however long they remain there, four actors in the drama are never likely to forget the great flood and its dramatic sequel. For had it not been so ordained, the secret of Godfrey Foljambe's disappearance might have remained a mystery to the end of time.

THE MAY QUEEN.

THE boughs were white with the bloom of May,
And the wild bees were astir,
And fitting about the livelong day
In their vests of golden fur,
And the swallows were circling far above
The meadows fresh and green,
When I ventured first to tell my love
To a blushing, fair, young queen.

And never a royal dame, I'd say,
Had a crown one-half so fair
As the flowery wreath that lightly lay
On her wealth of golden hair.
And her cheeks were red as a rose in June,
And her radiant, smiling eyes
Had the hue we see some summer noon
In the far, blue, gleaming skies.

And the linnet's notes with the woodlark's rang,
And the blackbirds answered keen,
And the village lads and lasses sang
As they danced around their queen;
And I joined their sports and shared their fun
The length of that summer day
Round the tall May-pole, and wooed and won
The maid that was queen of May.

I know that her hair is silvered now
By many a winter's snow,
There are lines of care on her once smooth brow,
And her cheeks have lost their glow;
But to me she is still as fair and young
As she was that summer day
When I told my love with faltering tongue
To the maid that was queen of May.

M. ROCK.

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ON WEALTH.

ALL men, it has been said, desire Wealth except those who have possessed it long enough to know that it, too, is vanity and vexation of spirit. In like manner, all men dread poverty except those who have endured it long enough to know that the fear of it is far worse than the reality. One of the negative advantages of wealth is this lifting up of a man above the dread of being in want, or in debt, or being neglected and insignificant, or even of having to work. For to the aged and sickly this last is a terror. To be rid of the fear of these calamities is no small gain. To have no dread of being deserted in old age, when the face is no longer fair to look upon, when the sight is dim, the hearing dull, the breath acrid, the temper, it may be, irritable—to feel secure of honour, love, obedience, or what pass for such, is one of the prerogatives of riches. In sickness, to have all duteous cares and attentions redoubled about them, is another; for the hand, feeble though it be, is yet a hand of power; and the breath, shortened and labouring, still carries authority to control the destinies of those about them. True it is, nevertheless, that whoso hath riches hath fear—fear of the proverbial wings which riches make to themselves and fly away with; fear, too, of leaving them—for he remembers having read at his mother's knee how that 'the rich man shall lie down, but he shall not be gathered: he openeth his eyes, and he is not.' Above all, the rich man nourishes that form of fear which shows itself as distrust and suspicion—distrust of the advances of strangers, suspicion of the motives which dictate those advances.

There is, without doubt, a hollowness in the deference with which the owner of great wealth is often approached on the one hand, and on the other a well-grounded suspicion of that hollowness, which hampers the intercourse between the wealthy and those about them. This applies not so much to the young rich man, who, well satisfied with himself and his surroundings, is seldom prone to suspicion, and is therefore an easy dupe

to flatterers; but to him whose distrust of his fellows is justified, as he considers, by the experience of a lifetime passed amongst toadeaters and sycophants.

The serene pleasure produced by perfect freedom in intercourse is thus inevitably absent, since that freedom is incompatible with a suspicion of insincerity. Inequality of fortune is alone sufficient to put this freedom into bondage. Men like Swift, who have actually felt their inferiority of position coupled with superiority of understanding, are apt to vent the irritation thus engendered in bitter sarcasm—a sarcasm which plainly reveals how their self-respect has been galled by the sight of the deference due to worth, absorbed by wealth.

But if it be painful to an upright mind to see money-grubbers respected, or to be themselves suspected of interested motives when paying due deference to the aged rich, how much more painful is that experience which teaches distrust of the frank advance, the courteous accost? What an inward degradation and stab to self-respect, to be compelled involuntarily to weigh the motives of those who address us, and question if it is to ourselves the courtesy is due, or to the power temporarily vested in our hands! Under this strain, many a naturally sweet and generous mind has turned morbidly sour and suspicious; while more than one great mind has deliberately resigned those adjuncts which it knew to be less than itself, but which it also knew to be the objects of worship and envy to those by whom it was surrounded.

Among the positive advantages of riches may be reckoned their efficacy to introduce their owner not only into society which his attainments alone could not command, but also that they give him the power of becoming acquainted with the grandest scenery of earth, by enabling him to travel; that they leave him leisure to study, should he be so disposed, the latest marvels of science, the most exquisite productions of art; to follow the glorious imaginings of poets, and learn wisdom of the philosophers.

But wealth has greater riches in store even than these, great as they are. It gives a man power to benefit his fellow-men. A rich man can, if he be so minded, be eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, health to the sick, comfort to the care-laden. By a scrape of his pen he can turn the children of the poor man from burdens into blessings, by putting them in a position to earn their own livelihood, and perhaps help their parents. To the ignorant he can give instruction; to the unemployed, work; to the worker, encouragement; to the unsuccessful, consolation; to the despairing, hope.

Who, then, shall say that wealth is not to be desired—that it is wrong to covet riches? No one, except perhaps the man who, secretly coveting, despairs of attaining, and affects to despise wealth. One among the many curious effects of riches on the minds of men, is the growth of the capacity and desire for all that wealth can bestow, which usually accompanies the accumulation of riches. 'If riches increase, how are they increased that eat them,' is as true to-day as it was two thousand years ago. People are said to rise with their circumstances when everything they can now legitimately enjoy is to them as though it had always been theirs; who, driving in a carriage, forget they have ever walked; or, drinking wine, forget their toast-and-water days; or, more rarely, dressing richly, are oblivious of the change in their attire. A bride may forget her ornaments, but can a newly-rich woman be unmindful of her diamond ring? And when, after twenty years of creating, and twenty years of enjoying wealth, when you are getting to feel 'the old man,' and the young folks are beginning, gently and indulgently, but persistently, to come to the front, invite the company, decide the time and place of the annual holiday, when, suddenly, those Silverine bonds fall lower and lower, and the Grand Cerulean shares drop like mercury before a storm—when, in short, riches make themselves wings and fly away—when Bob is taken from college and sent 'abroad;' and Julia's harp is sold, and Julia herself, the pride of your heart, becomes governess to the children of your dearest enemy; and your wife, prematurely aged, sits opposite to you by the fireside, looking at the hands unadorned now by diamonds, and weary with unaccustomed work: when this comes about, why, then, for the first time you realise what is meant by the 'deceitfulness' of riches.

But if riches do not fly away, but steadily increase, some there are in such a case who by-and-by lose the power to make use of their wealth. They may have a fine house; they barely allow themselves the use of the worst room in it; they walk, with the means of riding in their cash-box; they deny themselves all pleasures to indulge in the one pleasure of saving. In their waning age, honour and ease are as nothing beside the accumulation of barren metal, which, like a load, they carry until death relieves them of the burden.

Too often is it true that though 'the rich man answereth roughly,' he is never without friends, especially if he be childless—friends who attend upon his whims and fancies for the sake of that which he will never part with until it is no longer his to give or to withhold; and he earns

the posthumous gratitude of his legatees, a gratitude vastly increased by the fact that there is no need to give it expression. For they say, and not unjustly: 'Poor man! he held tight to it as long as he could. If he could have kept it, it wouldn't be mine now. Small need of thanks.'

The very look of money, coined or in the potential note or draft, is irresistible to some minds. We all remember the story of the young man who, going to repay his uncle the loan of a thousand pounds, was received with assurances of the unimportance of the affair, and the very slight necessity there was for repayment, or even thinking any more about it, until the nephew produced a crisp, new thousand-pound note, which so fascinated the eyes and imagination of the lender, that after fingering, he finally pocketed the note, saying: 'Ah, well; you can come again, you know, if you are hard up at any time;' leaving the disappointed prodigal firmly convinced that had the note been an old and a dirty one, or the sum made up of coinage and paper—in short, had it been anything but what it was, clean, crackling, crisp, *multum in parvo*, his kinsman's generosity would have got the better of his cupidity, and he himself have been the richer by a thousand pounds.

Of all the causes of quarrel public and private since the world began, wealth 'treasure' is surely the most certain and most prolific. The emulation of intellects is keen all the world over, but it is mild compared with the struggle for riches between nations and individuals. And if it be true, as it is, that 'there is that maketh himself rich and yet hath nothing'—who, having all that wealth can bestow, is yet a pauper in heart and brain, living a life of fear and suspicion—fear to lose his treasure, suspicion of the motives of those about him, still, this man is not so sunk as the man who envies him his hoarded wealth. If fear be the curse of the rich, envy, cankering envy, is no less the curse of the poor. Burns says:

It's hardly in a body's power
To keep, at times, frae being sour,
To see how things are shared;

and if he, the large-hearted, strong-brained poor man, felt this, how certainly is it experienced by the narrow soul, who thinks that because money would make *him*, as he fancies, happy, so the rich must be happy also; and he envies them accordingly. Yet, would he consider for a moment, his envy would soon abate: the rich man is but the steward of his wealth; only a certain limited amount can he spend upon himself, and he often toils in his stewardship more strenuously, and with less appreciation, than his salaried dependents. Add to this the fact—of which the wealthy are often painfully conscious—that the very persons whose friendship would be most acceptable to them are those who purposely avoid them, for fear of misconstruction; that the woman they love turns away because she will not submit to be suspected of marrying for money; and so they are left to the society of less sensitive, or more candidly interested companions, who both foster and justify their distrust; and it will be acknowledged that the 'wine of life'—happy, unrestrained intercourse

with their fellows—is to a great extent denied to the lonely rich man.

But this negative disadvantage pales its ineffectual fires before the active persecution which besets the wealthy. Now and then the curtain is lifted, and we see the millionaire a prey to nervous fears, a revolver by his bedside, in dread that some one of the maniacs who daily dog his path, and deluge his letter-box with impossible demands for his cash, may attempt the vengeance they all threaten. If he cannot hope to be loved for himself, is he also to be deprived of all peace of mind and sense of security? Will men never approach him except with hands extended either to beg or to menace?

'Ah, Davy,' said Dr Johnson, after surveying Garrick's grand new house, furnished with all that was pleasant to the eye and good for comfort—'ah, Davy, these are the things that make death terrible!'

Certain it is that if to leave aches and pains, penury and anxiety, distress and want, and neglect and unkindness, to exchange these for what they hope of heaven, makes death a not unwelcome visitor to half the human race; so, to leave ease and plenty, comfort and happiness, warmth and friends, love and life itself—to exchange these for what they fear of the chill, unknown hereafter—makes the importunate Phantom appear to the other half, in Eastern guise, as the Separator of companions, the Divider of friends, the Finisher of delights, and the Replenisher of tombs. So that, as wealth is not without its drawbacks and disadvantages, as it engenders fear, distrust, suspicion, envy, hatred, and disagreements without number, it is well to remember that either riches or poverty is but in opinion, that that man is rich whose wants are few, and that all have riches sufficient who have enough to be charitable.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XVIII.—WAS HE IN RAGS?

STUBBORN as a mule. Yes—it is the way with some girls: man is soft as wax compared with woman: man concedes, compromises, gives way, submits: woman has her own way—when that way is the right way she becomes a pearl above price.

Elsie, when the door was shut and her sister gone, stood silent, immovable. A red spot burned in her cheeks: her eyes were unnaturally bright: her lips parted: she was possessed by a mighty wrath and great determination: she was the tigress who fights for her beloved. Meantime, everything was changed: the sunshine had gone out of the day: the warmth out of the air: her work, that had pleased her so much an hour ago, seemed a poor weak thing: not worth thinking about. Everything was a trifle not worth thinking about—the details of her wedding: her presents: her honeymoon: her pretty flat—all became insignificant compared with this threatened charge against her lover. How was it to be

met? If it was only a suspicion put into shape by Sir Samuel and old Checkley, it would be best to say nothing. If it was really going to be brought against him, would it not be best to warn him beforehand? And about her brother?—

She sat down and wrote out the facts. To be doing this cleared her brain, and seemed like working for her lover. In March 1882 a cheque for £720 to the order of one Edmund Gray was cashed in ten-pound notes by a commissionaire sent from an hotel in Arundel Street, Strand. No one ever found out this Edmund Gray. Athelstan was suspected. The notes themselves were never presented, and were found the other day in Mr Dering's safe, covered with dust, at the back of some books.

In February, March, and April, by means of forged letters, a great quantity of shares were transferred from the name of Edward Dering to that of Edmund Gray. The writing of the letters was the same as that of the forged cheque.

These were the only facts. The rest was all inference and presumption. Athelstan had been seen in London: Athelstan had been living all the time in London: Athelstan had been seen going into the house which was given as the residence of Edmund Gray. Well—Athelstan must be seen the very first thing. Further than this point she could not get. She rang the bell, ordered tea to be brought to her own room, and then put on her hat and went out to the Gardens, where she walked about under the trees, disquieted and unhappy. If a charge is going to be brought against you, the most innocent man in the world must be disquieted until he knows the nature of the evidence against him. Once satisfied as to that, he may be happy again. What evidence could they bring against George?

She went home about eight, going without dinner rather than sit down with her mother. It is a miserable thing for a girl to be full of hardness against her mother. Elsie already had had experience, as you have seen. For the present, better not to meet at all. Therefore she did not go home for dinner, but took a bun and a cup of coffee—woman's substitute for dinner—at a confectioner's.

When George called about nine o'clock, he was taken into the studio, where he found Elsie with the traces of tears in her eyes.

'Why, Elsie,' he cried, 'what is the matter? Why are you crying, my dear? and why are you alone in this room?'

'I choke in this house, George. Take me out of it—take me away. Let us walk about the Squares and talk. I have a good deal to say.'

'Now, dear, what is it?'—when they were outside. 'What happened? You are trembling—you have been shaken. Tell me, dear.'

'I don't think I can tell you just at present—not all.'

'Something, then—the rest afterwards. Tell me by instalments.'

'You are quite happy, George? Nobody has said anything to make you angry, at the office, or anywhere else?'

'Nobody. We are going on just the same. Mr Dering thinks and talks about nothing but the

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robbery. So do I. So does everybody else. I suppose Checkley has told, for every clerk in the place knows about it, and is talking about it.—Why do you ask if anybody has made me angry?

'My dear George, Hilda has been here this afternoon. You know that—sometimes—Hilda does not always say the kindest things about people.'

'Not always. I remember when she wrote me a letter asking whether I thought that a lawyer's clerk was a fit aspirant for the hand of her sister. Not always just the kindest things. But I thought we were all on the most affectionate terms, and that everything had been sponged out. She has been saying more kind things about me. What have I done now? Isn't the money difficulty solved?'

'I will tell you some other time—not now—what she said. At the present moment I want to ask you a question. If you have reasons for not answering, say so, and I shall be quite satisfied; but answer me if you can. This is the question. Hilda says that Athelstan is secretly in London, and that you know it, and that you have been seen with him. Is that true?'

'Well—Elsie—the only reason for not telling you that Athelstan is here is that he himself made me promise not to tell you. Athelstan is in London. I see him often. I shall see him this evening after leaving you. He is in London, walking about openly. Why not? I know no reason for any concealment. But he cannot go to see his mother, or enter his mother's house, until this charge against him has been acknowledged to be baseless. As for you, he will be the first person to visit you—and will be your most frequent visitor—when we are married. He is always talking about you. He is longing for the time when he can see you openly. But nothing will persuade him to come here. He is still bitter against his mother and against Hilda.'

Elsie sighed. 'It is very terrible—and now — But go on.'

'I have answered your question, Elsie.'

'Oh, no. I have only just begun. You say that Athelstan is in London; but you do not tell me what he is doing and how he fares.'

'He fares very well, and he is prosperous.'

'Hilda says that he has been living in some wretched quarter of London all these years; that he has been frequenting low company; and that he has been, until the last few weeks, in rags and penniless.'

George laughed aloud. 'Where on earth did Hilda get this precious information? Athelstan in a low quarter? Athelstan a Prodigal? Athelstan in rags? My dearest Elsie, if Lady Dering were not your sister, I should say that she had gone mad with venomous hatred of the brother whom she made so much haste to believe guilty.'

'Oh! Tell me quick, George. Don't say anything against Hilda, please. I am already— Tell me quick the whole truth.'

'Well, dear, the whole truth is this. Athelstan is doing very well. I suppose you might call him prosperous. When he went away, he had ten pounds to begin with. People kindly credited him with the nice little sum of £720 obtained by

a forgery. We now know that this money has been lying in the safe all the time—how it got there, the Lord knows—perhaps Checkley could tell. He went to America by the cheapest way possible. He had many adventures and many ups and downs, all of which he will tell you before long. Once he had great good fortune on a silver mine or something: he made thousands of pounds over it. Then he lost all his money—dropped it down a sink or into an open drain—you know, in America, these traps are plentiful, and started again on his ten pounds. He was a journalist all the time, and he is a journalist still. He is now over here as the London correspondent of a great paper of San Francisco.—That, my dear Elsie, is, briefly, the record of your brother since he went away.'

'Oh! But are you quite sure, George?—quite—quite sure? Because, if this can be proved'—

'Nothing is more easy to prove. He brought letters to a London Bank introducing him as the correspondent, and empowering him to draw certain moneys.'

'How long has Athelstan been at home?' She remembered the dates of the recent forgeries, and the alleged fact that all were in the same handwriting.

'You are so persistent, Elsie, that I am certain you have got something serious on your mind—won't you tell me?'

'No, George—not to-night. But—how long has Athelstan been in England?'

'I will tell you exactly how and when I met him. Do you remember three weeks ago, that Sunday evening when we were so happy and so miserable—resolved on braving everything—going to live on love and a crust for the rest of our lives?—you poor, dear, brave girl!' He touched her fingers. 'I shall always be thankful for that prospect of poverty, because it revealed my mistress to me in all her loveliness of love and trust and courage.'

'Oh, George—you spoil me. But then I know myself better.'

'Well—on that evening we went to Church together; and after Church, as I was not allowed in the house, we walked round and round the Square until the rain came on, and we had to go home. Well, you did not take any notice; but as you stood on the steps waiting for the door to be opened, a man was standing on the kerb under the lamp close by. When the door was shut behind you, I turned and walked away. This man followed me and clapped me on the shoulder. It was Athelstan.'

'And I saw him and did not know him!'

'He has grown a big beard now, and wore a felt hat. He is a picturesque object to look at. Ought to have been one of Drake's men. I dare say he was in a former existence. He had then been in England exactly a week, and every day he had prowled about the place in the hope of seeing you—not speaking to you—he trusted that you would not know him again.'

'Oh, poor Athelstan! That is nearly three weeks ago. He has been in England four weeks—a month—and three—four—five months ago—where was he?'

'I told you. In California.'

'Oh! Then he could not—possibly—not pos-

sibly—and it can be proved—and oh! George—George—I am so glad—I am so glad.' She showed her joy by a light shower of tears.

'Why, my dear,' he said, soothing her, 'why are you so troubled and yet so glad?'

'You don't quite understand, George. You don't know the things that are said. All these forgeries are in the same handwriting.'

'Certainly.'

'One man has written all these letters and cheques and things—both that of eight years ago and those of last March?'

'That is perfectly certain.'

'Then, don't you see? Athelstan was out of England when these newly-discovered forgeries were done. Therefore, he had no hand in them. Therefore, again, he could have no hand in the earlier one. Why—you establish his innocence perfectly. Now you see one of the reasons why I was so glad.'

The other reason—that this fact destroyed at one blow the whole of the splendid edifice constructed upon the alleged stay of Athelstan in London—Elsie concealed. Her heart, it must be acknowledged, was lightened. You may have the most complete belief in the innocence of a person, but it is well to have the belief strengthened by facts.

'As for me,' said George, 'I have been so long accustomed to regard him as one of the worst used of men, that I never thought of that conclusion. Of course, if the handwriting is the same, and it certainly seems the same—a very good imitation of Mr Dering's hand—there is nothing now to be said. Athelstan was in California in the spring. That settles it. And the notes were in the safe. Two clinchers. But to some minds a suspicion is a charge, and a charge is a fact.'

'George, you must take me to Athelstan. Give me his address.'

'He is in lodgings in Half-moon Street. I will ask him if he will meet you.'

'No—no; let me go to him. It is more fitting. You will see him presently. Will you tell him that I will call upon him to-morrow morning at eleven? And tell him, George, that something has happened—something that makes it impossible for me to remain at home—even for the short time before our wedding.'

'Elsie! this is very serious.'

'Yes, it is very serious. Tell him that I shall ask him to receive me until the wedding, or until certain things have happened.—But in any case—oh! they must happen so—they must—it is too absurd.'

'Elsie, my dear, you grow interjectional.'

'Yes—yes. I mean, George, that if things turn out as I hope they may, I will go home again. If not, we will be married from Athelstan's lodgings.'

'And you will not tell me what this terrible business is?'

'Not to-night, George,' she repeated. 'It is very serious, and it makes me very unhappy that my mother and sister'—

'It was something to do with me, Elsie, clearly. Never mind. Tell me when you please. Whatever you do is sure to be right. I will see him this evening.'

'Thank you, George. I think that what I

propose is the wisest thing to do. Besides, I want to be with you and Athelstan. Tell him that as he left the house eight years ago, I leave it now.'

'You? Why, my dear child, what forgeries have you been committing?'

'None. And yet— Well, George, that is enough about me and my troubles. Tell me now about your search into this business. How have you got on?'

'There is nothing new to report. I told you that I left a note on Edmund Gray's table. No answer has come to that. The Bank has written to tell him that his letter of introduction was a forgery. No answer. The dividends are accumulating: he draws no cheques: he makes no sign. In a word, though this money is lying to his credit, and the shares are transferred to his name, and the letters give his address, there is nothing whatever to convict the man himself. We could not prove his signature, and he has taken none of the money. He might call any day and say that he knew nothing about it. I wonder he hasn't done it. When he does, we shall just have to put everything straight again. As for poor old Checkley, I really believe that he is going mad. If I meet him, he glares: if he is in his master's room, his eyes follow me about under his shaggy eyebrows with a malignity which I have never seen painted. As for being described, words couldn't do it. I suppose he sees that the end is inevitable. Really, Elsie, the man would murder me if he dared.'

'The man is dangerous, George, as well as malignant. But I think he will do you no harm in the long run.—Have you told Athelstan what is going on?'

'Certainly. He follows the business with the greatest interest. He agrees with me that the thing is done out of the office with the help of some one in. Now, the point is, that the man in the office must have the control of the post. All the letters must pass through his hands. Who is that man? No one but Checkley. Everything turns on that. Now, here is a lucky accident. An old friend of Athelstan's, a man who coaches, has chambers on the same stairs and on the same floor. He knows this Mr Edmund Gray. We have been to his rooms to question him.'

'Is it to see this old friend that Athelstan visits No. 22?'

'Yes. His name is Carstone—commonly called Freddy Carstone—a pleasing man, with a little weakness, which seems to endear him to his friends.'

'This is the way in which things get distorted in a malignant mind! Well. What did this gentleman tell you about this mysterious Edmund Gray?'

'Nothing definite. That he is some kind of Socialist we knew before: that he has occupied the chambers for ten years or so we knew before. Also, that he is an elderly gentleman of benevolent aspect. And that he is irregular in his visits to his chambers. We seem to get no further. We see Checkley coming out of the house. That connects him, to be sure. But that is not much. There is no connection established between Edmund Gray and the forgeries in his name. Nor between Checkley and the forgeries.

One feels that if one could lay hold of this mysterious elderly gentleman, a real step in advance would be taken.'

'You talked at first of arresting him on the charge.'

'Well—there is no evidence. His name has been used—that is all. On that evidence, no magistrate would issue a warrant. Sometimes one's head goes round with the bewilderment of it. I've managed to learn something about Checkley in the course of these inquiries. He is quite a great man, Elsie: a tavern oracle in the evening: a landlord and householder and collector of his own rents at odd hours: a capitalist and a miser. But he is not, as thought at first—Edmund Gray.'

They had by this time got round to the house again. 'Go, now, George,' said Elsie. 'See Athelstan this evening. Tell him that I must go to him. I will tell him why to-morrow.'

'If he is not at his club, I will go to his lodgings. If he is not there, I will wait till he comes home. And before I go home, I will drop a note for you.—Good-night, sweetheart—good-night.'

THE NEW CANADIAN CENSUS.

THE recent census of Canada is interesting for many reasons, apart from the rather disappointing increase (504,601) it shows in the population, equal to about 11·66 per cent. in the decade 1881-1891. The figures for the various Provinces, as compared with those of 1881, are as follows: Nova Scotia has a population of 450,523, as against 440,572 in 1881; New Brunswick, 321,294, as against 321,233; Prince Edward Island, 109,088, as against 108,891; Quebec, 1,488,586, as against 1,359,027; Ontario, 2,112,989, as against 1,926,922; Manitoba, 154,442, as against 62,260; British Columbia, 92,767, as against 49,459; and the North-west Provinces and Unorganised Territory, 99,722, as against 56,446. In the Maritime Provinces the gain is 1·17 per cent.; in Quebec, 9·53 per cent.; in Ontario, 9·65; in Manitoba, 148·06; in the North-west, 164·76; in British Columbia, 87·86; and in the Unorganised Territory, 80 per cent.

Among other things the census indicates that in new countries, as in older ones, there is apt to be a falling-off in the rural population and a movement towards the towns. This in the case of the Dominion of course only applies to the older provinces, not to Manitoba, the North-west Territories, and British Columbia; and it is accounted for by reasons somewhat different from those which generally obtain elsewhere. There are naturally some points of similarity, such as the development of the manufacturing industries, which has been specially noticeable in the last ten years; the higher wages in the towns; and the lessened demand for labour caused by the improvements in agricultural machinery. But, on the other hand, there are no heavy rents and taxes or tithes, and there is not so wide a divergence between urban and rural wages as in Great Britain. The slowness of the increase is all the more remarkable in view of the immense areas of unoccupied land still to be found in the

older provinces, except Prince Edward Island. Most of the Crown land in question is, however, covered with bush, scrub, or forest; and no one who has not had a hand in clearing a farm under such conditions, or who has not seen the process in course of development, can form any idea of what the work means. The farmers, although usually comfortably off, and able to make a good living on the old homesteads, are not always able to buy improved farms for their sons as they grow up; and consequently, the latter, instead of taking up claims in the backwoods, as their fathers did, go West to the free-grant lands on the prairies of Manitoba and the North-west Territories, or else make their way into the towns. Then, again, the old folks in such cases often sell the farms they hewed out of the forest in years gone by, and go West with their sons, the proceeds of the sale being sufficient to start the whole family comfortably on a comparatively large tract of land there. This helps to explain the slow progress of the rural districts of the older parts of Canada, and, in conjunction with the immigration that has taken place, the more rapid increase in the prairie country and in British Columbia. The forest lands of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, and Ontario will undoubtedly be attacked in time; but we shall have to wait until land becomes scarcer than it is in the great western plains of the Dominion. The condition of things in those provinces is not singular, for the same causes have been at work in New England, and there has been a falling-off in the population of the rural districts of that part of the United States.

The movement to which reference has been made is merely a transference of population from the east to the west, and is of recent growth. But before the great Canadian plains between Winnipeg and the Rocky Mountains were opened up and made accessible, which only took place in a partial degree about ten years ago—the Canadian Pacific Railway was not completed until November 1885—a goodly proportion of this bone and muscle of Canada went to the prairies of the United States, which have been available for settlement for the last thirty or forty years. The large number of Canadians in the Republic is the result of that emigration, and the lamentable consequence of British apathy in allowing the millions of acres of fertile land within our own boundaries, north of the forty-ninth parallel, to remain a *terra incognita* for so long a period. There is another thing which helps to explain the existence of a strong Canadian element in the States. Before the extension of the limits of the Dominion by the acquisition of the Hudson Bay Territory and British Columbia, Canada consisted of a strip of land along the great lakes, the river St Lawrence, and the coasts and rivers of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island. It was practically without railway communication to any large extent, and the area under cultivation did not increase with much rapidity from the time the American prairies began to attract attention. All this time, however, the rising generation in many well-to-do middle-class and successful agriculturists' families were being educated for the professional and lighter callings; and as Canada did not then supply so many openings of the kind as she does now, and the

manufacturing industry was in its infancy, these young people were almost obliged to go to the States; and the same thing may be said of the youthful French-Canadians and others, who were attracted by the high wages of the New England factories. There is little or no movement from Canada to the United States at the present time; indeed, so far from its being the case, people are going to Canada from the United States; and over three thousand emigrants from Dakota are reported to have settled in Manitoba and the North-west Territories last summer.

The increase in these last-named provinces and in British Columbia, though more satisfactory than in Eastern Canada, is not what was expected; but it must be remembered that twenty years ago the country was, as Lord Beaconsfield described it, an illimitable wilderness, having no railway communication with Eastern Canada; in fact, there was not a mile of railway in the country. As already mentioned, it is only six years since the Canadian Pacific Railway was completed. The population, chiefly Indians, was in 1878 under forty-four thousand; in 1881 it had increased to about eighty-eight thousand; and in 1891 it was about two hundred and twenty-one thousand, which, in view of all the circumstances, is not a bad showing. Immigration has to be coaxed and attracted; and much as more people are wanted there, they cannot be forced to go, and the movement must develop naturally. Manitoba has had to contend with misrepresentations of all sorts, and other things have tended to prevent a rush of immigrants, not the least being the competition of countries that have been open longer for settlement. A large population always acts as a magnet so far as immigration is concerned. But its day is coming very rapidly, and the recent visit of the British Tenant Farmers, their favourable reports, and the splendid harvest of last year, will do much to draw attention to the great advantages of Manitoba and the North-west.

Much publicity has been given to the statement that the yearly Reports of the Department of Agriculture show that over eight hundred thousand immigrants landed in the Dominion during the last decade; and as the total increase in the population is only a little over five hundred thousand, it is claimed that there is a screw loose somewhere. But there is little doubt that the immigration returns are inaccurate. The British Board of Trade Emigration returns, so far as regards British North America, show an emigration to Canada less than a third of that claimed in the Canadian returns. It is true that they do not include those who go to Canada by way of American ports, a considerable number nowadays, but not sufficient to account for a half of the balance. They include all the steerage passengers as well as actual emigrants, and for that reason are not reliable; the Canadian returns are also of doubtful utility for much the same reason, as there is a large amount of travel on business and pleasure between Canada and the United States. It deserves to be mentioned that there is a widespread feeling in Canada that the census returns are not so accurate as they might be; and it is admitted that the plan of enumeration adopted this year excluded many thousands of persons who would have been included if that in use in 1881 had

been continued. In many places local recounts are threatened, and one or two that have recently taken place seem to indicate that there is some ground for the distrust that exists. The population of Victoria, British Columbia, for instance, according to the official census, was only 16,841, while a later civic recount places the total at 24,972. There is also a divergence between the official and municipal censuses in Toronto and Vancouver. Again, the birth-rate in Canada has diminished in the last twenty years or so; and in Ontario alone it is said that had the size of the average family been maintained at its former percentage, the population this year would have been higher by nearly two hundred thousand!

It is not likely that Canada will get two hundred and fifty thousand people a year in the North-west, as an enthusiastic Governor once prophesied, at anyrate for a long time; but now that the Confederation is practically complete, all the provinces being united by railway, possessing ample means of local communication, and having access to the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, there is no doubt whatever that Canada generally, and especially the Western country, is upon the threshold of a period of active development. General statistics show that the material progress of Canada and its 4,829,411 inhabitants will compare favourably with any other country in which similar conditions prevail, either inside or outside the British Empire; and it will be strange indeed if the next census does not tell a much more satisfactory story than that of 1891.

MAJOR RANDALL'S WARNING.

PART II.

MR DREW was the manager of Merstoke Bank, residing over its offices in the High Street of that small cathedral town. On the morning of the day on which this story opened, he was hurrying over his breakfast in order to get away from the repinings of a discontented wife, who was upbraiding him for being a man with 'no ambition.'

'We ought to take a higher position,' said Mrs Drew.

'Let us be contented as we are, my dear; I am happy in my own station of life,' answered he.

'You don't push.'

'Certainly not to be thrust back again.'

'But you must confess that we are passed over. Lady Compton did not invite us to her garden fête; yet the Fullers were there, and he's only doctor, and as poor as a church mouse.'

'He cured her bad leg, my dear.'

'If you please, it was the servants he attended. One day, hearing she had rheumatics in her knee, he recommended camphorated oil; that's all he did.'

'At anyrate she walks now quite as well as you do, and declares that he cured her.—You have little to complain of, Martha. I am sure that very nice people invite us. We dined last week at the Sub-dean's in the precincts.'

'Bother the Sub-dean! He was only a tutor at Cambridge, and married a governess—and there was nobody of any consequence asked to meet us—only old lawyer Frampton, his deaf wife,

and the new organist at the cathedral; while a few days afterwards they gave another dinner-party with the Dean and Lady Charlotte, and two K.C.B.s!

'In small parties, my dear, people should only be brought together of nearly the same social position,' replied the bank manager, very sensibly.

'I consider myself as much a lady as the Dean's wife—as good as any in the county, and better than most in this town,' replied Mrs Drew, reddening with anger. 'No; it's as I've always said, you don't make enough of yourself; you've no ambition!'

Mr Drew looked at his watch, bolted his toast, drank his remaining coffee, and hurried away. He stopped at the door, however, to fire a parting shot. 'It is not what we consider ourselves, Martha; it is what we are in other people's opinion.' Then he fled. Mrs Drew shed a few angry tears, and set herself to consider how she could alter the existing state of things.

It is a remarkable circumstance frequently occurring, that when people are happy and prosperous, without a serious care in the world, they invent a grievance; and this silly woman was discontented because she could not enter the society to which neither her birth nor her education entitled her.

'A benevolent purpose would be a good way of getting in with them—a fancy bazaar for a charity, if the Mayor would lend the town hall,' she soliloquised. 'When they know me, and what a superior lady-like person I really am, they would cultivate my acquaintance.' This and similar thoughts occupied Mrs Drew's vacant mind that morning for some time, when there was a ring at the house-bell, and a visitor was announced.

Her face grew black, and the frown on her brow reappeared as she heard the name. It was a visitor who seldom called more than once in six months, and was not ushered into her drawing-room—a choice apartment overcrowded with showy furniture—but into a parlour opening from the hall.

This visitor was an old man, tall, thin, who had been handsome in earlier life, with well-cut features, a fair pale face, and light gray eyes. He was dressed in a drab-coloured suit of homespun, and wore leather leggings, as is the fashion of country people. He was Isaac Twyford, the miller at Roby, a small village at some ten miles' distance. His face brightened into a smile when Mrs Drew sailed into the room; he advanced to meet her, putting out his hand, in which she condescendingly placed the tips of her fingers.

'Well, Martha,' said he, 'as usual you do not seem to be pleased at seeing me. Your worthy husband is always friendly; one would suppose that he was my relation, instead of you.'

'What is it you expect, uncle? People cannot always go on in the same groove. I have been married sixteen years, and quite stepped out of my early sphere. I'm sure I'm always civil to you,' replied Mrs Drew with a sigh.

'You are pretty well so, perhaps; but there seems no real warmth in you, for I am a lone man, and you are a blood-relation—my nearest kin; I have felt a void since—since' (here his voice faltered and grew husky), 'since Elizabeth left her old father.'

'Don't mention her name in my presence!' cried Mrs Drew, holding up her hands in abhorrence. 'She's not fit to be mentioned in a decent lady's house!'

'Stay, Martha; not so fast. Elizabeth was lawfully married to the rascal—please to remember that. She is as honest as yourself'—he said this fiercely—'she made a mistake in her choice—taking lacquer for gold; and in leaving her home.—Never mind; we'll drop the subject. I've not come to talk about the poor girl; my visit is for a different purpose.'

'You have a purpose, then?' said she inquisitively.

The old man drew his chair nearer to her, saying confidentially: 'I've just come from Mr Frampton's; I've been making a new will.'

'A new will!' repeated his niece, opening her eyes. 'What is that for?'

'You shall hear. It is twelve years since my girl left me; she and her husband went to Australia, that is certain. Some time after I heard they had gone to Canada. Now, all traces appear to be lost. If Elizabeth returns in the course of the next ten years, she will inherit my property; if not, as my next of kin—I have no relations, save very distant ones—it will, according to law, revert to you.'

Mrs Drew's face brightened up. 'As your brother's daughter, I suppose so,' said she; 'though ten years seem a long while to wait.'

'I have not felt well lately; and for some days there has been an unaccountable weight on my spirits, as if something were going to happen; so I thought I would make a new will, leaving my forgiveness to my mistaken child, to whom, perhaps, I was too severe when I disinherited her; but I have taken care the rascal shall never claim a penny of it!'

'It's all news. You must have some refreshment—a hot chop, and a glass of good port, to hearten you up,' cried Mrs Drew with sudden cordiality, ringing the bell for luncheon.

The old miller did not refuse her offer: he had felt his loneliness of late; and though his niece was not affectionate, yet he found a species of comfort in being with a relative.

After his luncheon, and talking of bygone days and old friends, which did him as much good, he brightened up; and parted with her on more friendly terms than they had been for some years. He had other business to transact in the town, he said, and must get back home, for it looked as if it were going to be a wet night.

'Did you drive in, uncle?' asked she.

'No,' he answered; 'I rode over on Gray Dobbin. I have put him up at the Crown.'

And so they parted, the old man just touching her brow with his lips.

'Delightful!' cried Mrs Drew to herself, when she was alone, rubbing her hands with satisfaction. 'Everybody says he's rich. Really, he looks as if he were booked—very shaky. Seventy is not such a great age; but fretting for that minx Elizabeth has undermined him. Will she ever return, I wonder? That's the question. I think she must be dead, or she would have bothered him for money before this. That husband of hers reckoned to make money of his father-in-law. Roughing it in the colonies would soon wear her out. Fool that she was, to run

away from a good home with a man who had nothing! Well, perhaps it may make it better for other people.'

It is seen by the tenor of her thoughts that Mrs Drew was an unfeeling, worldly woman.

Mr Twyford had scarcely left the house an hour, when another ring at the door-bell announced a visitor.

'A person wishes to see you for a few minutes, mum,' said the maid-servant.

'A man or woman?' asked her mistress.

'She's a faded-like sort of lady,' answered Sarah.

'With a begging-letter, I'll be bound—or somebody worrying for a subscription,' exclaimed the projector of the bazaar for charitable purposes. 'I'll not see her. Tell her I am engaged.'

Presently Sarah returned. 'She says, mum, as how she'd be very much obliged if you'd see her just for a minute.'

'When I say no, I mean it, replied Mrs Drew shortly; then listening, she heard the visitor depart.

Ten minutes afterwards, her husband's voice sounded from the foot of the stairs in the hall; he had been sought in the bank by the 'faded lady,' and brought her into his house through the private door of communication.

'Martha, Martha, come down!' he called out; when she descended, wondering. 'You little know who is in there,' whispering, and motioning over his shoulder towards the parlour door. 'Be civil to her.'

'Whoever is it?' said Mrs Drew, opening the door and entering the room.

The faded lady rose from the chair on which she had been seated, with an air of fatigue. Faded indeed—but still beautiful; though the face was white and wan, it retained its perfect oval; the classical brow and charm of large lustrous eyes—too bright—for it was the brilliancy of consumption. Her figure was fragile and drooping; her attire all too thin and inappropriate to the season, damp with rain, and in the fashion of bygone years.

'Elizabeth!' she cried, halting, struck with dismay.

'Yes,' replied the poor wreck, in a sighing voice. 'I have come back once more; and have called to ask if you will break the news of my return to my father. I fear going to him suddenly; at his age the surprise might be too much for him. I must beg his forgiveness—before I die.'

'I'll not mix myself up in anything of the kind!' returned Mrs Drew angrily. 'It's all very fine saying you've come back to ask his forgiveness, now you are poor, as I conclude you are—glancing at the worn shabby dress. You should have thought of it when you were prosperous.'

'I have never prospered.'

'Martha!' said the bank manager reproachfully.

'Is my father well?'

'I shall give you no information. I washed my hands of you years ago, when you ran away with an adventurer;' and she turned her back, as if to leave the room; but Mr Drew gave her a warning glance as she passed him, which caused her to remain. The kind-hearted man could assert himself when thoroughly roused, and then his wife got the worst of it.

He now seated himself beside Elizabeth. 'Your father is pretty well for a man of his years. He was with me in the bank an hour ago, and is most likely still in the town. Would you like me to try and find him, my dear?' he asked kindly.

'Oh Mr Drew, thank you, thank you!' she cried, clasping her hands.

'He always puts up at the Crown. I shall ascertain his whereabouts there. You sit still here until I come back;' and the good man departed.

Left alone with her cousin, Mrs Drew did not take a chair, but stood, staring at her with a hard expression. 'Well, you see what flying in your father's face has brought you to,' said she. 'Thank goodness, I was always dutiful to mine.—Have you any children?'

'I have had three,' faltered Elizabeth. 'They died in infancy. One lived until four years old—my darling—she was so sensible. I learned to believe in Heaven through my child; she was an angel sent to me.' The unfortunate Elizabeth covered her face with her thin hands and wept silently.

'Is your husband kind to you?' asked Mrs Drew.

'Constant disappointments have much tried him now. At first he was kind; but he thought my father ought to have forgiven me and him; then he became cross because I refused to write asking for assistance.'

'Where have you been all these years?'

'First we went to Brisbane. He could not obtain employment as a clerk or a teacher, and he was not trained for manual labour; so we went to Canada, afterwards to the States; lastly, to California. Nothing succeeded with him. My health failed from the time I lost my little ones. Then he thought he might do better in England, after all; and I longed to see my father once more before I died—so we have come.'

'Well may you regret your conduct.'

'Yet some excuse might be made for me, a giddy, motherless girl, and my father too old to understand young people. His strict principles I miscalled severity. Well, it is all gone and passed now. I trust to see his dear face once more—to hear him say he forgives me; then I will lay down my head and die.'

'I really believe she is in a deep decline,' thought the pitiless woman to herself; then aloud: 'Where are you staying?'

'We only arrived at Liverpool yesterday, and came on here at once. My husband is waiting for me in the town; I hope he will not meet my father,' said she nervously.

'I'm glad I never was a beauty,' said Mrs Drew piously, 'or perhaps even I might have been led astray by flattery—not but that I was nice-looking, and scrupulous in my conduct. I had many offers, and might have done better than marrying Mr Drew, only'—

'No, no!' cried Elizabeth energetically; 'that would be impossible; he is a good kind man.'

At this moment Mr Drew returned, with a radiant face. 'I soon found your father, my dear,' he said, 'who waits to receive you with open arms at the Crown. He declined coming here. You must be guarded in what you say, remember. Your husband's name had best not be

mentioned. Him, he will never forgive.—Come ; I have a fly waiting ; I will take you to him.’

Elizabeth raised the bank manager's hand to her lips and kissed it.

‘She can't live, with that hollow voice,’ soliloquised Mrs Drew when they left the room. ‘I shall not have long to wait for the property.’

Elizabeth Ashworth, after an affecting and perfect reconciliation with her father, sought her husband at the small railway inn at the outskirts of the town where he awaited her return. He was furious when she related the results of the interview she had unexpectedly obtained, which were, that he would receive her back home and reinstate her as his heiress, on condition that she parted from her husband, whose treachery in beguiling a girl of eighteen from her father's roof he could never forgive.

Ashworth, after upbraiding his wife in not having overcome the old man's prejudice, rushed from the house.

Poor Elizabeth was found lying on the floor in a fainting fit. Overcome by excitement and fatigue, she was carried to a bedroom, a doctor sent for, who pronounced her condition to be precarious through failure of the heart's action. Although receiving every care and attention, she never rallied, and by morning's dawn she had passed away, being mercifully spared the knowledge of her father's tragic end.

AN OCEAN GRAVEYARD.

A low sandy fragment in the Atlantic, right in the track of vessels voyaging between Europe and British North America, is responsible for more maritime disasters than probably any piece of land of equal area in any part of the world. This is Sable Island. It has a curious history, as well as some peculiar physical features. An island, moreover, on which as many as two hundred lives have been lost by shipwreck in one year, must have special interest for a maritime people.

Sable Island, then, belongs to the province of Nova Scotia, is about eighty-five miles east from the northern promontory of the peninsula—Cape Canseau (or Canso)—and is in latitude 43° 60' N., long. 60° W. Its general physical appearance is like that of a collection of hard sandbanks with loose white ends. The surface is not level, but undulating ; and its colour so much resembles that of the surrounding sea on a cloudy day, that it is not difficult to understand why vessels have so often run upon it. Fifty years ago it was noted that the island was diminishing in size, for the spot on which the superintendent's house had been built some years previously, was then covered with two fathoms of water. On the other hand, new shoals and banks are being constantly created by the alternate and combined action of the wind and sea.

There is not a single tree or shrub on the whole island, and its only indigenous vegetation is a strong coarse bent-grass, interspersed with a few whortleberry and cranberry bushes in places where the wind has scooped out hollows. So loose is the soil, or sand, that the surface is

constantly altering, and a conical hill once only a few feet high is now over one hundred feet, and is still growing with the tributes of the storms. And often, after a gale, the skeletons of shipwrecked mariners, and the ribs and timbers of derelict vessels which have been buried for years, are exposed by the pitiless sea-blast.

It has been said that those who have not personally witnessed the effect of a storm on this place can have no conception of its horrors. The thunder of the sea when it strikes this long thin line of sand is something appalling, and the vibration of the whole mass under the mighty impact seems to threaten a collapse that never comes. The south end is completely covered with driftwood and wreckage driven ashore by the waves ; and at each end there is a dangerous sandbar, which in a storm raises continuous lines of breakers—in the one case sixteen, and in the other twenty-eight, miles long—making about fifty miles of broken water. The prevailing wind in the summer months is south-west, and is usually accompanied with fog. In winter, snow seldom lies, and the cold is much abated by the seabreeze.

Dr Dawson of Montreal, in his work on Acadian Geology, published some twenty years ago, mentions that it had been reported to him that within the previous twenty-eight years the western end of the island had decreased in length by about seven miles ; but that it had increased in height, especially at the eastern end. There is evidence, he thought, that the whole island is moving eastward, as the natural effect of the prevailing winds. More recent measurements give the present length of the island as little more than twenty miles, and its breadth about a mile. In 1802, when the Government Station was established, the length was marked at forty miles ; so that there has been a decrease of about fifty per cent. in bulk within about eighty years. There is a tradition that when discovered by Sebastian Cabot in 1447 it was eighty miles long, ten wide, and three hundred feet high ; but we have not been able to find any authority for these measurements.

Dr Dawson's explanation of the geological formation of Sable Island is, that it is the summit of one of those huge banks of sand, pebbles, and fragments of shell and coral, which form a line extending under the waters of the Atlantic, parallel with the American coast, from Newfoundland to Cape Cod. The whole of the sandy surface, he concludes, must have been washed and blown up by the sea and wind, and may in course of time be washed and blown down, as the mass is driven gradually to the edge of the submarine bank, and so into deeper water.

In the centre of the island there is a valley extending almost the whole length, in which is found the principal growth of grass and bushes. Eight miles of this valley are filled by a lake, which is separated from the sea by a narrow ridge of about two hundred yards. At one time the sea made a breach into this lake on the north side, and a commodious inland harbour was formed, in which coasters took refuge. But another storm closed it again after a time, and two American schooners were effectually imprisoned.

At each end of this lake there is a hut, fur-

nished with provisions for shipwrecked mariners, and with written directions how to find the house of the superintendent, which is about the centre of the north side of the lake. There is a large barn with stores here, and efforts are made, not with conspicuous success, to grow vegetables. Oats and rye have also been tried, but did not ripen. Rabbits abound; and at one time there was a herd of wild cattle, but these were killed off by various crews of adventurers before the present settlement was formed. Since then, horses have been introduced, and the island is now famous for a breed of strong, active, sturdy ponies, resembling those of Shetland. They at one time increased beyond the means of subsistence, and numbers had to be killed every year, not only for the good of the rest, but also to provide fresh food for the crews of wrecks, who have often to remain a long time before they can get across to the mainland. The meat is said to be tender and palatable. There was once, also, a herd of wild hogs; but the whole perished in an unusually severe winter some seventy years ago, and it has not been thought advisable to renew the stock, as their feeding among the wrecks was by no means free from horrible possibilities. During the summer, the island is visited by great flocks of sea-birds, as also by shoals of the hair-seal, which resort thither for breeding purposes.

The walrus, or sea-horse, at one time frequented the island, and was a valuable object of pursuit. There are notes in the old colonial annals which show that for a long term this island was a place of annual resort for both English and French fishermen. There is mention of a collection of four hundred pairs of walrus teeth, valued at three hundred pounds, and another of skins, furs, &c., valued at fifteen hundred pounds. The walrus is now extinct on Sable Island; but Dr Dawson ascribes its former presence there to the fact that the sandbanks form a meeting-place of the icy Arctic current and the Gulf-stream. The former brought the walrus and the seal; the latter, the driftwood of southern latitudes; while the mingling streams cause the deflection of the current, which throws navigators out of their reckoning and on to the sandbars.

So much for physical attributes, which it will be agreed are by no means attractive. Yet this uninviting sandbank in the Atlantic was really the situation of the first European settlement in what is now British North America. From that circumstance alone our interest is arrested.

It happened in this way. In 1534, Jacques Cartier, a pilot of St Malo, discovered Acadia, and in the following year the St Lawrence. He took back such glowing accounts to France that the French king determined to found a colony in the new land. In 1541, therefore, Roberval was nominated Lieutenant-general of Canada, and was sent out with a fleet to form a colony. The experiment was a failure—from what causes we need not now inquire—and Roberval returned to France with the remnant of his company.

For several years nothing more was done, until, in 1583, Sir Humphrey Gilbert set out from England with two hundred and sixty men to found a colony in Newfoundland. That also was a failure, and again there was a pause. But in 1598 the French again wakened up, and Henry IV. gave the Marquis de la Roche a commission

as Lieutenant-general and Viceroy of Canada, and sent him out to select regions for colonisation. De la Roche took with him forty-eight convicts from the French prisons, with whom he was to found a penal colony. The first land he sighted was Sable Island; and after a cursory inspection, he concluded that this was the very place for a settlement. So he landed his convicts, and then went on to explore Nova Scotia, intending, let us charitably suppose, to return to his island settlers. But stress of weather compelled him to take to the open sea, and he sailed for France, leaving the convicts to their fate. There they remained for several years, until the king, hearing of the circumstance, sent a vessel to bring them away.

Meanwhile, these pioneer colonists had not been idle. A providential wreck had supplied them with timber and a few sheep. They built huts, and lived on the sheep as long as they lasted. Then they hunted seals, and collected the skins while they fed on the flesh. It is said, also, that they found a few wild cattle, the produce of some animals left there by a previous French navigator in 1518; but as to this authorities differ. At anyrate, when the relief-ship came, there were only twelve of the original company who had survived the hardships, and these twelve were clad in rough seal-skins and were living in a rude hut. They were taken home and presented to the king just as they had been found; and he was so touched at their condition and sufferings, that he gave all of them a free pardon and a grant of money. It is sad to have to state that the unfortunates were robbed of the skins they had collected, which were worth a good deal of money, by the commander of the relief expedition; but they afterwards recovered the amount by process of law, and history says that they became prosperous fur-traders.

Possibly some of them went back to Sable Island, for when a vessel on a voyage from Connecticut to England, was, in 1635, wrecked on Sable Island, the crew found there a number of Frenchmen, who treated them kindly, and assisted them in reaching the mainland. Two years previously, John Rose, a Boston man, was wrecked there; and there were no Frenchmen then. But the account he gave of the place tempted several of the Acadian colonists to embark for the island, to hunt the wild cattle and the seals and walrus.

Some years later, a number of Boston adventurers organised a company to explore Sable Island; but when they arrived they found sixteen Frenchmen who had wintered there and had killed nearly all the cattle. The Bostonians did not do much good with the seals, and returned home; but two years later, twenty men set out from Boston again for Sable Island and remained away over two or three winters. After this, Sable Island expeditions from Boston became a regular thing, until there were no more wild cattle to kill, and hunting the sea-horse ceased to be profitable.

This was as long ago as the later half of the seventeenth century; and since then, Sable Island has ceased to have a commercial value. But it has acquired an importance of another and a dismal sort, so much so that the Government of Nova Scotia had to establish a beacon and

refuge for shipwrecked sailors, under the charge of a resident superintendent, with a small company of eighteen men, who are stationed at different parts of the island, on the constant lookout for distressed vessels. This, however, is a beneficent work which has only been undertaken within the present century—in 1802.

Sable Island was, before the Government took it in hand, a sort of paradise of villainy. It was not only the scene of countless wrecks, but also the chosen resort of heartless wreckers and blood-thirsty pirates. How many crimes have been committed on its sandy desert—how many criminals it has sheltered and enriched—will never be known. But the Nova Scotians regard it as a land of ghosts, and shudder at it as a place of fearful legend and of awful fact. It would be hard to find thirty miles of land anywhere more crowded with weird association and ghastly history. No wonder it is called by the Acadians, 'the Ocean Graveyard.'

The first wreck that occurred here of which there is any authentic record was that of one of the ships belonging to the unfortunate expedition of Sir Humphrey Gilbert above referred to. That was three hundred years ago, and the whole sum of disasters of these three hundred years will never be known. The centre of storm, of fog, of sandbars, of apparently endless breakers, and of swirling currents, Sable Island is feared by mariners of all nations. The catastrophe which led to the establishment of a life-shelter there occurred in 1801. The transport *Princess Amelia*, with upwards of two hundred officers, recruits, and crew, and carrying the household effects of the Duke of Kent, was cast on the sandbanks, and every soul on board perished. A gunboat which was sent to search for survivors was wrecked in the same manner, although not with such loss of life. Then it was decided that it was time for Government to do something.

A party was settled on the island for the express purpose of succouring shipwrecked people and saving property, and to ensure them from the depredations of pirates and free-hunters. A proclamation was issued forbidding any person, under pain of imprisonment for not less than six years, to reside on the island without a Government license. The risks are now too great for wreckers, and there is nothing else to attract adventurers. The principal station, as we have said, is near the centre of the valley, and there are five out-stations at which men reside to keep watch. These out-stations have signal arrangements for communicating with the head-station and also with vessels. Then there are, besides, the two refuge-houses already mentioned, the doors of which are always left open, and in which are wood and matches for fire, a supply of water, a bag of biscuits hung on the wall to be out of the way of the rats, and a board of written instructions for castaways. At different stations there are lifeboats, surfboats, life-buoys, rocket apparatus, &c.; and a supply of horses is always kept in readiness to drag the boats, &c., wherever they may be wanted.

We have mentioned rats, and concerning these an interesting incident occurred. It seems that many years ago the island was absolutely overrun with rabbits, which find very suitable places of residence in the sandy soil. But once

an old Norwegian vessel which was overrun with rats was cast ashore. The rats landed, and increased and multiplied so rapidly that they almost annihilated the rabbits, besides playing havoc with the Government stores. So a cargo of cats was imported, and the cats killed off both the rats and the rabbits. Then the cats so increased and multiplied that they in turn became a nuisance, and dogs were imported to extirpate the cats. What became of the dogs is not related; but a few years ago rabbits were again introduced, and rats also reappeared from some other wreck. The old story has been repeated, and two years ago the town of Halifax was beaten for a supply of cats, which were again shipped off to Sable Island. And there the struggle for survival between the rodents and the felines is now again in active progress.

We have said that no persons but those engaged in the life-saving establishment are allowed to reside on the island without a Government permit. There is one class, however, to whom a permit is never refused, and that is the victims of alcoholic indulgence. No drink is obtainable on Sable Island, and thus it has become an asylum for the confirmed inebriates of Nova Scotia. So that this dismal, death-strewn, ghost-haunted, horrible Atlantic excrescence does some good purpose, after all, in spite of all its evil deeds.

AN ELECTRICAL BURGLAR-TRAP.

As a member of the 'special staff' to whom is entrusted the duty of dealing with telegraph business at race meetings and other events of irregular and itinerant occurrence, I have visited most towns of any importance in England, and have been a spectator of, and in some cases a participator in, some curious incidents, one of which I propose to relate here. Many of the most successful meetings, from a racing-man's point of view, are those held at places otherwise of very little size or importance. As an example, it will be sufficient to mention Epsom. It was to a town in the Midlands ordinarily containing about six thousand inhabitants, that I, with five colleagues, including a supervisor, was ordered in the autumn of 187—. The event was a two-day race meeting. The first day was fine, with occasional showers; the racing was good; and as a large company was present, we had enough to do not only at the Grand Stand, but also later in the evening at the town office, whence we despatched a large quantity of press-work by means of a 'Wheatstone,' which had been sent for the purpose. It was eleven o'clock before we finished, and we then had a good half-hour's walk to our lodgings.

The second day was awful. Rain fell in torrents the whole afternoon. Of course the programme was carried out; but, beyond official results and 'received' messages, we had very little to do. It is the only day I can remember during which our boss did not stir out of the office. He generally contrived to have some business to transact outside about the time fixed for each race. This day, however, the persistent downpour was too much for him. After the third race, he sent me to one of the reporters on

some business. I found my man in the weighing-room, a small temporary wooden shed at the back of Tattersall's ring.

When I entered, the jockeys were being weighed in, and there was apparently some difficulty or dispute, as the process was an unusually protracted one. I waited, leaning against the back wall of the shed, and as I did so, became conscious of voices whispering outside. I caught the words, 'A bloke with a big red nose and one eye;' and my attention was arrested at once, for this was a description of our counter-clerk. I listened attentively and with increasing astonishment. The voices were those of two men; and the gist of their conversation was, that a plot which had been formed to rob our office of the cash-box on the previous day had failed, owing to the fact that Harper, our counter-clerk, had taken the box into town early in the afternoon, instead of, as was the practice, at the conclusion of racing. He had, however, been closely watched, and seen to place the box in the local postmaster's safe at the town office. The safe was in the room in which we worked in the evening, and was an old-fashioned, almost obsolete contrivance. All our movements must have been very diligently followed, as the men knew not only the exact position of the safe with respect to the doors and windows, but also at what hour we closed the office, and the whereabouts of our lodgings. They had also ascertained that no one remained during the night in or near the room where the safe was.

The upshot of the conversation, which occupied less time than it has taken me to relate it, was, that the town office was to be entered that night as soon after we had gone as would be considered safe. Entrance was to be effected from the back-yard, through the window of a small room adjoining the larger one in which we worked. Further details I failed to overhear, as the dispute at the weighing-chair, which had been gradually growing warmer, now waxed loud and furious. Taking advantage of the noise, I slipped out and hurried to the office. Taking the boss on one side, I told him all. He was for informing the police at once, and having the place guarded and the thieves scared off; but after a lot of persuasion, I talked him over, convincing him how much more to his credit it would redound if he himself captured the robbers red-handed and unaided by the police. I expounded to him a plan, the main idea of which had struck me at the first moment, to which he listened attentively, and occasionally smiled approvingly. When I ended, he said: 'It would do very well but for one thing. It involves three of us remaining concealed in the office?'

I assented.

'You say they watched us leave last night,' he went on, 'six of us. What will they think if only three leave to-night?'

I was nonplussed.

'I rather like the idea,' resumed the boss; 'but I think we should have help. Suppose we get a couple of Schinken's men?'

Sergeant Schinken was a kind of semi-public, semi-private police officer with a staff of men, who were largely employed by race committees in the task of preserving order in the enclosures, and excluding bad and doubtful characters.

They travelled about from meeting to meeting like ourselves, and in this way a sort of intimacy sprang up.

'Oh, they'd just be as bad as the locals,' I said. 'They'd want to boss the whole affair, and very likely spoil it. I'll tell you what: I'll ask three young fellows I know to come and have a game at cards at our diggings to-night. I'll tell them to call for us at the office half an hour or so before we close. At closing-time we can make some excuse, and send them off with our own three men, whilst you, Harper, and I remain.'

He still hesitated. I could see he was again more than half inclined to let the police deal with the matter. Of course his responsibility was heavy; and should anything go wrong, he would certainly be severely censured. I had, however, the utmost confidence in my plan, and would or could see no possibility of failure; so that, eventually, I succeeded in gaining his consent. This done, I was only anxious for the racing to conclude, that we might get down to the town and prepare our surprise party. At five o'clock the final race was run; and an hour later we were hard at it in the town, wiring full accounts of the day's doings. Only the three of us already mentioned knew of the projected attempt and our counter-plan; and we, convinced that we would be overlooked, assumed to the bent of our abilities an ordinary manner and bearing. Harper produced as usual his cash-box and sheets, counted and balanced his account, telling the money, which amounted to about eighty pounds, out on the counter before him. Finally, he replaced it in the box, which he handed to the boss, who placed it in the safe, closing, but not locking, the door.

Meanwhile, I had, quietly and unobserved, procured a box very similar to Harper's, and after partly filling it with some odd pieces of metal, I fastened one end of a long wire to its brass handle. I prepared another similar piece of wire. Ostensibly for working purposes, I had gathered all the batteries at our command underneath the counter, and when the work was over, I quietly knelt down and joined them all together in series. At the same time I fastened one end of my spare wire to the negative pole of this monster battery; and then, standing up and leaning over the counter, succeeded, unnoticed, in attaching the other end of the wire to a narrow brass rail which ran along the top edge of the counter. I must explain, that in order to reach the safe from the pantry door, as we called it, it was necessary to pass almost the entire length of this counter, and of course to re-pass it in returning.

The hour for closing arrived. My three friends had been waiting some time. Everything being ready, the boss sent our three colleagues home, saying we would follow shortly. The three guests went with them. It was still raining, and they hurried off. The gas was immediately turned off; and I at once opened the safe and removed the cash-box, which Harper put in a place of safety, and substituted the one I had prepared with the length of wire. There was plenty of slack wire, which we brought round the back of the safe, over the other end of the counter, fastening the free end to the positive pole of the battery.

All was now ready. We hid behind the counter and waited. Harper, who was very bitter against the thieves, on account of their unflattering description of himself, took up his place close to the Wheatstone transmitter, a clock-work machine driven by heavy weights, and capable of attaining a very high speed.

An hour passed. It struck twelve. The rain was still beating against the windows. I was stiff and cold and weary, and was beginning to wish we had called in the police, when I heard something a trifle louder than the rain at the pantry window. There was a quick scratching sound like a nail drawn across a slate, and immediately after we heard the window-latch slipped back and the sash quietly raised. The men were certainly expert at their work. Had we not been alert and expecting them, we should not have heard their operations. In a few moments the pantry door opened with a gentle creak, and the marauder was in the room. We held our breath. Confident in his knowledge, the man had no light save what came from the windows. He approached the safe, and could not altogether suppress an exclamation of surprise and delight at finding it open. He was destined for more surprise and less delight shortly. Peeping carefully over the counter, I could just discern him in the dim light, with the box in his right hand, turning to retrace his steps. As I had anticipated, and indeed reckoned on, he stretched out his empty left hand to guide himself along the counter, and—seized the brass rail. As he did so, the full force of the battery struck him. 'Blazes!' he shouted, or rather yelled out. He tried to let go the rail, but in vain. Then he attempted to drop the cash-box, but that stuck to him too. He began to hop about and stamp and groan and swear and pray continually and all at once. We could hear the cash-box thump and rattle against the floor or the counter as the current jerked his arm spasmodically to and fro.

At this point Harper quietly turned on the transmitter and pushed the lever over to top-speed. Any one who has heard an instrument of this description set in motion at its maximum speed knows what a sensation of coming disaster is given by the rapidly increasing revolutions of a score of wheels, which gather speed and force and noise until it seems as if the whole machine will burst up by excess of velocity. Imagine the effect this had on the nerves of the man already in the grip of some mysterious, unfathomable agony. Of course he jumped to the conclusion that the noise indicated some fresh increase of his torments. He began to scream for mercy. 'Oh-h-h! Help me. Murder! Oh gentlemen, stop it! Don't kill me. Help! Help!' He writhed and struggled, fell on his knees, and by an enormous effort, tore the rail from its place; but the battery wire still held on. For a time his cries and struggles redoubled; but at last he lay exhausted on the floor. I then turned off the current, and we turned on the gas. There lay our man, his face gray and distorted, as though he had had a fit. He was quite young. After he had somewhat recovered, he begged hard to be let go, gasping out: 'You've done it hard enough on me.'

After some hesitation, the boss decided to let him go. I fancy he was not quite at his ease

as to how his action would be regarded by the department. Another reason was that the second man had got clean away. He had been waiting outside; but on hearing the disturbance and his pal's cries, had fled and left him.

The man was grateful for his release, and walked slowly and heavily away. He was evidently severely shaken, and I should scarcely think would ever try to rob a telegraph office again.

HEADS AND TAILS.

THE trade in animals and their products is very extensive, and it will be thought curious that there are special trades carried on with the extremities of animals. The Heads and Tails have relative values. As food delicacies, the head of the calf, the sheep, the ox, the wild-boar, and the domestic pig, are appreciated. So is the cod's head. The trunk of the elephant, and the moufle or loose covering of the nose of the great moose-deer or elk, are also dainties in some countries. Animal and human skulls are esteemed by the craniologist and for the cabinets of museums; and the savage head-hunter prides himself upon the number of skulls of his enemies he possesses. The mounted heads of animals adorn many entrance halls and rooms. The ram's head is occasionally converted into an ornamental mull or snuff-box.

There are other animals whose 'head and front' have a commercial value. The snout or rostrum of the sawfish and other species, called in the Eastern Archipelago the 'juparang,' is a very considerable article of trade for the China market, being used as medicine. Mr Anderson, in *A Mission to Sumatra*, says he purchased at Delle, for half a dollar, the largest he had ever seen, being five feet five inches in length, and armed on each side with teeth of an immense size, some two inches in length and fifty-six in number. In India, a reward is offered by the Government for the destruction of tigers, leopards, bears, wolves, hyenas, and other wild ferocious animals. For tigers, about five thousand pounds is paid for the slaughter of fifteen hundred annually; and often two hundred and fifty heads have been brought by natives in a single day, to claim this reward. As much as twelve thousand pounds was paid in 1889 for the destruction of one hundred and ninety thousand wild beasts.

In commerce, the collective name 'head' is applied to other objects than the head of animals. A bundle of flax two feet in length, weighing a few pounds, is termed a 'head.' It is also a trade-name for the thirteen plates of tortoise-shell on the carapace of the hawk's-bill tortoise. The state of a deer's antlers, by which his age is known, is spoken of as his 'head.' At the present day, the oldest stags in Scotland, crown or royal stags, seldom present more than ten or twelve 'points.'

Passing now to tails. The ox-tail and the tail of the kangaroo are much esteemed for soup; and the tail of the beaver, which consists of a gristly kind of fat, is considered a great luxury when it is trapped. The brush of the fox is prized by sportsmen as a trophy, and is often

mounted as an ornament. The broad and heavy tail of the sheep bred in Asia Minor, and for a long time common in South Africa, is not the least valuable portion of the animal. It is composed wholly of fat, which differs essentially from tallow or any other fat excepting lard. Its delicacy enables it to take the place of butter for culinary purposes, and it is in many respects far superior, while also decidedly cheaper. Moreover, 'tail's fat,' as it is called, is as much an article of merchandise there as any other necessary or comfort of life, and a market unsupplied with it would be deemed poor indeed. It fetches a medium price between tallow and butter, and is almost entirely used by the natives instead of the latter.

The negroes esteem the tail of the alligator a delicacy; and Dr Holbrook states that it is tolerable eating, although Catesby found its peculiar taste and odour disagreeable. The tails of the lobster and crayfish form an article of commerce in America, Greece, and Russia, either dried or canned. In Europe they are chiefly sold dried.

One or two million squirrels' tails come into commerce annually: they are known as Calabar tails. The sable tails on mandarins' caps in China denote that the wearers are Tartars. The tails of the squirrel and ermine (sable tips) are esteemed for fur trimmings, and for making fine artists' pencils, being superior for this purpose to all other hairs. Many thousands of martens' tails are also imported. One species of marmot has a black tail eight inches long, or about half as long as the body. The ring-tailed monkey could a tail unfold, but it has no trade value. The point only of the tail of the ermine being jet black, is inserted at intervals into the prepared furs as an ornament. The ermine trimmings of the sovereign and royal family are not, however, spotted with the tail of the ermine, but with the paws of the black Astrakhan lamb, or other suitable black fur.

The tail of the musk-rat, also called the Desman, is placed among clothes and linen in Turkey and Russia as a perfume, to keep away moths. The musk-rat of India, called Mondjourou, is the *Sorex murinus*. About one million and a half of musk-rats' tails are said to be imported annually into Europe, and are sought for by perfumers. The tail of the Musquash, known as the *ondatre* in France, forms a considerable article of import into India, being regarded by some as an aphrodisiac.

The bushy horse-like white tail of the yak, or grunting ox of Tibet, is much prized in the East, where it is used to brush away flies, and also as an emblem of authority. In India these tails are mounted on ivory or silver handles, and are called 'chowries.' State elephants are taught to carry one of these chowries in their trunks and to wave it backwards and forwards. Nearly ten thousand pounds was paid for these tails brought into India in 1890. The tail of the African elephant is used as a fly-flapper and an emblem of authority. The hair on it is stiff and smooth, of glossy black colour, fourteen to fifteen inches long, the size of small iron wire, solid, of a horny nature, very tough, and will bear to be doubled and tied without breaking—though some are brittle—and therefore useful for

making braids to fish-hooks. Neat ornaments, as rings, brooches, &c., are made of them in parts of Africa and Asia.

The long hair on the tail of the horse is much valued for manufacturing purposes. A queue or tail of horse-hair, suspended at the end of a pike, terminated by a gilded pennant, is the emblem of authority of a Turkish pasha of the third rank; those of the first rank have three tails. The usage of these tails is of Tartaric origin.

The jackal's tail is much prized by the Metabele tribe in Africa. They wear a circle of them dangling from their waist-belt, and on their head a jackal's tail, so worn that it stands straight up on one side of the head at the same angle as an English cavalry forage cap.

In the West Indies, a rat-catcher is attached to every sugar estate, because the rats commit great havoc from gnawing the sugar-canes. A reward is therefore given for every dozen tails brought in; but negro ingenuity contrives to manufacture artificial tails. The imported mongoose, or ichneumon, in many islands, now takes the place of the rat-catcher. The same fraud was recently carried on by a mole-killer in Switzerland, who was sentenced to three months' imprisonment for swindling the authorities. The destroyers of moles receive a certain sum for each; but they are not bound to present the bodies to obtain the reward, but only the tails. The man in question delivered no fewer than two thousand, and received a sum of twelve pounds. Surprise was felt at the number; and on close examination, a great many were found to be artificial, manufactured by gumming a strip of the animal's skin on a bit of wire covered with paper. Similar frauds were recently discovered in Australia, where large sums are paid for extirpating rabbits. A clever schemer found he could buy the skins cheap in the towns and sell them at a good profit to the stock-owner as the result of his own killing.

The tail feathers of many birds are in great request, such as those of the peacock, Argus pheasant, and eagle. Those of the common peacock are much used in China for fly-flappers, and are also a mark of rank conferred by the emperor for special services. The tail feathers of the golden eagle are worn in the bonnets of most of the Highland clans, and by Zulu chiefs in South Africa.

PAWN AND TOBACCO IN INDIA.

PAWN (properly *pán*) is a luxury much esteemed by the natives of India. It consists of the fresh leaf of the betel-vine (*Piper Betel*), in which is placed a little red catechu, betel-nut, and quicklime; spices are also often added, and sometimes a piece of dry tobacco. Cloves and a piece of the root of the betel-vine are sometimes added medicinally, for colds and coughs, for pawn is also regarded as a stimulant. If a native of India be an opium eater, he adds some of his favourite narcotic. When these several additions have been made, the leaf is folded in a particular way and eaten with its contents. The betel-leaf is obtained from a creeper extensively cultivated

by the Hindus, who regard it as very sacred ; and it is with the greatest difficulty that any one who is a follower of another religion can obtain admittance into a plantation of betel-vines. The betel-nut is obtained from the areca palm, and is so called simply because it is eaten with the betel-leaf.

The visible effect of eating pawn is that the teeth, tongue, and lips all become red, and the two latter much swollen, so much so, that after a long course of pawn-chewing, the utterance becomes thick and indistinct, and the teeth black. The expectoration is also much increased, and is coloured a deep red from the same cause.

To our English taste, pawn is very offensive ; but the natives of India relish it, and regard it as a necessity. It is much eaten by Mohammedans of both sexes, and by the natives of Bengal. The Hindus of Northern India do not indulge in it so freely. Eurasians and others of mixed races frequently chew it ; and some are in the habit of continually taking it ; but it would be quite accurate to say that no person of pure English parentage is in the habit of eating pawn.

When a native pays a call upon a fellow-countryman, the master of the house immediately calls for pawn ; and when it is prepared, all present begin to chew it, carrying on conversation meanwhile. When the called-upon thinks that it is time for his friend to leave, he gives some gentle hint, such as, that he hopes his friend will call again soon ; and the caller rises to depart ; but before he leaves the house, he is presented with more pawn, so that he may not leave with his mouth empty.

Bengali baboos (native gentlemen) when leaving home for business habitually supply themselves with pawn ; and any day they may be seen going along the streets with lips and tongues swollen and red. It is not considered etiquette by the natives of India to eat pawn or anything else in the presence of social superiors or employers.

Another thing in which the natives of India indulge just as much as in pawn is tobacco. The substitute for the English pipe which is used in India is the hookah. The base of the hookah is a brass vessel containing water ; this serves as a pedestal, and into it are fitted side by side two tubes about an inch in diameter. One of these tubes is about two feet in height, and has at the top a little round earthen vessel called a chillum. This chillum is a cup about four inches in height, and the same in width ; at the bottom it has a hole just large enough to be fitted on to the tube. A little earth is put loosely into the hole, to prevent the contents falling down the tube ; then some tobacco is put in, and over this some live charcoal. Those who are addicted to the use of opium frequently place some of the drug in the chillum along with the tobacco. The second tube runs up parallel with the first for some distance, and then branches out sideways for two feet or more : to the end of this tube the smoker applies his mouth and—enjoys himself. The smoke being drawn through the water in the pedestal makes the peculiar sound which causes the hookah to be called the 'hubble-bubble.'

This description of hookah is most commonly

used among the better classes ; but there are many varieties. The poorer classes make a cocoa-nut shell serve the purpose of the brass water-vessel. The chillum is fixed on to a tube which is put into a hole at the end of the shell ; a second impromptu tube is formed with the hand and applied to a side-hole, through which the smoke is drawn.

It is not, as among the English, that only some men smoke tobacco ; but, with rare exceptions, all natives, men and women, indulge in this weed in some form or other. The hookah is smoked as a refreshment and sign of fellowship by the natives of India, and not merely as a luxury. When a group of natives are seated together, and, as is the custom, the hookah is passed round to each in turn, it is considered very bad manners for any one to decline to have a few puffs. If the hookah is thus refused in a friend's house, or while one is the guest of another, it is regarded as an insult. If, for any reason, a native is put out of caste, the fact is strictly marked by his former caste-fellows' refusal to smoke with him ; and any one who eats, drinks, or smokes with an out-caste, is himself out-casted.

It is curious how, while the Englishman speaks of 'smoking' tobacco, the Chinaman and native of Bengal speak of 'eating' it, and the native of Northern India speaks of 'drinking' tobacco, thus indicating that they regard it as one of the necessities of life. Tobacco grows freely in India, which may account for its cheapness and universal use.

A SEASIDE REVERIE.

A BLUE dome of heaven seeming
Faint blue 'gainst the sea, that, gleaming,
Trembles beautiful and bright ;
'Neath the island's purple steeps,
Dancing diamond-wise, it leaps,
In the sunny summer light.

And the wild high grasses blowing,
Listen to the tide in-flowing
With eternal melodies ;
Scarlets poppies kiss the feet
Of the young corn growing sweet
In the pleasant upland leas,

Growing in the sunshine sweetly,
While the summer wind goes fleetly
With light footsteps to the sea ;
Kisses he the laughing corn
As he goes this sunlit morn
With swift wings and merrily.

The sweet silence is unbroken ;
Rarely human words are spoken
On this yellow grassy hill ;
But the brown bee flying hums,
While for ever upward comes
The sea voice, never still.

MARY FURLONG.

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A NORTH-COUNTRY 'LION.'

THOUGH neither Shakespeare nor Sir Walter Scott took Alnwick Castle for his theme of song, prophetically or retrospectively, there is a glamour about this Border stronghold of the ancient Percies that is confessed by most educated persons. Perhaps it is the romance of the old Border song, *Chevy Chase*, that has entered into it; or perhaps it is the renown of Hotspur, and the great part played by the Percies in the destinies of kings, or it may be something in the structure itself, that imparts this charm. Be that as it may, it is certain that any one wishing to see the Lions of the North would miss one of the most impressive if he failed to view Alnwick Castle.

This ancient fortress and residence was not built by the Percies, but was purchased in 1309, by Henry de Percy, who added much to its original strength and accommodation immediately afterwards. Considerable portions of the structure that he acquired, and several of the towers with which he enlarged it, are still standing, and show that the first builders enclosed as large an area as is now surrounded by the curtain-wall. It is not known whether there was a Saxon building on the site, as Northumberland was not included in the great survey we call Domesday Book; but mention of the Norman Castle occurs in a charter granted to William de Vesci by Henry II., which confirmed his right to all the lands and tenures of his father, Eustace de Vesci, including the castle and the whole honours of his grandfather, Ivo de Vesci. These de Vescies were men of note; their barony consisted of sixty manors; their castle was 'most strongly fortified;' and they played important parts in the wars and other business of their times; they founded two abbeys in the neighbourhood of their stronghold, and gave the burgesses of Alnwick the right of pasture over a great tract of moorland, which they still enjoy. Eustace de Vesci was one of the barons who secured for the nation the privileges conferred by the Magna Charta,

and married a daughter of the Scottish king, William the Lion; and William de Vesci, the grandson of this couple, was one of the thirteen claimants to the Scottish throne in the time of Edward I. It was after the death of this baron that Anthony Bek, whom he had left in trust of his Northumbrian estates, sold the castle to Henry de Percy, in the third year of the reign of Edward II.

The keep of this stronghold consisted then, as it does now, of a ring of towers enclosing a central courtyard; and it was placed nearly midway in an area of about five acres in extent, surrounded by a high curtain-wall, strengthened at intervals and at some of the angles with strong towers. There were two moats—one outside the wall, and the other inside, immediately surrounding the keep. Henry de Percy on taking possession built a new barbican, and had his lion and motto, 'Espérance en Dieu,' carved in a panel on the face of it; and he also built new entrance towers to the keep, and a new dining-hall in the keep, with vaulted cellars below it. We may picture him, bronzed with much service in the field, keen and active arranging these matters, of which, however, he had no long enjoyment, as he died about six years after the acquisition. His son probably completed these improvements, and others were occasionally made by his illustrious descendants, especially by the son of Hotspur, whose work has also been identified. When the fortunes of the family prevented, for a time, continuous residence in the north, the great stronghold was left very much to its fate.

In the eighteenth century, four hundred years after Henry de Percy acquired it, and on the marriage of the heiress of the Percies, the Lady Elizabeth Seymour, with the handsome Sir Hugh Smithson, who was created first Duke of Northumberland, a great renovation was accomplished. Many of the old features of the fabric were removed; the towers of the keep were made of uniform height, and the rooms within them made gorgeous with ornamental stucco-work, then much

in vogue. The castle became a commodious residence in the fashion of the day; most of the traces of its garrison use and service were obliterated, and the pleasure-grounds and parks around it were improved by very extensive plantations. In the course of another century the reasonableness and taste of these alterations came to be questioned; and in our own day the knightly structure has been again remodelled and re-embellished. About five hundred and fifty years after the first Percy, lord of Alnwick, ordered the commencement of the works he required, his representative, Algernon, fourth Duke, laid similar commands upon his architect, and upon various Italian artists of note, who forthwith made the Border fortress into the combination of Plantagenet castle and palatial residence we now see.

It stands on a bank on the south side of the river Alne, close to the great North Road, and is built of a mellow-toned sandstone. Of the towers forming the keep one rises higher than the rest; that was built by the fourth Duke, and called the Prudhoe Tower, for the reason that he was known as Lord Prudhoe before he succeeded his brother in the dukedom; and on the summits of many of the other towers, as well as on those along the line of circumvallation and on the barbican, are stone effigies of men throwing down huge stones or discharging arrows, and in other ways appearing to defend their fortress. These stand out boldly against the sky. On passing under the sombrous archway of the barbican, and emerging through an inner gateway beyond it, those who enter find themselves face to face with the keep, in a spacious grass-laid bailey, traversed by a curved stone-paved drive which conducts to the entrance of a second bailey, in which stands the approach to the innermost courtyard. The moat has been almost effaced, and the drawbridge has been replaced by a permanent way; but the Norman archway is the same through which King John passed to and fro on four visits, and under which Henry III. and three King Edwards also passed. On either side of this gateway are Henry de Percy's towers, and below the basement of one of them is the underground prison where captives languished; and just inside it, under a recessed arch, is the well.

Before entering the keep, the curtain-wall is worth a careful glance. It is dove-coloured, dun-coloured, and silver-gray, according to the aspect, and here and there a stone 'streaked with iron brown.' There are different modes of masonry in it, marking where it has been heightened by some of its owners, or a breach made in it by some of its besiegers, or a tower removed and its space filled up as time went by. Those who made these changes, who chipped and fashioned the stones to suit them for their purpose, took no account of the manner in which the previous builders had made their stonework; they did not say, 'We will build as our fathers built of old,' but went on in their own method, the Plantagenet masons with larger stones than those of the Norman masons, and the Tudor builders again with stones that were twice as long as they were high, and sometimes thrice as long. The small squarish stones of the Norman masons are now rounded at the edges and interstices with

the winds and rains and frosts of eight centuries, and are easily distinguished from the less worn work of later years by their regularity and smallness. The Plantagenet ashlar is nobler, larger, of more unequal heights, and make more stalwart walling; and the Tudor work has an air of mellowness, as though it was gradually ripening in the sunshine. Besides the towers, there are garrets, or turrets, along the lines of walls for the shelter of those who manned them. On the tops of some lengths, where it is about five feet thick, are paved footwalks for the warders. From the bases of some of the towers to the height of the tops of the walls are stone stairs to give access to them. If we look narrowly at the parapets we may see a few of the grooves and bolt-holes for the wooden shutters with which the embrasures were once provided for the protection of defenders. And in one length of the curtain may be seen gargoyles in the form of cannon-mouths, placed there in the days when cannon were of a different calibre from those with which we are now familiar.

The towers are of much interest. Their names signify their uses. There is the Abbot's Tower, for instance, which has three spacious chambers one above the other, with a spiral stone staircase giving access to the upper two, with arrow-slits only to light the lowermost and stone-vaulted one, and cusped or shoulder-headed openings of a larger size to light those above. There is the Constable's Tower, which is lighted by crossbow openings, and on the second floor by a double-transomed window of rare pictorial aspect, and which has external stone steps leading to this middle chamber, which opens on to the top of the curtain wall. There is the Record Tower; and there were the Falconers' and Armourers' Towers, now removed; and there is the Postern Tower, also of three stories in height, very strong, stern, and massively walled, with a low narrow doorway in the basement giving access to the wide length of bank between the Castle and the river. Some of them are used as museums; one is an *atelier*; in another is kept the large collection of antiquated arms with which the Percy tenantry proposed to resist Bonaparte's expected invasion; and archives are stored in another.

When we enter the residential part of the Castle, or ring of towers forming the keep, we think no more of the de Vescies; or of Henry de Percy; or of Hotspur; or of the old Earl portrayed for us by Shakespeare; or of the Percies who fought at Cressy, Bramham Moor, Shrewsbury, Towton, Percy's Cross, St Albans, Bosworth, and Flodden; or of the later Earl, 'well horst upon a fayr corser with a footcloth to the grounde of Cramsyn velvet,' who escorted the daughter of Henry VII. through Yorkshire, Durham, and Northumberland, on the occasion of her progress into Scotland to marry James IV. We think no more, even, of Chevy Chase, as we begin to ascend the magnificent staircase that leads from the entrance hall to the chief apartments. We begin to think immediately of Roman palaces, of San Lorenzo, of the Camera Borgia, of the Castella del San Angelo; of Michelangelo, Bramante, Raphael, and Giulio Romano. Panels of polished Italian marbles line the walls; Venetian mosaic-work is spread

upon the floor of the vestibule into which the staircase conducts us; arcades and pilasters, frescoes, friezes, bas-reliefs, meet the eye; and tones as of lurid sunsets on the Campagna, or of awakening sunrises on southern seas, recall gorgeous interiors of cinquecento workmanship in the Eternal City. The vestibule gives access to an antechamber, from which the library is entered on the one hand; and the saloon, and beyond that the drawing-room and dining-room, on the other. A corridor also departs from it in another direction, which furnishes communication with these and other apartments, as well as with other staircases and the gallery of the chapel.

The library, as is the case with all the other rooms, follows the contour of the tower in which it is placed. It is fifty-four feet long, with a bay in the centre that projects sixteen feet; and it has three fireplaces in it, with coloured marble mantel-pieces, and two tiers of bookcases, one above the other, all round it, the upper one of which is approached by a staircase in the thickness of the walls, and furnished with a light gallery. The ceiling is divided into four compartments, in which are octagonal panels with carved devices relating to the arts and sciences.

On the opposite side of the antechamber, which is hung with damasked satin and very richly decorated and furnished, a door opens into the saloon, in which a bay following the contour of a semicircular tower is modified into a semi-octagon with slanting angles. The white marble mantel-piece is supported by Roman slaves; the dado is of walnut and maple inlaid; the window shutters and doors are richly carved; the walls hung with damasked satin and enriched with a frieze between the cornice and architrave; and the ceiling is coffered and panelled, and the carved-work in each panel is gilded. Adjoining it is the drawing-room. Two female figures, copied from antique canephore, uphold the marble mantel-piece; and the dado and other woodwork, the ceilings and the walls, are treated with the same sumptuousness as those of the saloon. The utmost harmony of tone prevails. Beyond the drawing-room, in the adjoining tower, is the dining-room, which covers the site of the dining-hall built by Henry de Percy. The art of the Italian carver and his school of English and Scottish assistants, who were engaged for some years in perfecting this re-embellishment, is seen in this apartment to more advantage than in the others, as their work in the superb ceiling, the dado, doors and window-shutters, is left, uncoloured and ungilded, in the natural tints of the pine and cedar and walnut woods employed. The great marble mantel-piece is supported by a bacchante and fawn, and is sculptured with the arms of the fourth Duke and his Duchess.

Over and above these constructional enrichments, and the lustre of the marbles, and splendour of gold and colours, all these apartments are adorned with paintings by some of the most gifted of the old masters, by superb mirrors, gilded chairs and inlaid cabinets and tables, soft-piled carpets, and innumerable artistic elegances. The chapel is within easy access of them; and has been made noteworthy with the mosaic-work known as *Opus Alexandrum*. There are other apartments of similar Italian presentment that are admirable, one of which, especially a boudoir,

is treated with still more lavishment of costliness.

The kitchens, which adjoin the line of circumvallation, bring us back to old associations again. Opposite the huge open fire, which consumes a ton of coal at a time, hangs the great dish for the baron of beef, which, preceded by a ducal piper playing *Chevy Chase* on the Northumbrian pipes, is placed upon the banquet-table on grand occasions. Around are all the appliances modern ingenuity has been able to invent to further the most artistic preparation of food. The principal kitchen is about thirty-four feet square; and the walls, floor, and lantern-shaped roof are built of stone in the old mediæval manner. There is a great hydraulic roasting-jack; and steam is made to take several parts in the necessary operations. There is another kitchen where vegetables only are prepared; and there are also a pastry kitchen, larders for meat, fish, game, stock, and a plucking-room. Lifts are used to lessen labour. Below the kitchens are huge vaults for coals and lifts for them. Along the same side of the bailey are the numerous offices required for the conduct of the business of the estate; and near them is the four-faced clock tower.

The centuries; the number of sovereigns who have passed under the gateway and dismounted in the courtyard to partake of hospitality; the ancient Percies, and the times their warriors were brought home dead; the celebrities who visited it in the days of the first Duke and Duchess; as well as the reputations of the artists, scholars, and antiquaries engaged upon the most recent alterations and decorations, have combined to invest this northern lion with an interest that the passing of years can only enhance. Ever and anon great gatherings are held in it that in their turn impart fresh associations. Twenty-five years ago, when the present Earl Percy came of age, there was a week of rejoicing with fêtes and feasts; and now History has repeated itself with similar expressions of joy and gladness on the coming of age of his eldest son, Lord Warkworth.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XIX.—THE PRODIGAL AT HOME.

IN the morning, Elsie rose at seven and put together such things as she would want for the three weeks before her marriage, if she was to spend that interval under her brother's care. At eight o'clock she received her letters—including one in a handwriting she did not know. She opened it. 'DEAR ELSIE,' it said, 'come to me at once. Come early. Come to breakfast at nine. I will wait for you till ten, or any time. —Your affectionate brother, ATHELSTAN.'

'Oh!' she murmured. 'And I did not know his writing. And to think that I am twenty-one, and he is thirty-one; and that I have never had a letter from him before!'

Her boxes were packed. She put on her jacket

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and hat and descended into the breakfast-room, where her mother was already opening her letters and waiting breakfast.

'You are going out, Elsie?' she asked coldly.

'Yes. Hilda told you, I suppose, what she came here for yesterday. In fact, you sent me a message.'

'I hope she delivered it correctly.'

'She said that you would not sanction my wedding while this charge, or suspicion, was hanging over George's head. And that you would not see him until it was withdrawn or cleared away.'

'Certainly. In such a case it would be worse than hypocrisy to receive him with friendliness.'

'Then, like Hilda, you accept the conclusion.'

'I am unable to do anything else. The conclusion seems to me inevitable. If not, let him explain. I hope that no time will be lost in bringing the formal charge. It is foolish kindness—real cruelty—to all concerned to keep such a thing hanging over our heads. I say *our* heads, not yours only, Elsie, because you know your brother is implicated—perhaps the real contriver—of the dreadful scheme.'

'Would you believe me if I were to tell you that Athelstan *could* not be implicated?'

'My dear—believe you? Of course, I would believe if I could. Unfortunately, the evidence is too great.'

Elsie sighed. 'Very well; I will say nothing more. You have driven out my lover, as you drove out my brother for the self-same cause, and on the self-same charge. I follow my lover and my brother.'

'Elsie!'—her mother started. 'Do not, I pray you, do anything rash. Remember—a scandal—a whisper even—may be fatal to you hereafter. Sit down and wait. All I ask you to do is to wait.'

'No; I will not wait. If those two are under any cloud of suspicion, I too will sit under the cloud and wait until it lifts. I am going to stay with my brother until my wedding. That is to be on the 12th.'

'No—no—my poor child. There will be no wedding on the 12th.'

'Before that time, everything will be cleared up, and I shall be married from this house, so that I have left all my things, my presents—everything.'

Her mother shook her head.

'Try not to think so cruelly of George and of Athelstan, mother. You will be sorry afterwards. Try to believe that though a case may look strange, there may be a way out.'

'I have told you'—her mother was perfectly cold and unmoved—'that I have come to this conclusion on the evidence. If the young man can explain things, let him do so. There will be no wedding on the 12th—Elsie. You can come home as soon as you are convinced that your brother is an improper person for a young lady to live with, and as soon as you have learned the truth about the other young man. That is to say, I will receive you under these distressing circumstances, provided there has been no scandal connected with your name.'

Elsie turned and left the room. The fifth commandment enjoins that under such circum-

stances as these the least said the soonest mended.

When a man learns that his sister, his favourite sister, from whom he has been parted for eight years, the only member of his family who stood up for him when he was falsely accused of a disgraceful thing, is about to take breakfast with him, he naturally puts as much poetry into that usually simple meal as circumstances allow. Mostly Athelstan took a cup of coffee and a London egg. This morning he had flowers, raspberries lying in a bed of leaves, a few late strawberries, various kinds of confections in dainty dishes, toast and cake, with fish and cutlets—quite a little feast. And he had had the room cleared of the bundles of newspapers: the pipes and cigar cases and all the circumstances of tobacco were hidden away—all but the smell, which lingered. One thinks a good deal about a sister's visit, under such conditions. At a quarter past nine Elsie arrived. Athelstan hastened to open the door, and to receive her with open arms and kisses strange and sweet. Then, while the people of the house took in her luggage, he led his sister into the room, which was the front room on the ground-floor.

'Elsie!' he said, taking both her hands in his, 'eight years since we parted—and you are a tall young lady whom I left a little girl. To hold your hand—to kiss you, seems strange after so long.' He kissed her again on the forehead. She looked up at the tall handsome man with a kind of terror. It was almost like casting herself upon the care of a strange man.

'I remember your voice, Athelstan, but not your face. You have changed more than I, even.'

'And I remember your voice, Elsie—always a soft and winning voice, wasn't it?—to suit soft and winning ways. There never was any child more winning and affectionate than you—never.'

'Oh! you are grown very handsome, Athelstan. See what a splendid beard, and the brown velvet jacket, and white waistcoat—and the crimson tie. You look like an artist. I wish all men wore colours, as they used to do. I only heard yesterday that you were in London. Hilda told me.'

'Was that the reason why you cannot stay at home?'

'Part of the reason. But you shall have breakfast first. You can take me in without any trouble?'

'My dear child, I am more than delighted to have you here. There is a room at the back where you will be quiet: we have only this one room for sitting-room, and I think we shall find it best to go out every day to dinner. That will not hurt us, and George will come every evening. —Now, Elsie, you sit here, and I will— No—I quite forgot. You will pour out the tea. Yes—I see. I thought I was going to wait upon you altogether.—There—now you will make a good breakfast, and—and— Don't cry, dear child.'

'No—Athelstan.' She brushed away the tears. 'It is nothing. I shall be very happy with you. But why are you not at home? And why am I here? Oh! it is too cruel—too perverse of them!'

'We had better have it out before breakfast, there.—Strawberries don't go well with tears, do they? Nor jam with complainings. Come, Elsie, why need you leave home?'

'Because, in two words, they are treating George as they treated you. I was younger then, or I would have gone away with you.'

'Treating George? Oh! I understand. They are pouring suspicion upon him. Well, I saw that this was coming. Old Checkley, I swear, is at the bottom of this.'

'Yes—Checkley went to Sir Samuel with the "Case," as he called it, complete. He proved to their joint satisfaction that nobody could have done the thing except George, assisted by you.'

'Oh! assisted by me.'

'Yes—while you were in California, I suppose. There is to be a warrant for your arrest—yours and George's—in a few days, they say. Hilda brought the news to my mother. They both believe it, and they want me to break off my engagement. My mother refuses to see George so long as this charge, as she calls it, remains over him. So I came away.'

'You did wisely. Well—any one may call up a cloud of suspicion, and it is sometimes difficult to disperse such a cloud. Therefore, we must do everything we can to find out who is the real criminal.—Now, let us rest quite easy. There can be no arrest—or any charge—or anything but a fuss created by this old villain. It is only troublesome to find one's own people so ready to believe.'

'Why did you not tell me that you were home again?'

'Pour out the coffee, Elsie, and begin your breakfast. I wanted to reserve the Return of the Prodigal until you came home after your honeymoon. Then I meant to call mysteriously about sunset, before George was home. I thought I would have a long cloak wrapped about me. I should have begun: "Madam: you had once a brother."—"I had"—that is you.—"On his deathbed."—"My brother dead?"—that's you.—"With this packet."—Oh! we have lost a most beautiful little play. How can I forgive you?'

Then they went on with breakfast, talking and laughing until, before the meal was finished, they had lost their shyness and were brother and sister again.

After breakfast, Athelstan took a cigarette and an easy-chair. 'Now I am going to devote the whole day to you. I have nothing to do for my paper which cannot wait till to-morrow. All this morning we will talk—that is, until we are tired. We will have lunch somewhere, and go to see the pictures. George will come at about seven: we will have dinner, and go to the Naval Exhibition. Then we will get home, and have another talk. To-morrow, I shall have to leave you to your own devices between ten and six or so. I am very busy some days; on others, I can find time for anything.—Now that's all cleared up. I am to be your banker and everything.'

'Not my banker, Athelstan. Oh! you don't know. I am a great heiress.'

'Indeed? How is that?' he asked, a little twinkle in his eye.

'Mr Dering told me when I was twenty-one,

three weeks ago. Somebody has given me an immense sum of money—thirteen thousand pounds.'

'That is a very handsome sum. Who gave it to you?'

'That is a secret. Mr Dering refuses to tell me. I wish I knew.'

'I wouldn't wish if I were you. Gratitude is at all times a burden and a worry. Besides, he might be a vulgar person without aspirates or aspirations. Much better not inquire after him. Thirteen thousand pounds at three and a half per cent. means four hundred and fifty pounds a year. A nice little addition to your income. I congratulate you, Elsie; and this evening we will drink the health of the unassuming benefactor; the retiring and nameless recogniser of maidenly worth. Bless him!'

'And now, Athelstan, begin your adventures. Tell me everything: from the day you left us till now. You cannot tell me too much or talk too long. Before you begin, ask any questions about my mother and Hilda that you want to ask. Then we can go on undisturbed.'

'I have no questions to ask about either. I have already ascertained from George that both are in good health, and that Hilda has married a man with an immense fortune. That is happiness enough for her, I hope.—Now, Elsie, I shall be tedious, I am afraid; but you shall hear everything.'

He began. It was such a narrative as thousands of young Englishmen have been able to tell during the last five-and-twenty years. The story of the young man with a few pounds in his pocket, no friends, no recommendations, and no trade. Athelstan landed at New York in this condition. He looked about for employment and found none. He hastened out of the crowded city: he went West, and got work in the business open to every sharp and clever man—that of journalism. He worked for one paper after another, getting gradually more and more West, until he found himself in San Francisco, where he was taken on by a great paper, which had now sent him over here as its London correspondent. That was all the story; but there were so many episodes in it, so many adventures, so many men whom he remembered, so many anecdotes cropping up, in this eight years' history of a man with an eye, a brain, and a memory, that it was long past luncheon-time when Athelstan stopped and said that he must carry on the next chapter at another time.

'That pile of dollars that you made over the silver mine, Athelstan—what became of them?'

'What became of them? Well, you see, Elsie, in some parts of the United States money vanishes as fast as it is made. All these dollars dropped into a deep hole of the earth, and were hopelessly lost.'

She laughed. 'You will tell me some day—when you please—how you lost that fortune. Oh! what a thing it is to be a man and to have all these adventures!—Now, Athelstan, consider—if it had not been for your bad fortune, you would never have had all this good fortune.'

'True. Yet the bad fortune came in such an ugly shape. There has been a black side to my history. How was I to tell people why I left

my own country? I could make no friends. At the first appearance of friendship, I had to become cold, lest they should ask me where I came from and why I left home.'

Elsie was silent.

They carried out part of their programme. They went to see the pictures—it was eight years since Athelstan had seen a picture—and after the pictures they walked in the Park. Then they went home and waited for George, who presently appeared. Then they went to one of the Regent Street restaurants and made a little feast. After this, Elsie asked them to come home and spend a quiet evening talking about things.

By common consent they avoided one topic. Edmund Gray was not so much as mentioned, nor was the malignity of Checkley alluded to. They talked of old days, when Athelstan was a big boy and George a little boy and Elsie a child. They talked of the long engagement, and the hopeless time, when it seemed as if they were going to marry on two hundred pounds a year: and of that day of miracle and marvel when Mr Dering gave to one of them a fortune, and to the other a partnership. They talked of their honeymoon and the tour they were going to make, and the beautiful places they would see. Tours and Blois, Chenonceaux and Amboise; Angoulême and Poitiers and La Rochelle; and of their return, and the lovely flat, where the friends would be made so welcome. Athelstan was a person of some sympathy. Elsie talked as freely to him as she could to George. They talked till midnight.

Then Elsie got up. 'Whatever happens, Athelstan,' she said, 'mind—whatever happens, you shall give me away on the 12th.'

'Now she has left us,' said George, 'you may tell me why she refused to stay at home.'

'Well—I suppose you ought to know. Much for the same reason that I refused to stay at home. They then chose to jump at the conclusion that at one step I had become from a man of honour, a stupid and clumsy forger. They now choose—I am ashamed to say—my mother and sister choose—to believe that you and I together have devised and invented this elaborate scheme of forgery. With this end in view, it has been found necessary to contrive certain little fabrications—as that I have been living in London on my wits—that is to say, by the exercise of cheater—y—for the last eight years; and that, being in rags and penniless, I persuaded you to join me in this neat little buccaneering job.'

'Oh! it is too absurd! But I suspected something. Well—it is perfectly easy to put a stop to that.'

'Yes, it is easy. At the same time, it will be well to put a stop to it as soon as possible, before the thing assumes serious proportions, and becomes a horrid thing, that may stick to you all your life. You have got to do with a malignant man—perhaps a desperate man. He will spread abroad the suspicion as diligently as he can. Let us work, therefore.'

'Well—but what can we do, that we have not done? How can we fix the thing upon Checkley?'

'I don't know. We must think—we must find out something, somehow. Let us all three

work together. Elsie will make the best detective in the world. And let us work in secret. I am very glad—very glad indeed—that Elsie came.'

DETECTION OF CRIME BY PHOTOGRAPHY.

BY T. C. HEPWORTH.

THE detection of crime is a matter of fascinating interest to all but those who, unhappily for themselves, have to pay the penalty of wrong-doing. The novelist as well as the dramatist knows well that a crime round which a mystery hangs, or which involves the detection or pursuit of a suspected individual, is a theme which will at once secure the attention of those for whom he caters. In one respect it is a misfortune that this should be so, for there has arisen a copious supply of gutter literature, which, by its stories of wonderful escapes, and lawless doings of notorious thieves and other vagabonds, arouses the emulation of youthful readers, and often, as the records of our police courts too frequently prove, tempts them to go and do likewise. On the other hand, we cannot look without admiration at such a wonderful word-picture as that given us in *Oliver Twist*, where the wretched Sikes wanders with the brand of Cain upon him, haunted by the visionary form of his victim.

Both novelists and playwrights have many clever ways of tracking their puppets and hounding them to death. Some of these are hackneyed enough, such as the footmark in the soil, the dirty thumb-mark on the paper, &c.; and he who can conceive a new way of bringing about the inevitable detection is surely half-way towards success.

Once, again, has romance been beaten by reality. In this matter of the detection of criminals the Photographic Camera has lately performed such novel feats, that quite a fresh set of ideas is placed at the disposal of fiction-mongers. The subject recently came before the Photographic Society of Great Britain in the form of a paper by Dr Paul Jeserich of Berlin, a chemist, who has devoted his attention for many years to the detection of crime by scientific means, and more especially by means of photography. This paper was illustrated by a remarkable collection of photographs, which were projected by means of an optical lantern. Some of the wonderful results obtained by this indefatigable worker we will now briefly place before our readers.

Most persons are aware that for many years it has been the practice in this and other countries to take the portraits of criminals when they become the unwilling tenants of the State, and such photographs have proved most useful in subsequent identification. There is little doubt, thinks Dr Jeserich, that this system might with advantage be extended to the photographing of

the scene of a crime, for the camera will faithfully record little details, at the time considered to be unimportant, but which may supply a valuable link in the chain of evidence later on. Thus, he refers to a case of murder, when, in the course of a terrible struggle, the contents of a room were upturned, a clock, among other things, being hurled from its place and stopped. A photograph would have shown the hour at which the deed was done, a fact of first importance, as every prisoner who has endeavoured to establish an alibi knows well enough. But it is in microscopical examination, and in the subsequent photographing of the object examined in much magnified form, that Dr Jeserich has done his most noteworthy work. Such a photograph will often afford evidence of the most positive kind, which can be readily comprehended and duly appraised by judge and jury alike. Let us now see, by a few examples, how the method works out.

The first criminal case brought forward by Dr Jeserich was one in which the liberty of a suspected man literally 'hung upon a hair,' for by a single hair was he tracked. The case was one of assault, and two men were suspected of the deed. A single hair was found on the clothing of the victim, and this hair was duly pictured in the form of a photo-micrograph. (It may be as well, perhaps, to point out here that by this term is meant the enlarged image of a microscopic object, the term micro-photograph being applied to those tiny specks of pictures which can only be seen when magnified in a microscope.) A, one of the suspected men, had a gray beard, and a hair from his chin was photographed and compared with the first picture taken. The difference in structure, tint, and general appearance was so marked that the man was at once liberated. The hair of the other man, B, was also examined, and bore little resemblance to that found on the victim. This latter was now more carefully scrutinised, and compared with other specimens. The photograph clearly showed for one thing that the hair was pointed; it had never been cut. Gradually the conclusion was arrived at that it belonged to a dog, 'an old yellow, smooth-haired, and comparatively short-haired dog.' Further inquiry revealed the fact that B owned such a dog, a fresh hair from which agreed in every detail with the original photograph; and the man was convicted. He subsequently confessed that he alone had committed the crime.

In the identification of blood stains, several difficulties crop up. As every one knows, blood when magnified is found to contain myriads of little globules, or corpuscles as they are commonly called. Some of these are colourless; but the others are red, and give to blood its well-known colour. The microscopist can tell whether the blood which he submits to examination is that of a mammal, of a bird, or of a fish, for the corpuscles of each have distinct characteristics. But when we ask him to differentiate between the blood-corpuscles of different kinds of mammals, he is somewhat at a loss, because his only guide is that of size. Thus, the blood-corpuscles of the elephant are, as might be expected, larger than those of any of the other

mammalia. But they are in other respects like those of his brother in mammal Man: round in outline, and looking like so many coins carelessly thrown together. A dog or a pig possesses corpuscles of smaller size, while those of the goat are very much smaller still. Here is a case in which these differences witnessed with terrible effect against a man suspected of a serious crime. A murder had been committed, and D was the man suspected; suspicion being strengthened by the circumstance that an axe belonging to him was found smeared with blood, which had been partly wiped off. The man denied his guilt, and accounted for the blood-stained weapon, which he declared he had not taken the trouble to wipe, by saying that he had that day killed a goat with it. The blood was examined microscopically, and the size of the corpuscles proved his statement to be false. A photo-micrograph of it, as well as one of goat's blood, was prepared for comparison by the judge and jury. Another photo-micrograph was also made from part of the blade of the axe, which showed very clearly by unmistakable streaks that the murderer had done his best to remove the traces of his crime. It is certain that these photographs must be far more useful for purposes of detection than the original microscopic preparations from which they are taken, for it requires a certain education of the eye to see through a microscope properly, and still more to estimate the value of the evidence it offers. It is certain, too, that counsel on either side would see through the microscope with very different eyes.

We now come to a very important section of Dr Jeserich's work, the detection of falsification of handwriting and figures by means of photography. Crimes of this nature are far more common than deeds of violence, and, judging by the heavy punishment meted out to the offenders in comparison with the mild sentences often passed upon men whom to call brutes would be base flattery, the law would seem to consider such sins worse than those committed against the person. However this may be, it is a most important thing that this very dangerous class of crime should be subject to ready detection. The microscope alone will not help us much, although we can detect by its aid places in paper where erasures have been made. If any one will take the trouble to examine microscopically the paper on which these words are printed, using quite a low-power object glass, he will note that its smooth surface altogether disappears, and that it seems to be as coarse as blanket. This being the case, it will be readily understood that an erasure with a knife which would be imperceptible to the unaided eye becomes so exaggerated when viewed with the microscope that there can be no mistake about it. In examining writing by this searching aid to vision, the finest lines appear thick and coarse. It is also possible to ascertain whether an alteration has been made in a word before the ink first applied has become dry, or whether the amendment has been an after-thought. In the former case the previously applied ink will more or less amalgamate with and run into the other, as will be clearly seen under the microscope; while in the latter case, each ink-mark will preserve its own unbroken outline. The use of this observation in cases of

suspected wrong-doing is obvious. Dr Jeserich shows two photographs which illustrate these differences. In the first, a document dated early in January is marked 1884—the 4 having been altered into a 5 as soon as written—so as to correct a mistake which most of us make a dozen times or more at the beginning of each new year. In the other picture the date had been altered fraudulently and long after the original words had been traced, in order to gain some unworthy advantage.

The photographic plates by which these records have been accomplished are the ordinary gelatine plates which are being used in the present day by thousands of amateur workers. By special preparation, these plates can be made to afford evidence of a far more wonderful kind, and can in certain cases be made to yield a clear image of writing which has been completely covered with fresh characters by the hand of the forger. In this way the true and the false are distinctly revealed together with the peculiarities belonging to each clearly defined.

The word 'ordinary' has special significance to photographers, and is used by them in contradistinction to a colour-sensitive (orthochromatic) plate. This second kind of sensitive surface is of comparatively recent date, and the great advantage in its use is that it renders colours in their relative shade-values to one another. An 'ordinary' plate will photograph blue as white, and yellow and red as black. But a colour-sensitive plate will render these colours more according to their relative brightness; just, in fact, as an engraver would express them by different depths of 'tint.' These plates are especially useful in photographing coloured objects, such as paintings in oil or water-colour. Dr Jeserich has, however, pointed out an entirely new use for them, and has shown that they will differentiate between black inks of different composition.

The oft-quoted line, 'Things are not always as they seem,' is very true of what we call black ink. It is generally not black, although it assumes that appearance on paper. Taking, for experiment, the black inks made by three different manufacturers, and dropping a little of each into a test-tube half full of water, the writer found that one was distinctly blue, another red, and the third brown. Each was an excellent writing fluid, and looked as black as night when applied to paper. Now, Dr Jeserich prepares his colour-sensitive plates in such a way that they will reveal a difference in tone between inks of this description, while an ordinary plate is powerless to do anything of the kind. Among other examples, he shows the photograph of a certain bill of exchange whereon the date for payment is written April. The drawer of this bill had declared that it was not payable until May; whereupon Dr Jeserich photographed it a second time with a colour-sensitive plate. The new photograph gives a revelation of the true state of affairs. The word 'Mai' has been altered to April by a little clever manipulation of the pen, and the fraud was not evident to the eye, to the microscope, or to the ordinary photographic process. But the colour-sensitive film tells us that the ink with which the original word 'Mai' was written was of a different black hue from that employed by the forger when he wrote over it

and partly formed out of it the word 'April.' The consequence is that one word is much fainter than the other, each stroke of alteration being plainly discernible, and detecting the forgery. Another case is presented where a bill already paid, let us say, in favour of one Schmidt, is again presented with the signature Fabian. Here, again, the photographic evidence shows in the most conclusive manner that the first word is still readable under the altered conditions. In this case, when the accused was told that by scientific treatment the first name had been thus revealed, he confessed to the fraud, and was duly punished.

Alterations in figures have naturally come under Jeserich's observation, figures being, as a rule, far more easy to tamper with than words, especially where careless writers of cheques leave blank spaces in front of numerals to tempt the skill of those whose ways are crooked. Dr Jeserich shows a document which is drawn apparently for a sum of money represented by the figures 20,200. The amount was disputed by the payer, and hence the document was submitted to the photographic test. As a result it was found that the original figures had been 1,200—and that the payee had altered the first figure to 0, and had placed a 2 in front of it. The result to him was four years' penal servitude; and it is satisfactory to note that after sentence had been passed upon him, he confessed that the photograph had revealed the truth.

Two cases in which fabrication of documents was rendered evident by the camera are of a somewhat amusing nature, although one might think it difficult to find matter for mirth out of these mendacious doings. Two citizens of Berlin had been summoned for non-payment of taxes, and had quite forgotten the day upon which the summonses were returnable, thus rendering themselves liable to increased expenses. It was a comparatively easy matter, and one which evidently did not lie very heavily on their consciences, to alter the 24 which denoted the day of the month into 26. But that terrible photographic plate found them out, and the small fine which they hoped to evade was superseded in favour of imprisonment for the grave offence of falsifying an official document. In another case a receipt for debts contracted up to 1881 was altered to 1884 by the simple addition of two strokes in an ink which was of a different photographic value from the ink which had been used by the author of the document.

Many cases like these, relating to falsification of wills, postal orders, permits, and other documents, have come under the official notice of Dr Jeserich. One of these is especially noteworthy because the accused was made to give evidence against himself in a novel manner. He was a cattle-dealer, and had altered a permit for passing animals across the Austrian frontier at a time when the prevalence of disease necessitated a certain period for quarantine. The photographic evidence showed that a 3 had been added to the original figures, and it was necessary to ascertain whether the prisoner had inserted this numeral. To do this he was made to write several 3's, and these were photographed on a film of gelatine. This transparent film was now placed over the impounded document, and it was found that any

of the images of the newly-written figures would very nicely fit over the disputed 3 on the paper. Such a test as this, it is obvious, is far more conclusive and satisfactory in every way than the somewhat doubtful testimony of experts in handwriting, the actual value of whose evidence was so clearly set forth during the celebrated Parnell inquiry.

It is refreshing to turn to an instance in which the photographic evidence had the effect, not of convicting a person, but of clearing him from suspicion. The dead body of a man was found near the outskirts of a wood, and appearances indicated that he had been the victim of foul-play. An acquaintance of his had been arrested on suspicion; and a vulcanite match-box believed to belong to the accused—an assertion which, however he denied—seemed to strengthen the case against him. The box was then subjected to careful examination. It was certainly the worse for wear, for its lid was covered with innumerable scratches. Amid these markings it was thought that there were traces of a name, but what that name was it was quite impossible to guess. Dr Jeserich now took the matter in hand, and rubbed the box with a fine impalpable powder, which insinuated itself into every crevice. He next photographed the box while a strong side-light was thrown upon its surface so as to show up every depression, when the name of its owner stood plainly revealed. This was not that of the prisoner, but belonged to a man who had dropped the box near the spot where it was found many weeks before the suspected crime had been committed. The accused was at once released.

In conclusion, we may quote one more case of identification which, although it does not depend upon the camera, is full of interest, and is associated with that other wonderful instrument known as the spectroscope. Solutions of log-wood, carmine, and blood have to the eye exactly the same appearance; but when the liquids are examined by the spectroscope, absorption bands are shown which have for each liquid a characteristic form. In the case of blood the character of the absorption bands alters if the liquid be associated with certain gases, such as those which are given off during the combustion of carbonaceous material. Now, let us see how this knowledge was applied in a case which came under Dr Jeserich's official scrutiny. A cottage was burned down, and the body of its owner was found in the ruins in such a charred condition that he was hardly recognisable. A relative was, in consequence of certain incriminating circumstances, suspected of having murdered the man, and then set fire to the building in order to hide every trace of his crime, thinking, no doubt, that the conflagration would be ascribed to accident. The dead body was removed, and a drop or two of blood was taken from the lungs and examined spectroscopically, with a view to finding out whether death had been caused by suffocation or had taken place, as was believed, before the house was set on fire. The absorption spectrum was found to be that of normal blood, and the suspicion against the accused was thus strengthened. He ultimately confessed to having first committed the murder, and then set fire to the building, according to the theory adopted by

the prosecution. The proverb tells us that 'the way of transgressors is hard.' The thanks of the law abiding are due to Dr Jeserich for making it harder still.

MAJOR RANDALL'S WARNING.

PART III.—CONCLUSION.

MAJOR RANDALL only remained a few days at the Hall, having a large circle of friends to visit before returning to his military duties in India. There was to be a week's hunting at one place, a week's shooting at another; then a stay with former brother-officers at Woolwich and Aldershot, lastly, to his married sister in Worcestershire. Sir Philip and Lady Hartbury were rich, spending their money freely, as wealthy people ought to do. They entertained largely. A country seat with a succession of staying guests is charming; at least the Major found it so after his long sojourn in the East, and for the time he quite gave himself up to the enjoyment of English home-life and society. He was a general favourite, being bright, agreeable, fine-looking, and an amusing *raconteur* of Indian adventures; unmarried, on the verge of forty. Now forty is really an excellent age in a man; for he is experienced, as clever perhaps as he will ever be; the glamour of youth with its rose-tinted atmosphere has departed, and he sees his fellow-men with plain black and white outlines, yet is still young enough to enjoy life. Such was Major Randall.

There were few ladies who would have refused him had he made proposals of marriage; but he was not a marrying man; an early disappointment—through death—had caused him to relinquish that idea for ever.

There were frequent dinner-parties at the Hall, and occasional dances; the time passed swiftly and pleasantly. Several times he attempted to take his departure, but had been induced to stay on by his sister and brother-in-law's solicitations. At last he terminated his visit in a very unexpected manner. One night, after a musical evening, or home concert, in which the Major had distinguished himself—for he had a pleasant barytone voice, and sang ballads nicely—he retired to rest about eleven o'clock, in a happy enough state of mind, such as people feel who have done their best and been appreciated. He went to sleep at once, and slept for two hours, when he awoke with a start: some one was speaking to him. Raising himself upon his elbow, he gazed round the room, dimly visible by a tiny night-light. There was no one there, and nothing disturbed. Yet a voice had said distinctly: 'Go to Lincoln.'

Had he dreamt it? If so, why dream of Lincoln, where he knew no one? Composing himself to sleep again for about another two hours, once more he was suddenly awakened with a greater shock, for again the voice repeated closer to him and most impressively: 'Go to Lincoln.' This time the Major got up and thoroughly searched the room. He had locked the door, so no one could enter that way. The house was hushed in profound repose, not a sound, save the dull ticking of a clock at the end of the corridor.

Major Randall was extremely discomposed. He was not a superstitious man by any means; but there was a tone in that voice that penetrated to his very soul with a thrill through his system such as he had never before experienced.

'Dreams are strange things,' he said to himself; 'why should I dream of Lincoln, where I have not been half-a-dozen times in my life, and that twenty years ago?'

Again he got into bed, but not to sleep, for his nerves were too much excited. He tried to lose himself in vain; his mind was so thoroughly awake and clear, that—as he afterwards declared—he could have written any letters or despatches as well as ever he did in his life.

He lay thus, quite still, on his back, with wide-open eyes, when he was electrified by the same voice saying close to his ear: 'Go to Lincoln—at once!'

'I will,' answered the Major aloud; and springing up, he lighted the tapers on the toilet table and began to dress. Consulting his watch, he found it was four o'clock in the morning; and looking from the window which gave a view over the park, he saw a clear starlit sky and a white frost on the grass. Writing a short note of explanation to his brother-in-law, Sir Philip, he placed it on the outside handle of his door, in order that it might be seen by the servants at an early hour.

'He will think I am cracked; I hope I am not, for really I am going to Lincoln without knowing why,' he soliloquised as he noiselessly descended the broad staircase. The Hall door was so barricaded by its manifold fastenings of bars, bolts, and chains, that he could not undo them without alarming the household; he therefore entered a conservatory opening from the drawing-room, and unlocking a glass door, let himself out into the park, traversing it without encountering a keeper, but disturbing the deer clustered together under the bare branches of the fine elms and beeches, who started up from their lair, gazing at him in wonder.

Major Randall rather enjoyed his tramp to Worcester in the bracing air of a fine frosty morning. He reached the station in time to take a cup of coffee and a sandwich before starting by the six o'clock train. Being an experienced traveller, he arranged his long journey so well, that, changing at one junction in order to catch the express at another, he was enabled to reach Lincoln by two o'clock. After enjoying a luncheon, he strolled through the hilly street of that interesting old city.

'Why am I here, I wonder?' he kept repeating to himself. 'Shall I have further orders?'

But though he listened attentively, no voice spoke again. He surveyed the exterior of the fine cathedral, and looked in the shop windows, wandering without any definite object. The town was unusually full of people, who seemed in a state of excitement. The winter assizes were on. Not knowing how to occupy his time, he stepped into the courthouse, where a trial was taking place. The entrance was blocked with people.

'What case is on?' he inquired of a policeman.

'A young man is being tried for his life, sir—it's a murder.'

'Of whom?'

'Mr Twyford, the miller at Roby, as was shot on the road between Merstoke and his house—pore old gentleman.'

Major Randall recalled the sad affair that had happened the night of his arrival at the Miss Ingestres': in his succession of visits and amusements it had escaped his memory.

'I will go in, if you can get me a place,' said he, slipping silver into the policeman's hand. This talisman and his fine military appearance gained him an admission which had been refused to many others. Through some private interest he possessed, the officer succeeded in not only introducing him into the body of the court but procuring him a good seat.

The interior was densely packed, and its heat was great, for the trial had lasted some hours. The accused was a young man of about four-and-twenty years of age, tall, fair, and handsome, but pale and worn by anxiety. The Major was sorry that he had not heard the case from its commencement; but from what he gleaned, the evidence was fearfully against the prisoner at the bar. To state it briefly: William Armstrong had been four years in Isaac Twyford's employment as foreman at the mill, when he was offered a higher salary and a house to live in by a corn-factor at Boston. The old miller was unwilling to part with him, and offered to raise his wages to those proposed by the corn-dealer; but young Armstrong declined. The chance of a house rent-free was a great inducement for the change, as it would enable him to marry a young girl to whom he was engaged. Unfortunately, his master did not take the refusal in good part, and thought him too young to get married. High words had followed, and a quarrel ensued.

Mr Twyford was well known and respected as a just man by all the country round; but it was also acknowledged that he was a severe one; still, he was not supposed to have any enemies; yet, within a week of his disagreement with Armstrong, he was shot dead on the high-road leading from Merstoke to Grantham, beside which his mill was situated. He had been the best part of the day at Merstoke transacting business, but had unexpectedly been detained until late; indeed, it was nearly half-past six when he quitted the Crown Inn on his starting for home.

Many persons had heard the old man call his foreman hard names—ungrateful, time-server, and such-like—and had seen Armstrong leave the mill in anger. Other witnesses from Boston deposed that he possessed pistols and a fowling-piece, which he had been cleaning and using recently. Some had met him at ten o'clock on the night of the murder, looking wet and fagged. Mr Twyford's housekeeper stated that in the afternoon of that day Armstrong had come over from Boston saying he particularly wished to see her master and apologise to him for the hasty words he had used; it pained him to be at variance with the old miller, who had formerly treated him with kindness. He appeared disappointed when she told him that Mr Twyford had gone to Merstoke for the day, making many inquiries as to the time of his return, also saying he had half a mind to go and meet him; whether he did so or not she could not say. Soon after he left, it began to rain.

Another witness was the carrier, who met him, and exchanged a few words on the Merstoke road; it was then raining fast.

The prisoner had pleaded not guilty. What the witnesses had stated was correct. Upon hearing that the miller had ridden over to Merstoke, he started to meet him; but the rain fell so fast, he turned back. Unfortunately, he missed the train, and was obliged to walk the whole distance to Boston, where he arrived greatly fatigued and very wet. It was a great shock to him when he was arrested the following day, charged with the murder of his former employer.

It was seven o'clock when Mr Twyford was shot; the woman at the roadside cottage stated that her timepiece struck that hour just before she heard the report of the pistol.

'I am innocent,' the prisoner said solemnly. 'Appearances are fearfully against me; but I would never raise my hand against Mr Twyford. We were not on good terms; still, there was no malice on either side. I was not near Merstoke high-road at the time of the murder, but in a directly opposite direction, seven miles away from it, going home. There is one person, the only one in the world, who could prove it. Who he is, I do not know. I overtook him on the way. It was pitch dark; the rain came down in torrents, and we took shelter for a time in the porch of Bertoft old church, and exchanged a few words. Of course we could not see each other. That stranger could testify the fact of my presence there—though perhaps he has forgotten it.'

'No; he has not,' rang out Major Randall's clear voice. 'He is here.'

In the midst of great excitement, the Major pushed his way through the crowd to the witness-box. He now saw *why* he had been sent to Lincoln.

Thus, at the eleventh hour, William Armstrong's character was vindicated to the world, his statement fully corroborated by a witness of irreproachable integrity. Clearly and circumstantially the Major related how he was walking from the small station to Cressing Hall, and had been overtaken by a fellow-pedestrian, seeking shelter with him for a short time in the old church porch—the clock striking seven while there; also the conversation they had held together in the dark—of how the prisoner's grandfather had during a flood rowed in a boat to make his purchases at the village shop, and shot wild-ducks in the fields of Bertoft—facts which a stranger could not possibly have known.

William Armstrong was discharged, and a reward of a hundred pounds at once offered for the apprehension of the actual murderer.

Sir Philip and Lady Hartbury were quite prepared to quiz their brother unmercifully on his wildgoose chase, when he returned; but when they heard its result, speedily changed their intention, listening almost in awe to his recital.

Major Randall never heard the voice again, and declares, in spite of the general opinion to the contrary, that it was *not* a dream.

To do Mrs Drew justice, she was greatly shocked at her uncle's tragic death and poor Elizabeth's sudden decease, but triumphed in the expectation of inheriting the miller's property, its amount proving greater than expected. She

contemplated removing to a country-house, keeping a pony phaeton and giving garden-parties, to let the county families see she could hold up her head as high as any of them. But behold! when the time came for legal settlement, no certificate of her parents' marriage could be found—no entry in registers. Alas! Mrs Drew was illegitimate.

'Pride must have a fall,' exclaimed the town-folk.

She never again upbraided her husband with having 'no ambition.'

The miller's fortune went to very distant relations, who were advertised for in the papers.

A convict named Ashworth died at Portland. On his death-bed he confessed that he had shot his father-in-law on the road home, having learned from his wife that she was forgiven and would inherit the property. Her sudden death defeated him.

SORTES SACRÆ; OR, DIVINATION BY LOT.

THE practice of consulting certain books in order to discover the future is common to all people who have books more or less sacred. Among the Romans the Sibylline books were kept in a stone coffer under ground in the temple of Jupiter on the Capitol, under the custody of certain officers. They were consulted in the case of prodigies and calamities. The contents having been divulged by one of these men, he was put to death. When the temple in which they were preserved was burnt, 82 B.C., the Sibylline books perished in the fire. Then ambassadors were sent to various towns in Italy, Greece, and Asia Minor to collect any copies of these prophecies that might be preserved there.

A great number of spurious prophetic books circulated, pretending to be Sibylline oracles, and Augustus ordered that they should be collected and burnt. But other works were consulted for the purpose of peering into the future beside the Sibylline books. A favourite volume for such exploration was Virgil. The story is told of Hadrian, in the reign of Trajan, that being concerned as to the mood of the Emperor towards him and his own prospects, he consulted Virgil, and lit on the lines:

Who is he at a distance, with branches of olive
adorned,
And bearing the hallowed vessels? I know the look
of a king,
With locks and beard all hoary, the first to establish
the city
With laws—from a humble village exalted a sovereign
to be.

And when Alexander Severus, as a boy, consulted the same book, his finger rested on the line: 'To thee the empire will come of heaven and earth and the ocean.' The manner of inquiring is for the inquirer to open the book at random and apply the first passage that strikes the eye to the person's own immediate circumstances.

The story is well known of King Charles I. and Lord Falkland inquiring into the future in this manner before the battle of Newbury. The king, being at Oxford, went one day to see the

Bodleian Library, and was shown there, among other volumes, a Virgil, very handsomely bound. Lord Falkland, to divert the king, proposed that they should consult it as to an augury for the future; whereupon the king, opening the book, lit on Dido's imprecation, thus translated by Dryden:

Yet let a race untamed, and haughty foes
His peaceful entrance with dire arms oppose;
Oppressed with numbers in the unequal field,
His men discouraged and himself expelled;
Let him for succour sue from place to place,
Torn from his subjects and his son's embrace.
First let him see his friends in battle slain,
And their untimely fate lament in vain;
And when at length the cruel war shall cease,
On hard conditions may he buy his peace;
Nor let him then enjoy supreme command,
But fall untimely by some hostile hand,
And lie unburied on the barren strand.

It is said that King Charles seemed concerned at this accident, and that Lord Falkland, observing it, would likewise try his own fortune in the same manner. The place he stumbled upon was yet more suited to his destiny than the other had been to that of the king. It ran:

O Pallas! thou hast failed thy plighted word
To fight with caution, not to tempt the sword:
I warned thee, but in vain! for well I knew
What perils youthful ardour would pursue:
That boiling blood would carry thee too far,
Young as thou wert in dangers, raw in war;
O curst essay in arms—disastrous doom—
Prelude of bloody fields and fights to come.

Not long after this, King Charles was beheaded, and Lord Falkland fell in a skirmish he had rashly engaged in.

Such is the story as told by Dr Welwood; but, unfortunately, its authenticity is doubtful, as the same story is told by Aubrey of Prince Charles and the poet Cowley at Paris, just before the trial of the King.

Among the Mohammedans it is not unusual to consult in this manner the Koran and the poet Hafiz; and from an early period it was customary among Christians to employ the Bible for the same purpose. St Augustine mentions this as practised in his time, and hesitates about condemning it, so long as it was not applied to things of this world.

Gregory, Bishop of Tours in the sixth century, tells us what was his practice. He spent several days in fasting and prayer, after which he resorted to the tomb of St Martin, and taking any book of Scripture that lay at hand, he opened it, and accepted the first passage that met his eye as the answer to the query he put.

Another manner of consulting the sacred books for an answer consisted in accepting the first verse of a psalm or Scripture read or sung on entering a church during divine service, as the reply to the question in the mind. According to the Confessions of St Augustine it was this that determined the life of St Anthony. He was in hesitation as to his career, when, entering a church, he heard the deacon read the words: 'Go, sell that thou hast, and give to the poor—and come follow me.'

The practice, however, of consulting Scripture as a book of Fate was generally condemned by the Church. A council at Vannes pronounced against it in 461 A.D. So did one at Agde in 506,

and one at Auxerre in 585. Charles the Great forbade it in his Capitularies, and so did Pope Gregory II. Nevertheless, curiosity as to the future was so strong in men's minds that the custom continued. An odd circumstance is that the cathedral Chapter at Orleans in 1146 appealed to a prognostic of this sort in a supplication addressed by them to Pope Alexander III. against their bishop. At his consecration, when the Gospel was opened above his head, the finger of the deacon rested on the words, 'And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked.' This was a token that the bishop, Elias, was to be turned out of his see.

The practice of observing the book when opened over the head of a prelate at his consecration was very common. It was thought that a sure augury could thence be drawn as to what sort of a bishop he would prove.

At the consecration of Athanasius, nominated to the patriarchate of Constantinople, a patriarchate which he stained with his crimes, 'the Bishop of Nicomedia having brought the Gospel,' says the Byzantine historian, 'the congregation prepared to take note of the oracle which would be manifest on the opening of the book, though this oracle is not infallibly true. The Bishop of Nicæa, noticing that he had lighted on the words, "Prepared for the devil and his angels," groaned in the depth of his heart, and putting up his hand to hide the words, turned over the leaves and disclosed the other words, "The birds of the air come and lodge in the branches;" words which seemed to have no connection with the ceremony.'

When Landri, Bishop of Laon, was consecrated, the Gospel for the day gave, 'A sword shall pierce through thine own soul also;' and a few years after he was assassinated. He was succeeded by the Dean of Orleans, at whose consecration the book was opened at a blank page; and, in fact, he died shortly after, without having done anything by which his pontificate could be marked.

In 391, when Evurtius desired to retire from the bishopric of Orleans from extreme old age, he assembled the clergy and bade them elect a successor by writing the names of their candidates on slips of paper and putting them into a box. A little child was enjoined to draw the lot, and the name drawn was Aignan. Evurtius was doubtful whether he were suitable, and advised the consultation of the sacred oracles—the Psalter, the Epistles, and lastly the Gospels. This was done. The Psalter was opened at haphazard, and the text at the head of the page was, 'Blessed is the man whom thou choosest and receivest unto thee: he shall dwell in thy courts.' Then in like manner the Epistles were opened at random, and at the head of the page stood, 'Other foundation can no man lay than is laid.' In like manner the Gospel rendered the text, 'On this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.' After this, all doubts as to the suitability of Aignan to fill the episcopal throne ceased.

Guibert of Nogent, a writer of the twelfth century, who gives a very curious memoir of his own life, tells a story of himself, which shows that the same practice was in vogue at the installation of an abbot. 'On the day of my entry into the monastery,' he says, 'a monk who had

studied the sacred books desired, I presume, to read my future : at the moment when he was preparing to leave with the procession to meet me, he placed designedly on the altar the book of the Gospels, intending to draw an omen from the direction taken by my eyes towards this or that chapter. Now the book was written, not in pages, but in columns. The monk's eyes rested in the middle of the second column, where he read the following passage, "The light of the body is the eye." Then he bade the deacon who was to present the book to me to take care as soon as he had opened the book before me to note on what part of the pages my eyes rested. The deacon accordingly did so. Whilst he observed with curious eyes the direction taken by my glance, my eyes and spirit together turned neither above nor below, but precisely towards the verse which had been indicated before. The monk, who had sought to form conjectures by this, seeing that my action had accorded without premeditation with his intentions, came to me a few days after and told me what he had done, and how wondrously my first movement had coincided with his own.'

The reader will probably agree with the writer of this article that Guibert and the monk must have been hard put to it to discover any oracle in the words, and with Bruno, Bishop of Segni, in the eleventh century, that the looking for such oracles is 'foolery.'

In 1191, Albert von Löwen was elected Bishop of Liège, and was consecrated in the following year. It was at a time of great discord, for there were two rival bishops claiming the see—the one nominated by the Emperor, and a second Albert. At the consecration, the two bishops who assisted the archbishop opened the Gospel before him, and he read the words, 'Herod had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison.' He hastily turned the page, and read, 'Immediately the king sent an executioner and commanded his head to be brought.' Then the archbishop was troubled, and groaning in spirit, laid hold of Albert and said : 'My son, prepare thy soul for temptation, for thou shalt die the death of a martyr.' And in fact Albert was put to death within a few months of his consecration.

The eleventh chapter of Proverbs, which contains thirty-one verses, is often taken to give token of the character of a life. The manner of consulting it is simple ; it is but to look for the verse answering to the day of the month on which the questioner was born. The answer will be found in most cases to be exceedingly ambiguous. For instance, the present Premier, the Marquis of Salisbury, was born on the 3d of January ; the text for him accordingly will be, 'The integrity of the upright shall guide them : but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them ;' which is no doubt appropriate enough from a Unionist point of view. But from the opposite point it would be regarded as most unsuitable. For 'General' Booth, born on the 10th of April, we have : 'When it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth : and when the wicked perish, there is shouting ;' which is vague enough. Mr Gladstone, the 29th of December, gets, 'He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind : and the fool shall be

servant to the wise of heart ;' which is also ambiguous.

A mode of taking the lot by Scripture, still in vogue among ignorant and superstitious people, is to put a key in the book, bind the book with twine so as to hold the key in place, and then suspend the Bible between two fingers under the key handle : to ask the question and see whether the key and book turn on the fingers and drop. This is, of course, entirely due to unconscious muscular action, which makes the book give that response which the interrogator desires.

A sacred book given for one purpose, by the perversity of man is used for another for which it was not intended ; and it is hard to say whether the consultation of the *Sortes Sacre* is most silly or most profane.

DORIS AND I.

BY JOHN E. STAFFORD.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

THERE was evil in front of us, and much aching of hearts and suffering. But the throstle sang in the sycamore tree, and the swallows curved and twittered all about us, and in the rich amber light we could see that all was fair and good ; then our eyes would meet, and we thought not of evil, Doris and I. We spoke little, our hearts being very full and words mere idleness. Doris looked out again to the west, leaning her head against me, and taking my hand as it twined over her shoulder. We were in the orchard by the old green wicket, where a month ago, before the blossoms had burst their bulbs, she had allowed me to tell her an old tale, and had said one word of her own to give it finish. And as the throstle sang his love-song, and the sun sank to his bed behind the hills, I thought of then and now, and my head lowered and I kissed her forehead gently. Then Doris sighed as if a spell was broken. For I had come to tell of my wind-fall ; that I was no longer a poor man ; that instead of waiting for years, we might begin our married life on my return from Canada in three months or so ; and the sudden happiness of the thing had wrapt us round and silenced us both. Now that the first flush of it was over, we remembered the fleeting minutes, and fell to talking. What we said is of no account here ; but so little did we dream of harm, or accident of nature to cross our happiness, that not once did we mention *him*, though we knew he was coming next day, to stay perhaps for some weeks, as sick people do.

Then we said good-bye, and I opened the wicket to pass through ; but seeing the wet in her eyes, lingered a while longer till she was smiling again, when I let her go. But I looked back again every dozen yards or so ; and when I got across the second meadow and stood by the stile before vaulting into the high-road, I could still see the straight white figure among the green, and the waving handkerchief. So I asked God to keep her, and went my way with the rose she had given me. Walking home in the pink twilight, the heaviness at leaving her wore off as I looked into the future and saw what was there, or rather what I pictured in it. For when

love is the warp and fortune the woof, what will not the shuttle of fancy do?

Yesterday, things had been so different. Of all my airy castles, there seemed hardly one left, and I had built a good few. Before I knew Doris, such imaginings had never troubled me; but when I had met her at Winchcomb flower-show, love had touched me with its wand, and all of a sudden the dead wall of my life, like that in Chaucer's Romaunt—for I had read a thing or two in the long winter nights before the old place had been hammered into other hands—seemed all alive with pictures. Everything was lit up; the world seemed a new place, and life had sweeter meanings after I had looked into Doris's eyes and she into mine. And when, after many months, I plucked up courage to ask her heart how it was, and she told me, the future widened out in such a fashion that the sight of it nearly made me light-headed.

Had I known how things were, I should have held my tongue, through shame and hopelessness. But my father never gave a sign that ruin was near upon him; that my comfortable heritage, as I deemed it, was mortgaged to its last rood. The crash came, and then the sale, and then life in a little cottage with a broken-down father and a changed look-out, which perhaps made me over-moody. For sometimes I despaired of ever possessing Doris, or of being able under many years to support her in a way fitting to her upbringing. Everything would be broken off, and it would all be a dead wall again.

It was in some such humour that the notary's letter found me that morning. I had seldom heard of Uncle Ben, and had never seen him. He had in early manhood deeply wronged my father in some way, and his name was rarely mentioned. I handed the letter to father, and he was dumb like myself, his face working strangely between anger and something softer. Then he put it down and said: 'Conscience-money, lad, every penny on it; but it's saved yer from my folly, so tek it, an' thank God for teachin' Ben repentance an' me forgiveness—no easy lesson, when a brother— Well, well, let it lie. Poor Ben!'

No wonder, then, that I saw visions as I walked home in the light of the aftermath. It was nearly dusk when I arrived at the cottage; and as I turned for a last look at the burnished hills, a bat came between me and the light and fluttered mockingly before me. But I kissed my rose and laughed at the flittermouse.

I had lived some twenty-five years in the world without knowing much more of it than what our valley and its neighbourhood had to show; so that what I saw on my long journey to my uncle's Canadian farm made me wonder and marvel, as young people do when they go for the first time beyond the mountains and see what is there. But there is no need to dwell upon that; and, moreover, it doesn't concern the drift of what I am telling you.

Nor need I say much about the farm and personal estate which had come to me by my uncle's will. I found that the latter came to some eighty thousand dollars, chiefly invested in Northern Pacific and other stock; and the former a large tract of prairie-land, with house,

farm-buildings, and every appointment of a first-class property. There was a new railway creeping up, which would double its value in a few years' time; and it was for me to say, after I had seen the place, whether I should let it, or wait, or sell it right out. I wrote the lawyer, saying that for the present I would take it in hand till the corn was safely harvested.

So one thing leads on to another, and we prepare our own destiny without knowing it. But I had looked at things in a practical way and according to my lights; and the notary commended me; and Doris sent a letter along saying: 'Yes, Jack; but don't tarry the thrashing too,' which was only sweetheart-like.

The weeks passed on, and I found plenty to occupy and interest me, as was natural. I let Boss Wilson keep much of his authority—he had been in charge of the farm since the death, and his loquacious company was not disagreeable after I had learned to know him. One day in the town near by I happened upon a Worcester man—one Henshaw—and his clannish good feeling made the place still less lonely. Then every week Doris wrote down her little heart for me to read it, and I sent her an account of mine; and all the while the same sun warmed us, and the same moon set us thinking one of the other when the day was over and our souls skipped out for a game at dreams. She was there and I was here, and soon there would be no there and here, but only one place and we in it.

Thinking to this tune I jumped into the saddle one August morning and rode to the post-office for the usual weekly letter. I always rode over, because the postboy who passed us on his way to the next settlement waited for the second mail at noon. I met Mr Henshaw at the door of the office with two letters and a newspaper in his hands.

'Mornin', Mr Sedley,' said he; 'lot o' letters this mail; let me hold the cob till you come out.'

That was the beginning of it—there was no letter. I rejoined Henshaw, and walked down with him to his store, heavy with disappointment.

'Like to see the paper?' said he, as I was leaving, after ordering some supplies of his man. 'Tain't often I get one; but my brother's hay-ricks 'a bin blazin', an' he's sent the account of it. Arl new hay too, an' on'y part insured. Ain't it a pity?'

I said it was, and looked moodily through the columns for news that might interest me. I only learned that there had been a regatta at Evesham; and that our old doctor at Ranston had sold his practice to a Dr Robson—that was all. But as I rode home I kept muttering that doctor's name, wondering where I had heard it before, till suddenly it came to me, bringing a lot of something else with it.

Why had Doris never mentioned him beyond the postscript in her first letter, weeks ago? I had clean forgotten she had a Cousin Stephen, so little did I heed him; but he was still at Ranston, still perhaps an inmate of her home. Why— Here I dropped the reins, and drew out her last letter, to steady me. I read it through, and the dear words brought kindness back, and I kissed her name at the end, saying some one was a fool.

But the doubt had found entrance, and grew, as cancers do, without our knowing it. For the days went on, and no letter came, no sign, till I grew half-wild at the cruelty of it. I wrote, reproaching her; and another week went and another. At last the letter came. The postboy handed it to me as I stood at the gate—I daresay he wondered why I was always there—and I ripped it open, while my heart pumped fit to break itself. Then the paper dropped from my hands, and I held on to the gate with a singing in my ears, and a sudden weakness in seeing, which darkened the sun and all beneath it. . . .

Doris unfaithful—it wasn't natural. Our souls had grafted, and we were one; we were two streams that had met to turn the same millwheel together; our hearts were bound with ligaments of their own growing; there was no undoing what nature had so willed. Yet there was her handwriting, her own words in good black ink telling white it was a liar.

Then all at once, through the rush and swirl of it, came the thought of the new doctor, and a queer coldness went through me as if I had been turned to clay before my time. The life seemed to go out from me, and I could scarcely move my feet as, half staggering, I went indoors and dropped into a chair. Again I read the note, though every cursed word was burnt in my brain for ever.

'I cannot marry you, dear—it is impossible. I like you—I am fond of you, as I told you in the orchard that evening; but I cannot be your wife—I cannot indeed. Oh, I wish I had told you earlier how things were; it was cruel of me to let you go on loving me without telling you the truth. I was afraid to at last; but now you are away it seems less difficult to say. Forgive me; look elsewhere for a more fitting mate—some one who can fully share your new life with you, and help you as a wife should, with head, heart, and hand—some one who can love you better than

DORIS.'

An hour went by, maybe two, while the hardening went on; while the love died away, and the light and the joy of life dimmed and flickered out, leaving me in darkness with hate and revenge. Then I rose up and looked round at the difference of things; for all seemed altered, and not the same. I moved to my desk, and unlocking a drawer, took out all her letters, and they, too, had altered, and were merely so many pieces of paper, not sacred things to be touched with reverence, like bits of the holy rood. But the breath of lavender from them got at some soft corner in me, making my eyes hot and tightening my throat. For a second or two I paused, looking at the vision that grew out of them, till anger puffed and blew it all away, leaving me with only the bundle of papers. This I wrapped up, along with a dead rose and a lock of yellow hair, and directed to Miss Hanlow, Ranston-in-the-Vale, Worcestershire, England.

'Hère,' said I, as Nita, my uncle's old house-keeper, hobbled in to lay the cloth for tea; 'let one of the lads take this to the dépôt before dark. No matter; I'll take it myself.—Where's Boss?'

'Goin' away?' said Boss Wilson, as I pulled up, half an hour later, at the gate he was mending—'just as the corn's yellowin' for the machines? Summat wrong? You look kinder hit—hope

'tain't serious.' He wiped his face, looking hard at mine, which I turned away, feeling it was a tell-tale.

'You won't be alone long,' I went on. 'My father is on his way, and will take possession of the farm and see to things in my absence. I have asked him to keep you on, Boss, and I think you'll find him a good sort.—Good-bye. See you again some day when I've—when I've found what I want.' I glanced down at his furrowed face and saw kindness in it.

'Lost summat, gaffer?' said he, and I could feel the search of his look. He was a shrewd man, twice my age, and may have noticed many things since we had been together.

'Ay, I've lost something,' I answered; 'but it's not that I'm after, Boss. No use hunting for broken bubbles, I take it.'

'No, 'tain't,' drawled Boss; 'but whatever you're after, it'll tek some findin', I guess, an' you may scour the world up an' down an' find it in yourself when all's done. Have a good knock round, gaffer; an' when it's all burnt out, come back again and mek friends w' things.'

I could see his outstretched hand, and mine went to it involuntarily.

'S'long, gaffer,' was all I heard as the horse leaped away with me down the rough track.

'So long,' I said to the hot silence and the western solitude, where I had dreamed my dreams awhile, tolerant of the summer loneliness as long as I could people it with fancy and see Doris and good company beyond it. But to remain there with my dead hopes all about me, grinning like marionettes which love had made caper, deluded by its own magic; to live on through the long monotonous heat with no opposite shore for the bridge of thought to touch, with no future but a fogbank where had been a fair country. No, I could not.

ON LOOKS.

THERE is probably no subject in the world which excites more interest in the human mind than personal appearance. Whether we are conscious of it or not, it is the centre of the greater portion of our daily thoughts. Look, for instance, at some of the other themes on which thought dwells—Ambition, Anticipation, Anxiety, Charity, or Sympathy. The space of time occupied by any one of these in twenty-four hours cannot equal that which we spend on our toilet, dress, and comportment combined. They claim our attention at the earliest hour of the morning; follow us instinctively through every action of the day; are present at our meetings of social intercourse; haunt our pleasures, not unfrequently mar them; and are probably in some degree the last shadows which veil us from the land of dreams. Considering that it is very important that our minds should not be burdened with what is unworthy, it would be well for us to assure ourselves that the effect this produces is not intended to be prejudicial. At first glance a person may disclaim the imputation, and say: 'Indeed, I think very little of my personal appearance;' or, 'I have no looks to boast of, so it's little time I spend on them.' To each of whom we would reply: 'My friend, you think

more of your personal appearance than you are aware of; and you spend more time on your looks because they are *not* good.'

People who depreciate or pretend to be wholly indifferent to their looks, either act a lie, or else fail to recognise the main structure on which the human mind is built. What, in fact, are looks for? If faces were like blades of grass or leaves of trees, where would be our identity? Where would be our passions? Where would be our motives? The whole world would become a gigantic piece of machinery, worked by the mind of man, without aim, without vitality, without result. It is the human form divine which gives lifeblood to our passage through this world. Emulation, self-respect, improvement, and admiration, are all qualities which spring from the consciousness that outward appearance is, and was intended to be, a matter of first importance. It is as much a law of nature as self-preservation. No matter how handsome or how ugly a man may be—and there is no distinction between man and woman here—let him go arm in arm with a friend towards a mirror. Whose image does he first glance at? Not the friend's, you may be sure. Observe a lady walking along the street. How many times will she glance at her own reflection in the shop windows? As often as she gets the chance. The sight never loses its novelty. That question, 'What am I looking like?' never loses its fascination. Let her go into a room full of mirrors. She will look into one on the right; then immediately turn and repeat the process on the left. She is quite right. The two sides are entirely different. Again, let her see a friend appear in a new dress or fashion. What is the first thought that occurs to her? 'Now I wonder how that would suit me?' She immediately turns over in her mind how and when the idea is to be carried out, while the friend is all the while flattering herself she is an object of admiration.

Let no man or woman condemn themselves for this weakness. It is common to all alike. Neither let them undervalue good looks, nor despair of improving bad ones. The gift of beauty is often allied with a fascination of manner which plain faces may sigh for in vain. If it could be bought for money, what price would not be paid for that peculiar glance or smile which is imprinted for all time!

But while we acknowledge its power and envy its possession, there is much to be said on the opposite side. Those who lack beauty avoid its snares. Those who are passed by, pause to ask themselves how they may turn life to its best account. They have no chance in the world of show. They will not even have honourable mention. They had best not compete. Other fields are open to them, wider and more satisfying than the gift that fades. We are few of us born geniuses; but we venture to say many who come under that head have become known to the world from the simple fact that they were born with a plain face. It is easy to recall instances where even severe bodily affliction has not been an obstacle to a distinguished career. There is, however, one kind of beauty with which no one is born and to which any one may attain, but the means of acquiring it is a secret which each must find out for himself. It is

exceedingly rare and exceedingly beautiful. At least once in our lives we may remember to have seen such a face, generally that of an old man with many lines in it. It arrests the heart as well as the eye. It makes us yearn for something yet unknown, that serenity of countenance which is the index of a saintly soul.

THE GOLDEN THREAD.

A MAIDEN stood in an old-world room,
With the early light on her golden hair,
And said, as she dusted her silent loom :
'The web of my life shall be bright and fair.
I will hasten to choose some silken strands,
And begin my work in the morning hours,
While the dew-beads gleam on the meadow-lands,
And the air is sweet with the breath of flowers.'

So she wove together each slender thread
Till the web grew broad and the web grew strong,
While high in an elm-tree overhead
A blackbird warbled his matin song.
But noontide smiled on the hill's green slope
Ere she said with a sigh of soft regret :
'I have finished my threads of faith and hope,
And the hues of my web are sombre yet !'

Then, over the bridge where the runnel flowed,
And under the shade of the leafy lane,
In brodered doublet a stranger rode,
With something bright at his bridle-rein,
Who bent her unfinished work above
To say in a whisper : 'Maiden sweet,
You need but this golden thread of love
To make the web of your life complete.'

Did the woof break off with a sudden jerk
As the gleaming shuttle was swiftly thrown ?
For the maiden found it was weary work
Weaving Life's intricate web alone.
And the stranger saw that her face was fair,
And spoke of the road and the scorching sun,
And owned 'twould be pleasant her task to share
By the rose-screened pane till the day was done.

So he wove with her till the light grew dim,
And daisies closed on the quiet lea,
And the blackbird ended his vesper hymn
On the highest branch of the old elm-tree.
When the minster clock in the tower struck eight,
And shadows lay on the hill's green brow,
She rose and said : 'It is growing late,
And I think that my web is perfect now !'

The years went on, and his youth had fled
When they stood once more in the quaint old room.
Time's snows had silvered her golden head ;
The dust was thick on the broken loom.
But he looked at the web they had wove that day
When Life was young and their hopes were new ;
When he rode o'er the bridge by the leafy way
'Neath a sun that shone from a heaven of blue ;
And, folding in his her white, worn hands,
He kissed her there by the rose-screened sill,
And said : 'Sweet wife, through these faded strands
The thread of our love runs golden still !'

E. MATHESON.

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BRIGANDAGE IN EGYPT.

In the summer of 1890 the Egyptian Ministry of Interior sent round a circular to the Mudirs enjoining on them to demolish certain *esbehs*, or groups of houses situated in isolated positions or on the banks of the river. This drastic measure was to be undertaken for curious reasons—namely, that the poor inhabitants of the said *esbehs* should not be plundered by ‘brigands,’ and that the brigands should not use them as places of rendezvous. These brigands greatly exercised the police, and, in truth, scarcely a week passed without a paragraph in the newspapers with the alarming title of Brigands, and recounting the doings, more or less daring, of these industrials. Again and again, in all directions throughout the provinces, private houses had been attacked by armed men, shots exchanged with the inmates, and not unfrequently there were killed and wounded on both sides.

In May, in the Mudirieh of Beherah, a band of one hundred and twenty Bedouins fell upon a village to carry off the cattle. The inhabitants, with the help of neighbours, resisted the attack, and there were many wounded on both sides. Several other attacks on villages in Lower Egypt were reported in the same month. Next month, June, brigandage was brisk, and fairly successful. In Beherah district a band of Bedouins ‘conveyed’ forty camels; while in Manufieh, Assiout, and Minieh, cattle were lifted, a *ghaffir* (watchman) or two killed, and wounds, more or less severe, inflicted on robbers and robbed. Not long afterwards, in the Shoubra Avenue, in the environs of Cairo, the police patrol came upon some of these gentry, like old-time patriarchs, peacefully driving off a mixed lot of camels, cattle, and donkeys. Naturally irritated at being disturbed in the exercise of their vocation, they fired into the police; the police replied, and brought down—not a brigand—but an unhappy camel. The rest of the spoil was secured by the retreating robbers, the police not having numbers or courage enough to press them close. Sometimes there is

a kind of pitched battle, as in the Keneh Mudirieh, in August, where some members of the brigand band of Zaid and Ismail resisted the police for about two hours, suffering loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners.

September was specially lively. In the province of Assiout, the factory of a M. Sef was attacked, nine camels stolen, and a native shot. In Garbieh province, Lower Egypt, the watchmen at a country-house were knocked down, and six bullocks and four donkeys carried off. At Bassioum, in the same province, a raid was made upon the cattle. About the middle of the month it was reported from Damanhour, in Beherah province, that a certain Abu Zed, an escaped convict, at the head of a fully-armed band, was spreading terror in the country round about, and had hitherto escaped the attentions of the mounted police. In broad daylight he attacked a country-house, pillaged it throughout, killing in the process one *fellah* and wounding two others by gunshots. As soon as the authorities heard of the outrage, they sent out soldiers in pursuit; but while these were searching for the robbers in one direction, the latter were busy in another, attacking and pillaging the village of Sannour, and killing a Greek subject who tried to resist the invasion. Nor were the operations of the brigands confined to the dry land. In the same month of September, a sailing-boat was boarded on the Nile, near Mellaoui. The cargo, consisting of sheep, was seized, while the captain, crew, and passengers were bound and thrown into the bottom of the boat. The brigands next proceeded to lower the mast, break the rudder; and having pushed the boat out towards the middle of the stream, they departed in peace with their booty.

About this time a native was killed and his horse stolen on the road between Cairo and Ghizeh. Thereafter, we several times experienced difficulties with donkey drivers. We would hire a donkey at night in Cairo, and without saying where we were going, start off for Ghizeh, where we stayed. We would get

along famously while traversing the broad and well-kept roads of the Ismailia quarter; the zealous driver in the rear keeping up the pace of the donkey with intermittent 'Ahs!' and resounding stick-whacks. But when we left the town and clattered over the Nile bridge, the alarmed donkeyman began to ask: '*Riah fain?*' (Where are you going?) At the word 'Ghizeh,' and the aspect of the black, impenetrable, Egyptian darkness that lay before us in the Lebbeck tree arcade on a moonless night, man and donkey called a halt. Even offers of extra 'baksheesh' are unavailing. Nor will the donkey move a step without the man; so we have to dismount and grope our way onward on foot, leaving the Arab rascal to mourn the fare he has *not* got through his fear.

Though in many cases the authorities have not been able to lay hands on the wandering depredators, who, after a successful haul, can disperse for a time among the villages, or retire to the desert and the rocks, never far remote from the river in Upper Egypt, yet they sometimes are on the winning side. In July the Keneh police secured some fifty members of a band led by 'the famous Ismail Kassem,' and some months before, the same Keneh police bagged a still more 'famous' personage in the self-styled 'chief of all the robbers of Upper Egypt,' Zaid Abdalla, his brother, and some seventy members of his band.

We were in Keneh shortly after the capture of this 'famous' worthy, and had an opportunity of seeing him in prison. The prison was a one-storied, white-washed range of buildings, placed round a large open courtyard, where Egyptian troops kept guard with fixed bayonets and loaded rifles. The door behind which the desperadoes were confined was not what you would expect in a jail, and a fairly stout kick might have demolished the mouldy wood composing it. As our party entered, accompanied by several police officers and legal luminaries from the courthouse of the Mudirieh hard by, some scores of prisoners, all collected in one room, rose to their feet and stood in double rows, down which we passed in single file, so close to them as almost to brush against them in passing. In fact it occurred to us that any evil-minded and desperate character might easily have seized one of us by the throat and strangled him on the spot. The officials so far recognised the peculiarities of the situation by making us leave our sticks outside, in case some Arab might be tempted to clutch them.

The prisoners were a very mixed crowd. There were young boys and old men; densely black-skinned negroes mingling with the lighter skins of Lower Egypt and the surrounding desert. Among them was one fellow clothed in European style. He was lying on the ground, and had tied round his head a white cloth deeply stained with blood, which had oozed through from some wound. Passing these commoner ruffians, we were brought to a door fastened by a wooden wedge loosely thrust into a staple. Here was secured in solitary state Zaid, the hero of the hour, about whose capture the police were much puffed up, and introduced us to interview him as to the audience of a great man. Zaid was not a bad-looking fellow of about thirty-five, of

sleek healthy aspect, and well clad in Arab fashion. One of his arms was wrapped in bandages and strapped across his breast. We interviewed him by an interpreter. His arm, he said, had been shot through in two places by the police in the skirmish preliminary to his capture. Asked how long he had been engaged in killing and robbing, he denied the soft impeachment; but afterwards admitted having, as it was more euphemistically put, levied 'taxes' on the sordid industrial plodders of the surrounding parts. Taking X for some prominent personage in the administration, he asked, with a wistful light in his intensely dark eyes, if he would pardon him. This X generously assured him he was ready to do—only he had no say in the matter. On taking leave of Zaid, we again brushed shoulders with the ragged crowd on our way to the exit, and had a glimpse of another room filled also with a motley band of malefactors.

We were next asked to go to see Zaid's woman-kind; for the police, previous to bagging the chief, had made a clean sweep of his wives, sisters, cousins, and aunts, and clapped them all into Keneh prison—their idea being that the bereaved robber would be caught prowling around to discover the fate of his missing relatives. The strategy was justified by success.

On our way to the part of the prison where the women were, we met a gang of prisoners coming in from outside work. They were a ragged crew, young and old, laden with chains, which clanked as they went along surrounded by guards with fixed bayonets. The fastening of the door where the women were imprisoned was a work of art. The door, of decayed wood, had great cracks and holes in it. Through some of these holes, a long chain, such as is used to fasten a string of prisoners together when on the march to and from their work, had been passed along the inside of the wall to an adjoining iron-barred window, then through between the bars and along the outside wall to the door. The chain was wound round in this fashion again and again in a complicated series of folds, and finally fastened by a padlock. To undo this ingenious arrangement was a work of time and patience, so we had leisure to observe a large basin placed outside the door, and containing a heterogeneous mass of edible matter in the shape of rice, fragments of meat, vegetables, bits of bread, &c., all mixed up together. This, we were informed, constituted an offering from certain charitably-minded inhabitants of Keneh for the good of the unfortunates we were going to see.

The door being at length open, we found a dozen or more women with a number of children squatting on the dirty earthen floor. Most of the women had the blue-black native garment drawn over their heads, or wore the peculiar Eastern veil, so that their faces were hidden. One virago started a noisy jeremiad as soon as we entered, declaring she had nothing to do with Zaid, and anathematised him and all his works. She was put to silence with much difficulty. A young girlish figure crouching against the wall was pointed out as Zaid's latest acquired wife—he had several. She resisted endeavours to get a look at her face, keeping her head down and firmly wrapped in her cloak. On X asking what she would take for a ring she wore, she said

faintly, without raising her head, 'A millime.' He gave her ten piastres, and pocketed the relique.

Just then the dish of food was brought in and set down in the midst, when a poor little fellow about two years old, with quite a light-coloured, European-like skin, and in a practically naked state as he sat on the bare ground with a solemn bewildered expression, cast a wistful eye upon it, and hesitatingly stretching out his tiny arm, took his small handful of the much-mixed mass. Taking a step aside, I nearly trod on a small bundle of blue cloth which I discovered to be a baby a few weeks old, sleeping peacefully, with one extremely small doll-like arm stretched out on the dirty earth. In a dark corner against the wall, as far removed as possible from where the prisoners were sitting, was another and larger bundle covered with a white cloth. It was a dead body. The young son of the robber-chief had died in prison the previous night, and was lying here, while his father awaited sentence of death in a cell a few yards off.

Zaid, however, would not submit tamely to the sentence of the Keneh court, and appealed unto Cæsar at Cairo. Thither, accordingly, after some time and trouble, he and his band were conveyed under a strong escort. I have several times met such convoys of prisoners marching across the Nile bridge on their way to the prison at Ghizeh. They trudge along, a ragged, motley, bare-footed band, small brown-skinned boys and girls in front, women with babies on their shoulders, and huge bundles of household goods on their backs, then a crowd of men of all ages and colours, the whole hedged in before, behind, and round about by black Soudanese troops with fixed bayonets. The light dry dust rises in a cloud about the many moving feet, and sweat bathes the faces of guards and guarded, as the strong sunlight beats on the melancholy spectacle.

In view of the frequency of acts of brigandage, the Government, in the month of April (1890), submitted to the Legislative Council a special decree defining the penalties to be inflicted on organisers, leaders, and members of armed bands. While some of the members of the Council favoured the Government project, the majority declared for the proposals of one of their own members, Sheikh Mohamed Effendi El Abassi. He, at the request of the Government, had embodied in a projected decree the relevant 'prescriptions of the Holy Law in force in all the countries dependent on the Ottoman Empire.' There is a sliding scale of penalties. A brigand who is arrested before having robbed or killed anybody would get a dose of bastinado and be imprisoned till he repents—or dies. Brigands who have seized property to the extent of ten dirhems each—provided this is in good money or in kind—would be condemned to amputation of the right hand and the left foot. But desperate characters who have taken part in both theft and murder have presented to them the following interesting programme: (1) Amputation of right hand and left foot, followed by capital execution: (2) Amputation as above and crucifixion. (3) Amputation as above, capital execution, and crucifixion. (4) Capital execution and crucifixion. (5) Capital execution alone. (6) Crucifixion alone. The above scale to be

applied according to the 'enormity of the offence or the discretion of the judge.

The project submitted by the Government was less elaborate than that of the Sheikh. It was that any operation of a band involving murder should bring the death penalty on the leaders or organisers of the band. When there was no murder, the leaders and organisers should be punished with forced labour for life; while in either case the ordinary members should perform forced labour for life or for a term of years.

THE IVORY GATE.*

BY WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XX.—THE WHISPER OF CALUMNY.

WHISPERED words are ever more potent than words proclaimed aloud upon the house-top. If the envious man from the house-top denounces a man of reputation as a thief, a gambler, a patricide, a sorricide, amicicide, no man regardeth his voice, though he call out with the voice of Stentor: people only stare: these are the words of a madman or a malignant. But whisper these charges in the ear of your neighbour: whisper them with bated breath: say that, as yet, the thing is a profound secret. Then that rumour swiftly flies abroad, until every Burgess in the town regards that man askance; and when the time for voting comes, he votes for another man, and will not have him as beadle, sexton, verger, schoolmaster, turncock, policeman, parish doctor, workhouse chaplain, common-councilman, alderman, Mayor, or Member of Parliament. And all for a whisper.

It was Checkley who set going the whisper, which at this moment was running up and down the office, agitating all hearts, occupying all minds, the basis of all conversation.

King Midas's servant, when he was irresistibly impelled to whisper, dug a hole in the ground and placed his whisper at the bottom of that hole. But the grasses grew up and sighed the words to the passing breeze, so that the market-women heard them on their way: 'The King's ears are the ears of an Ass—the ears of an Ass—the ears of an Ass.' The old and trusty servant of Dering & Son buried his secret in the leaves of his Copying-book. Here it was found by the boy who worked the Copying-press. As he turned over the pages, he became conscious of a sibilant, malignant, revengeful murmur: 'Who stole the bonds? The new Partner.—Who forged the letters? The new Partner.—Who robbed the safe? The new Partner.' Here was a pretty thing for a pretty innocent office boy to hear! Naturally, his very soul became aflame: when the dinner hour arrived, he told another boy as a profound secret what he had heard. That boy told an older boy, who told another still older, who told another, and so up the long official ladder, until everybody in the place knew that the new Partner—actually the new Partner—the most fortunate of all young men that ever passed his Exam.—who had stepped at a bound from

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two hundred to a thousand, at least—this young man, of all young men in the world, had forged his partner's name, robbed his partner's safe, made away with his partner's property. Who after this can trust anybody?

But others there were who refused to believe this thing. They pointed out that the new Partner continued—apparently—on the best of terms with the old Partner: they argued that when such things are done, friendships are killed and partnerships are dissolved. They even went so far, though members of the great profession which believes in no man's goodness, as to declare their belief that the new Partner could not possibly by any temptation do such things. And there were others who pointed to the fact that the whisper came from the boy of the Copying-press: that he heard it whispered by the fluttering leaves: and that it was imparted to those leaves by Checkley—old Checkley—whose hatred towards the new Partner was notorious to all men: not on account of any personal qualities or private injuries, but out of the jealousy which made him regard the Chief as his own property: and because he had been deprived of his power in the office—the power of appointment and dis-appointment and the raising of screw, which he had previously possessed. Checkley was dethroned. Therefore, Checkley spread this rumour. Others, again, said that if the rumour was really started by Checkley, which could not be proved, seeing that, like all whispers or rumours, the origin was unknown, and perhaps supernatural, then Checkley must have very strong grounds for starting such a thing.

Thus divided in opinion, the office looked on, expectant. Expectancy is a thing which gets into the air: it fills every room with whispers: it makes a conspirator or a partisan or a confederate of every one: it divides a peaceful office into camps: it is the cause of inventions, lies, and exaggerations. There were two parties in this office—one which whispered accusations, and the other which whispered denials. Between these hovered the wobblers or mugwumps, who whispered that while on the one hand—on the other hand—and that while they readily admitted—so they were free to confess—Everybody knows the wobbler. He is really, if he knew it, the master of the situation; but, because he is a wobbler, he cannot use his strength. When he is called upon to act, he falls into two pieces, each of which begins to wobble and to fall into other two pieces of its own accord. The whole process of a Presidential Election—except the final voting—was going on in that office of half-a-dozen rooms, but in whispers, without a single procession, and not one German band. And all unconscious of the tumult that raged about him—a tumult in whispers—a civil war in silence—the object of this was going on his way unconscious and undisturbed.

Now, however, having learned that the old clerk was actually seeking to fix this charge upon him, George perceived the whispering and understood the charge. When he passed through the first or outer office in the morning, he perceived that the clerks all looked at him curiously, and that they pretended not to be looking at him, and plied their pens with zeal. On the stairs he met an article clerk, who blushed a

rosy red with consciousness of the thing: on his way to his own room through his own clerks' room, he felt them looking after him curiously as he passed; and he felt them, when his own door was closed, whispering about him. This made him extremely angry. Yet, for a whisper, one cannot suffer wrath to become visible. That would only please the whisperers. There is only one thing worse than to be suspected rightly: it is to be suspected wrongly; for the latter makes a man mad. What? That he—even he—the man of principle and rule, should be suspected! Does nothing, then—no amount of character, no blamelessness of record, avail? Is the world coming to an end?

George then shut his door and sat down to his table in a very wrathful and savage frame of mind. And while he was just beginning to nurse and nourish this wrath, coaxing it from a red glow to a roaring flame, a card was brought to him.

'I will see Sir Samuel at once,' he said.

It is as well that we do not hear the remarks of the clerks' room and the servants' hall. The Service, in fact, is a body of critics whose judgments would, if we only heard them, cause us to reconsider our self-respect. Great Philanthropist, great Statesman, saintly Preacher—if you only knew what they say of you—down below!

The clerks, as Sir Samuel Dering—his face composed to the solemnity of a mute—walked into the new Partner's room, whispered to each other: 'He's going to finish him. There'll be a bolt to-night.—He won't dare face it out.—He has got a nerve!!!—The game's up at last.—They won't prosecute; you see if they do.—If it was one of us, now.—Sir Samuel's come to warn him—now you'll see.' With other exchanges and surmises.

Sir Samuel, big and important, coldly inclined his head and took a chair. 'A few words,' he said—'a few serious words, if you please, sir.'

'Pray, go on.' George sat up and listened, his upper lip stiffened. He knew what was coming. The thing which Sir Samuel proposed to say, apparently became difficult. He turned red and stammered. In fact, it is very difficult to inform a highly respectable young man in a highly respectable position that he is going to be charged with a crime of peculiar atrocity.

'I am here,' he said, after two or three false starts, 'without my brother's knowledge. This is a private and unofficial visit. I come to advise. My visit must be regarded as without prejudice.'

'Is it not well to ask first of all if your advice is invited?'

'In such a case as this, I venture to obtrude advice,' Sir Samuel replied with dignity. 'There are occasions on which a man should speak—he is bound to speak. You will remember that I was to have been your brother-in-law.'

'You are to be my brother-in-law. Well, Sir Samuel, go on. I will hear what you have to say.'

'You are, as no doubt you suspect and fear, about to be charged in company with another, with complicity in this long series of forgeries.'

'Really. I heard last night from Elsie that there was some talk of such a charge. Now, Sir

Samuel, a man of your experience must be aware that it is not enough for a foolish old clerk to suggest a charge; but there must be some connection between the accused person and the crime.'

'Connection? Good Heavens! There is a solid chain of evidence, without a single weak point.'

'Is there indeed? Well, we will not ask for the production of your chain. Let us take it for granted. Go on to the next point.'

'I wish, young gentleman, I wish most sincerely, for the credit of yourself, and for the happiness of the unfortunate girl who has given you her heart, that my chain was of glass, to fly into a thousand fragments. But it is not. Everything is complete. The motive: the tempter: the conspiracy: the working out: the apparent success—everything complete. The motive—want of money.'

'Want of money? Well, I was pretty badly off. That cannot be denied. Go on.'

'You wanted money—both of you—wanted money. In ninety cases out of a hundred, this is the cause—wanted money. So you went and did it. Always the way in the City—they want money—and so they go and do it—go and do it.'

'I see. Well, we need not have the tempter and the rest of it. They can wait. Let us go on to the advice.'

'Just so. What I came to say is this. You are in a devil of a mess, young gentleman: the whole job is found out: there's no use in trying to brazen it out. Best come down at once.'

George nodded with as much good-humour as he could assume under the circumstances.

'Down at once,' Sir Samuel repeated. 'It is always best in the long run. In your case, there is every reason why a scandal should be avoided. The thing hasn't got into the papers: we are only yet in the first stage of finding out what has been actually stolen: it has not been a case in which the police could help. Now my brother is not a vindictive man. I, for my own part, don't want my wife's brother, to say nothing of you, convicted of forgery. Eh? Beastly thing, to go down to the City in the morning and to hear them whispering, "That's his wife's brother in the papers to-day. Lagged for fifteen years." Fifteen years for certain, it will be, my fine fellow.'

'Fifteen years for certain,' George repeated.

'Let me help you out of the mess. Don't make difficulties. Don't stick out your chin. Think of Elsie!'

George nearly lost his self-control—not quite.

'Think of Elsie!' he cried. 'Best not mention her name, Sir Samuel, if you please.'

'She would be heart-broken if it went so far. If it stops short of that, she will soon get over the little disappointment.'

'Go on to the next point.'

'Well—it is just this. I'll help you both—Athelstan as well as you—yes—I'll help Athelstan. Hang the fellow! Why couldn't he stay at Camberwell? Who cares about him and his bad company, if he keeps himself out of people's way? Now, then. Let me have back the money. You haven't drawn anything out of the

Bank. Give me the papers. Then I'll square it with my brother. I will advance you a hundred or two: you shall go clear out of the country, and never come back again. And then, though it's compounding a felony, we'll just put everything back again, and say nothing more about it.'

'Oh! That is very good of you.'

'Yes, I know. But I want to make things easy. I don't want a beastly row and a scandal. As for Athelstan, I shouldn't know the fellow if I ever saw him. I hardly remember him. But for you, I've always had a liking, until these little events happened.'

'Very good, indeed, of you.'

'When the thing came out, I said to Lady Dering. "My dear," I said, "I'm very sorry for your sister, because it will vex her more than a bit. The engagement, of course, will be broken off; but we must not have a scandal. We cannot afford it. We can not"—he smiled—"we are positively not rich enough. Only the very richest people can afford to have such a scandal. I will try and get things squared," I said, "for all our sakes." That is what I said to Lady Dering. Now, be persuaded. Do the right thing. Tell Athelstan what I have told you. The warrant for the arrest of the man Edmund Gray will be issued to-morrow, I suppose, or next day. After that, nothing can save you.'

'Nothing can save me,' George repeated. 'Is that all you came to say, Sir Samuel?'

'That is all. A clean breast is all we ask.'

'Then, Sir Samuel'—George rose and took a bundle of papers from the table—'let us find my Partner. You shall hear what I have to say.'

'Ah! that's right—that's sensible. I knew that you would be open to reason. Come. He is sure to be alone at this early hour. Come at once.'

They went out together. The clerks noticed their faces full of 'business,' as we poetically put it—matters of buying and selling being notoriously of the highest importance conceivable. Evidently something very serious indeed had passed. But the chief personage still held up his head. 'Game, sir, game to the last. But there would be a bolt.'

Mr Dering was in his usual place, before his letters, which were still unopened. He looked ill, worn, and worried.

'Brother,' said Sir Samuel, 'I bring you a young gentleman who has a communication to make of great importance.'

'Is it about this case? Have you—at last—found out something?' The tone, the words, suggest extreme irritability.

'I fear not. You know, I believe, all that we have found out. But now,' said Sir Samuel, rubbing his hands—'now comes the long-expected—'

'What I have to say will not take long. I hear from Sir Samuel that he and Checkley between them have got up a case which involves me in these forgeries.'

'Quite right,' said Sir Samuel. 'Involves you inextricably.'

'And that things have gone so far that I am about to be arrested, tried, and convicted. Which he rightly thinks will be a great scandal. So it

will—so it certainly will. He therefore proposes that I should make a clean breast of the whole business, and give back the stolen bonds. I am sorry that I cannot do this, for a very simple reason—namely, that there is nothing to confess. But there is one thing that I must do. You placed the case in my hands’—

‘I did. I asked you to find out. I have brought no charge against you. Have you found out?’

Mr Dering spoke like a schoolmaster in one of his least amiable moods.

‘It is a very improper thing for a person accused of a crime to be engaged in detecting it. So I resign the case—there are the papers. You had better go to some solicitor accustomed to this kind of work.’

‘Stuff and rubbish!’ cried Mr Dering.

‘Sir, you have deceived me.’ Sir Samuel’s face was gradually resuming its normal length. ‘You promised to confess, and you have not. You as good as confessed just now.—This man is clearly, unmistakably guilty,’ he added, turning to his brother.

‘I have not asked you, my Partner,’ Mr Dering added, more softly, ‘to give up the case. I have heard what is said. I have observed that the so-called case is built up entirely on conjecture.’

‘No—no,’ said Sir Samuel. ‘It is a sound structure, complete in every part.’

‘And there is nothing as yet to connect any man with the thing—not even the man Edmund Gray.’

‘Quite wrong—quite wrong,’ said Sir Samuel. ‘In the City, we may not be lawyers, but we understand evidence.’

‘I cannot choose but give up the case,’ George replied. ‘Consider. Already Mrs Arundel has requested her daughter to break off her engagement; I am forbidden the house; Elsie has left her mother and gone to her brother. No, sir—take the papers, and give them to some other person.’

Mr Dering mechanically took the papers, and laid his hand upon them.

‘Let me remind you,’ George continued, ‘how far we have got. We have proved that Edmund Gray is a real person, known to many. We have not proved the connection between him and the robberies committed in his name. He is apparently a most respectable person. The problem before you is still to fix the crime on some one. I shall be glad to hear that it has been successfully solved.’

‘Glad?’ asked Sir Samuel. ‘You will be glad? This is amazing!’

‘Eight years ago, Mr Dering, another man stood here, and was accused of a similar crime. He refused to stay in the house under such a charge. That was foolish. Time has established his innocence. I shall stay. I am your Partner. The Partnership can only be dissolved by mutual consent. I remain.’

Mr Dering laid his head upon his hand and sighed. ‘I believe I shall be driven mad before long with this business,’ he said querulously. He had lost something of his decision of speech. ‘Well, I will give the case to somebody else. Meantime, look here. Tell me how these things came here.’

The ‘things’ were two envelopes containing

letters. They were addressed to Edmund Gray, and had been opened. One of them was George’s own note inviting him to call. The other was the letter from the Manager of the Bank asking for other references.

‘How did they get here?’ asked Mr Dering again.

‘Had you not better ask Checkley?’ George rang the bell.

‘I found these on the top of my letters, Checkley,’ said Mr Dering. ‘You were the first in the room. You put the letters on the table. I found them on the top of the heap. Nobody had been in the room except you and me. You must have put them there.’

Checkley looked at the envelopes, and began to tremble. ‘I don’t know,’ he said. ‘I put the letters on the table. They were not among them. Somebody must have put them there’—he looked at the new Partner—‘some friend of Mr Edmund Gray, between the time that I left the room and the time when you came.’

‘I entered the room,’ Mr Dering replied, ‘as you were leaving it.’

‘Observe,’ said George, ‘that in the whole conduct of this business there has been one man engaged who has control of the letters. That man—the only man in the office is, I believe, the man before us—your clerk—Checkley.’

‘How came the letters here?’ Mr Dering repeated angrily.

‘I don’t know,’ answered Checkley. ‘He’—indicating George—‘must have put them there.’

‘The Devil is in the office, I believe. How do things come here? How do they vanish? Who put the notes in the safe? Who took the certificates out of the safe? All you can do is to stand and accuse each other. What good are you—any of you? Find out. Find out. Yesterday, there was a handbill about Edmund Gray in the safe. The day before there was a handful of Socialist tracts on the letters. Find out, I say.’

‘Give the thing to detectives,’ said George.

‘Let me take the case in hand, brother.’ Sir Samuel laid hands on the papers. ‘I flatter myself that I will very soon have the fellow under lock and key. And then, sir’—he turned to George—‘scandal or no scandal, there shall be no pity—no mercy—none.’

George laughed. ‘Well, Sir Samuel, in a fortnight or so I shall call myself your brother-in-law. Till then, farewell.’ He left the office and returned to his own room, the ripple of the laughter still upon his lips and in his eyes, so that the clerks marvelled, and the faith of those who believed in him was strengthened.

‘Before then, young crowing bantam,’ cried Sir Samuel after him, ‘I shall have you under lock and key.’

‘Ah!’ This was Checkley. The little interjection expressed, far more than any words could do, his satisfaction at the prospect. Then he left the room grumbling and muttering.

‘I believe that this business will finish me off,’ Mr Dering sighed again, and passed his hand over his forehead. ‘Night and day it worries me. It makes my forgetfulness grow upon me. I am as good as gone. This hour I cannot remember the last hour. See—I had breakfast at home as usual. I remember that. I remember setting out. It is ten minutes’ walk from Bedford Row to

here. I have taken an hour and a half. How? I do not know. What did I do last night? I do not know, and I am pursued by this forger—robber—demon. He puts things in my safe—yesterday, a placard that Edmund Gray was going to give a lecture on something or other—the day before, a bundle of tracts by Edmund Gray. What do these things mean? What can I do?

(To be continued.)

ON THE GREAT ANDES; OR, LIFE AT LOW PRESSURES.

EVERY one knows what, in a moral sense, life at high pressure means. The phrase is one borrowed from applied science, and is perhaps still more aptly designated in the popular saying about 'burning the candle at both ends.' Well, what 'high pressure' is in the moral world, so is 'low pressure' in the physical—both bring about more or less of injury and collapse. In both cases the cause is obvious; it is due to departure from a normal state of existence. The man who goes to bed at daybreak, and does the most of his work or amusement when other people are asleep, violates the recognised healthful division of time; so the man who, in a physical sense, ceases to occupy a level at which the body is subjected to an atmospheric pressure of fifteen pounds to the square inch cannot very comfortably exist where the pressure is so low as to be little more than half of this. At sea-level, or at a reasonable distance above it, we are not aware of any pressure upon us—everything is so evenly balanced within us and around. But let us ascend a high mountain—say Mont Blanc, or Chimborazo, or Cotopaxi—or let us go up still higher in a balloon, and then we perceive what occurs: difficulty of breathing, bleeding at the nose and the gums, even the lips and the eyes, a tendency to faint, or even to die (as has happened). This is due to the absence of that mysteriously comforting fact about the fifteen pounds of atmospheric pressure to the square inch—is, in short, due to living at 'low pressures,' or 'out of our usual.'

From a scientific point of view, the phenomena of life at low pressures are exceedingly interesting, and have not yet received either complete elucidation or conclusive explanation. Mr Whymp, in his latest book (*Travels amongst the Great Andes of the Equator*. London: John Murray), has devoted much space to the question, and has certainly succeeded in arriving at some important conclusions. The book, as all his books are, is a thing at once of beauty and of utility; for he is equally traveller, artist, author, and man of science. We shall endeavour to give some account of Mr Whymp's experiences on those great altitudes at which he lived amongst the majestic mountains of the equatorial Andes.

One of the principal scientific objects of Mr Whymp's journeys among the mountain ranges of South America had reference to the well-known difficulty of living at an abnormally high level above the sea. At what time this difficulty was first recognised by men of science, is not perhaps known. We are all acquainted with the

ancient prejudices attaching to the attempt to scale sacred mountains—say, that of Ararat. As the site on which the ark of Noah rested after the flood, Mount Ararat was naturally associated with much that was sacred in the history of the Jewish religion; and the attempt to reach its summit to ascertain whether any trace of the ark was still there, was regarded as sacrilegious. To any one who attempted the feat, it was believed that death was the consequence. It is not difficult to perceive the origin of this belief. Ararat is a thousand feet higher than Mont Blanc; and any adventurer in the old and unscientific ages who made so bold as to scale its lofty height, would no doubt suffer from that state of breathlessness and bleeding at the mouth and nose to which we have referred. This was quite enough to stamp the attempt as one displeasing to the Deity; and such as, if persevered in to the end, would result in death. So thorough was this belief in the minds of the semi-barbarous inhabitants of Armenia, that it was not until the present century that any mountain-climber actually reached the summit of Ararat.

What held true of Mount Ararat held true also of Mont Blanc. In 1775 four natives of Chamouni attempted the ascent of the latter mountain, and succeeded in reaching a considerable height. So far as they went they found their route comparatively free from mechanical obstacles, but they were completely overcome by fatigue and difficulty of breathing. Being ignorant of science, they did not attribute this oppression to its right cause. They thought it was due to the heat of the sun's rays in the confined ravines through which they had to pass; the difference of atmospheric pressure as between high and low levels not, of course, occurring to their untutored minds. M. de Saussure was the first man of science to reach the top of Mont Blanc. This was in August 1787. He has graphically described his extraordinary sufferings from the heat and rarity of the atmosphere. But he was a man of science, and knew that his sufferings were due, not to any so-called curse upon those who would seek to reach the summit, but simply to the fact that the barometer, instead of showing a pressure of thirty or thirty-one inches, showed only a pressure of sixteen. It is this abnormal reduction of atmospheric weight which induces those symptoms of suffocation that occur in high altitudes—whether the situation be on Mount Ararat or Mont Blanc.

That the symptoms of this illness—Mountain-sickness, as it is now called—are mainly due to the change of atmospheric pressure, is generally admitted; but as this change does not affect all individuals alike, and does not operate alike in all localities, there are many persons who seek to attribute the sickness to other co-operating causes. The subject has appeared to Mr Whymp as worthy of careful investigation, more particularly for ascertaining the heights at which those painful effects begin to manifest themselves, what the symptoms of those effects are, and whether the effects are permanent. The leading symptoms of this Mountain-sickness are, according to him, 'nausea and vomiting; headaches of most severe character; feverishness; hemorrhages; lassitude, depression and weakness, and

an indescribable feeling of illness ;' which illness, occurring at great elevations, is only cured by descending into lower zones. While, therefore, high elevations, and consequent diminished atmospheric pressure, have obviously to do with Mountain-sickness, yet, says Mr Whympier, 'in various parts of the world, the notion is, and has long been entertained, that it is due to local causes, such, for example, as noxious exhalations from vegetation. Some support to this notion,' he adds, 'seems to be found in the fact that whilst the greatest heights in Europe (15—16,000 feet) are annually ascended by throngs of persons without perceptible inconvenience, multitudes of others in Asia and America suffer acutely at lower elevations (14—15,000 feet); and it would therefore seem that there are influences at work on the latter continents which do not operate in Europe.' In short, he thinks Mountain-sickness may to some extent be attributable to the frailties of human nature. In some individuals it may be superinduced by their inability to bear severe and prolonged exertion, so that circumstances which might inconvenience them would give little or no inconvenience to others. We shall see what Mr Whympier's own experiences were.

These began with his ascent of Chimborazo, which was accomplished in January 1880. His first camp was at a height of something like 15,000 feet above sea-level; and up to this point neither he nor his attendants had suffered much inconvenience from the reduction of pressure. But when they had moved on another thousand feet higher, evidences of distress began to manifest themselves. Curiously enough, it was one of the mules that first showed tokens of exhaustion. It was probably the same animal which, at a slightly lower level, had been in particularly good spirits just a day or two before. On that occasion, says Mr Whympier, 'there was a noise, and I became aware that the mule had broken loose and was frisking about. The animal rejoiced in freedom, and, intoxicated by success, went as near to standing upon its head as a mule can go. Its behaviour seemed to me supremely ungrateful, and I went for that animal. It ran away; but it was handicapped, for it had a long halter, which trailed along the sandy plain, whilst I ran unimpeded, and gained on it at every stride. When I seized the halter it was I who was captured. The wretched beast dragged me unmercifully over the sandy soil until Louis came to my assistance, and we then towed it in triumph back to camp.' But at 16,000 feet above the sea, and with a pressure of a little over seventeen inches, mules are not so lively. At this altitude, Mr Whympier's mule struck work, and he had to dismount and lead it. It obviously found difficulty in supporting its own weight. 'Looking back, to see how the rest were progressing, I found that they were scattered over about half-a-mile, and that all the animals were in difficulties, though none carried more than one hundred and sixty pounds.' The falling barometer was clearly too much for the mules.

But the human members of the expedition were soon to feel a similar degree of affliction. Shortly after they reached their second camp at 16,664 feet, they were on their backs, and incapable of the least exertion. 'We knew that the evening was upon us, and that we were ex-

periencing our first attack of Mountain-sickness. We were feverish, had intense headaches, and were unable to satisfy our desire for air, except by breathing with open mouths. This naturally parched the throats, and produced a craving for drink, which we were unable to satisfy—partly from the difficulty of obtaining it, and partly from trouble in swallowing it. When we got enough, we could only sip, and not to save our lives could we have taken a quarter of a pint at a draught. Before a mouthful was down, we were obliged to breathe and gasp again, until our throats were as dry as ever. Besides having our normal rate of breathing largely accelerated, we found it impossible to sustain life without every now and again giving spasmodic gulps, just like fishes when taken out of water. Of course there was no inclination to eat; but we wished to smoke, and found that our pipes almost refused to burn, for they, like ourselves, wanted more oxygen.'

This painful condition of affairs continued all night, and all next day; but was ultimately relieved by the administration of chlorate of potash—ten grains to a wine-glass of water—the dose repeated every two or three hours, if necessary. The trouble was gradually overcome to such an extent as to make further ascent possible; but still the party suffered much from lassitude and a desire to lie down. They started from their third camp on January 4, at 5.40 A.M., the morning being fine and nearly cloudless. At ten o'clock they had reached the height of 19,400 feet, and for some distance farther continued to progress at a reasonable rate through the soft snow, having fine weather and a good deal of sunshine. At eleven o'clock they were 20,000 feet above sea-level, and could see the two summits of the great Chimborazo. The one they scaled first turned out not to be the highest, and they boldly struck out for the other summit. For five hours—as the snow was hiding many crevasses—they could only proceed by crawling along the surface on all-fours; but at length they reached the highest summit of the mountain, and their labours were rewarded with success. They stood at an elevation of 20,498 feet above the sea. The wind, by this time, blew hard from the north-east, and drove the light snow before it viciously. Mist also had set in, and not much beyond the mountain could be seen. So, as there was only another hour and a quarter of daylight left, they had at once to start on their downward journey in order to reach their camp, which they gained just as daylight was vanishing.

After his final descent from this great mountain, Mr Whympier and his party rested awhile and recruited; at the end of which period he prepared to make the ascent of the highest active volcano in the world—Cotopaxi, in Ecuador, 19,613 feet above the sea. Though slightly lower than the peak of Chimborazo, the cone of Cotopaxi presents features which lend to it an interest peculiarly its own. It stands on a high base—the valley at its foot being 9000 feet above sea-level. The upper part of the mountain, however, consists of a perfect cone of 4400 feet, completely covered with snow, except that the edge of the crater on the top is formed of bare rock, the result doubtless of the fiery glow and the steam emitted from the mouth of the volcano.

In 1877 Cotopaxi was especially active. On the 21st of June, soon after midday, and apparently without warning, an immense black column was projected about twice the height of the cone (say, 18,000 feet) in the air, and was accompanied by tremendous subterranean bellowing. The summit glowed at night, but next morning its appearance was normal until 6.30 A.M., when another enormous column rose from the crater. These eruptions were clearly seen from Quito, thirty-five miles distant, and so immense was the quantity of dust and ashes ejected from the volcano that as it drifted north-easterly over the country it carried darkness with it. In Quito it began to be dark at eight o'clock that same morning, the darkness increasing in intensity until mid-day, when it was like night. From the south or windward side, however, the summit of the mountain could be clearly seen; and it was observed, about ten o'clock in the forenoon, that molten lava was being poured through the gaps and notches in the lip of the crater, bubbling and smoking, so it was described, like the froth of a pot that suddenly boils over. 'The scene which then ensued upon the mountain was shut out from mortal eyes, for in a few minutes the whole of it was enveloped in smoke and steam, and became invisible; but out of the darkness a moaning noise arose, which grew into a roar, and a deluge of water, blocks of ice, mud, and rock, rushed down, sweeping away everything that lay in its course, and leaving a desert in its rear.' It is estimated that it travelled as far as Latacuya, twenty-five miles to the south-west, at the rate of fifty miles an hour.

It was this tremendous volcano which Mr Whympet set himself to scale in the month of February 1880. His first camp was pitched at a height of 15,139 feet above the sea. At this level he found lichens growing, also live beetles and a frog; but above this he found nothing, either animal or vegetable, except some shabby patches of moss. When nearing the summit of the cone, the ascent became very difficult, as it had to be made up a smooth slope of soft ashes; and but for the fact that occasional streaks of ice gave some stability to the mass, the ascent would have been almost impossible. As it was, large quantities of débris slipped down at every step.

A few minutes after the arrival of the party at the crater, a roar from the bottom told them that the 'animal'—as one of the attendants called the volcano—was alive. The crater was nearly filled with smoke and steam, which drifted about and obscured the view. 'It had been settled beforehand that every man was to shift for himself if an eruption occurred, and that all our belongings were to be abandoned. When we heard the roar, there was an "it is time to be off" expression clearly written on all our faces; but before a word could be uttered we found ourselves enveloped only in a cloud of cool and quite unobjectionable steam, and we concluded to stop.'

When night fairly set in, the party went up to view the interior of the crater. 'The atmosphere was cold and tranquil. We could hear the deadened roar of the steam-blasts as they escaped from time to time. Our long rope had been fixed both to guide in the darkness, and to

lessen the chances of disturbing the equilibrium of the slope of ash. Grasping it, I made my way upwards, preparing for something dramatic, for a strong glow on the under sides of the steam-clouds showed that there was fire below. Crawling and grovelling as the lip was approached, I bent eagerly forward to peer into the unknown, with Carrel behind gripping my legs. The vapours no longer concealed any part of the vast crater, though they were there, drifting about as before.' The immense amphitheatre thus disclosed was afterwards found to be 2300 feet in diameter from north to south, and 1650 feet across from east to west. It was surrounded by cliffs and overhanging precipices. 'Cavernous recesses belched forth smoke; the sides of cracks and chasms shone with ruddy light; and so it continued on all sides right down to the bottom, precipice alternating with slope, and the fiery fissures becoming more numerous as the bottom was approached. At the bottom, probably twelve hundred feet below us, and towards the centre, there was a ruddy circular spot about one-tenth the diameter of the crater—the pipe of the volcano, its channel of communication with lower regions, filled with incandescent if not molten lava, glowing and burning; with flames travelling to and fro over its surface, and scintillations scattering as from a wood-fire; lighted by tongues of flickering flame which issued from the cracks in the surrounding slopes.' At intervals of about half an hour the volcano regularly blew off steam, with a noise resembling that which is heard when a great ocean steamer performs the same operation; and on these occasions the steam rose in jets with great violence from the bottom of the crater, continually enveloping the beholders.

As to how the low pressures on Cotopaxi affected the party, the result was not so severe as upon Chimborazo. There was of course the overpowering desire to sit down, and the disposition to breathe through open mouths. Some of the party complained also of a rather sharp headache; but there was no recurrence of the more acute symptoms which they had experienced on Chimborazo. It is not improbable that the fact of the party having now lived for some months at very high levels may have led to some degree of acclimatisation. In any case, Mr Whympet states that no perceptible effects were produced—beyond those which have been mentioned—by the low atmospheric pressure which they experienced.

DORIS AND I.

CHAPTER II.

I NEED not dwell on that period; it lies in my memory more like a hideous dream than so many weeks and months of actual life, and like a dream, there are only portions of it which stand out from the shadows—adventures, incidents, scraps of scenery, seen in clearer moments. It is enough to say that I came round gradually, and began to see things as they should be seen. But the hate was all gone, and love alone was left. Yes, love was left, though badly nourished, having no hopes to diet it; and I got accustomed to think

of Doris as one who was dead and yet living, and very lovable withal, even as Beatrice was to Dante.

So a year passed on, and left me minus some thousands of dollars. I had found my way into Colorado, and was a miner at one of the great joint-stock claims which have taken the place of the old-fashioned diggings. The rough work suited my humour, and there was life and go in the town and much distraction in the game of Pharaoh, of which more in its place. For nine months I had not heard from Canada, and had ceased to think of the place. My father had taken kindly to his new life, which was all I needed to know. I wished to be, and was, a solitary in the world, though I mixed much with men, finding more isolation in a crowd than in lonely places. But I was beginning to be restless again, and to wish for another change, when something happened which I had not looked for, but which makes me always thankful I played Pharaoh that night at Midas's.

It was nothing more than a quarrel and a whipping out of revolvers, and then a sudden lane of rough figures looking on while the two fired from either end. I heard the low thud of the bullet as it struck Black Jake, and I caught him in my arms as he fell backwards with sudden limpness and whitening face. I had only seen him once before, and he had roused a vague recollection which had made me look again at him, wondering what it was about him that was so familiar. He had been at one of the far tables, or perhaps his speech would have given me the cue. Now, as he opened his eyes and stared up into mine, he turned his lips from the flask and said: 'God forgive us—it's Master Sedley!'

'That's so. Take a pull at this, and tell me who you are,' said I, surprised at my own name.

The liqueur was of little use; for his heart was slowing every moment; but it brought a flicker to his face and a word or two more to his lips. 'Gie me yer ear—closer,' he whispered. 'Bob Hilton—Ranston postman—ay, yo' know me now. They want me—want me for robbing the bags. Tell 'em death has got me; an' tell young doctor chap as I hopes to— He larned me the beginnin'—he— Yore letters—Miss Doris's—I stopped 'em— His money. Hope no harm done, sir—I— Christ save'— His eyes glazed, a tremble went through him, and he slipped off without another word, leaving me staring at the dyed whiskers and dissipated features with ringing ears, and a thousand thoughts and feelings all set loose together, to the overwhelming of my wits, which seemed quite undone.

Long after they had carried him away, and the noise and confusion were spent, I stood leaning on the bar counter, staring vacantly through the smoke of the saloon, seeing and hearing nothing, but conscious of a growing fiend within me, and a tightening of my teeth as I reckoned things up and saw in all its clearness the perfidy that had come between us. The letter—was not that a part of it? Could Doris from her heart's heart have written such a letter at all? It was a forgery, a trick, and I had been a fool to be duped by it—nay, a villain in very truth; for I had doubted Doris, and given her pain and

miserly perhaps a thousand times worse than my own.

Yet the letter was clear enough, said the ghost of Doubt; it was in her own characteristic handwriting, said Memory; and there was no forging that, put in Doubt again.

Then a resolution came to me, and I walked out into the open air, and breathed it in with a long inhalation, as men do at sudden relief, or when stirred with new purpose.

There were evil things in my heart; but there was one little corner where hope stirred, as if after a long sleep. I could feel it as I looked up to the heavens, where the stars were twinkling down at me, as if they knew a thing or two, having seen Doris only a few hours ago.

Next morning I started for New York, and in four more days was on the Atlantic, gazing at the last point of Sandy Hook as it sank lower and lower, till the horizon was an unbroken line and America nowhere.

But as we sped eastwards through the long days and nights, as I drew nearer to Doris and him and the truth, the fiends grew busier within me, and gave my little babe of Hope such a hustling that I well-nigh lost sight of it in the tumult.

I had been away eighteen months, and what might a man not do in that time with an impressionable young girl who had the best evidence that her lover was unfaithful? They were cousins, and had been together in earlier years; he was a highly educated, and, contrasted with me, a brilliant, perhaps a fascinating man. He had secured his diploma; but the arduous study had broken him down, and to recruit himself, he had left his London home to pass some weeks among the breezy hills of Worcestershire, the guest of his father's sister, the daily companion, no doubt, of Doris. He had seen her beauty, her young susceptibility to the influences about her, and he had wormed his way into her heart and cankered it, as grubs do roses. So hatred totted it all up and made me feel as murderers do. God forgive me! It is all passed now, and it was love's doing with all three of us.

It was past midnight when I arrived after ten days at Worcester. The old city was slumbering, and the great cathedral was watching over it, and telling out the hours to its deaf ears as the fly rumbled noisily to the hotel, where I had perforce to stay till daylight enabled me to continue my journey by the early train.

I lay on the bed half-dressed, listening to the quarters as they chimed through the silence one after the other, and each time the familiar sounds crossed the current of my thoughts they swung me out of the morrow to other days, which their ringing brought back irresistibly, till by-and-by I allowed memory to have its way entirely, and I lived again in the halcyon summiness of bygone years. I closed my eyes to look at it all, and allowed it to float dreamlike and as it would, till patches of grayness came, and a fading of colour and form, and I was fast asleep.

But as I lay like any log, and the hours went on, till all in the city but myself could hear the cathedral clock ring them out, some part of my brain woke up, and finding reason still a sluggard, started straightway a-dreaming. It was a queer

medley for the most part, and no better than other fantasies of the sort; but to this day I remember it more as a real thing than a trick of the brain, if such it was. There in the darkness of the prairie was the deep red rose that Doris had given me, borne by an army of fireflies, in whose united radiance the flower lay on a hammock of golden threads and flitted before me mockingly while I stumbled in chase of it. Ay, it was the rose, and it blushed in the embrace of Doris's own hair. I had seen it shine so at sundown when the light got in it and made it luminous with a gold not its own, as the grass blades seem shafts of emerald fire when the glow-worms are among them. The phantasm rose and fell in the blackness, while the hundreds of little light points made a shifting circle round. On, on they flitted, ever eluding me as I stumbled along, till there was a sudden clash of bells, when the little vision dissolved into a kind of crimson and golden atmosphere, in which I laved myself with beating hands, while it widened more and more, lighting all things round, till I saw that I stood in a crowded churchyard in all the soft sheen of a summer's morning. I rubbed my eyes as the people moved about, some towards the wooden porch, some taking places on the path, till there was an avenue of smiling faces and one slim figure, followed by her maids, wending slowly through all.

It was Doris, all white and beautiful in bridal vestments; but her golden head was bent, and there was heaviness in her step. As if she were entering some prison-house, never to know liberty again, she paused at the porch, and looked long and wistfully back into the sunshine. And I could see the thin face and the pain deep down in her eyes, knowing all the meaning of her long look, but unable to move, as she passed in and out of my sight. Then the clanging of the bells died away into a melody of old time, which they quaintly chimed, while the people thronged into the church, leaving me alone among the headstones. The agony was too much. I wrenched free my voice and shrieked her name—and awoke, still hearing the chiming, but realising gradually that it came from the cathedral tower, which I could see in the morning sun over the house-tops, and its clock pointed to three minutes past nine.

Now I never believe in dreams; but I sat down to breakfast uneasy and without appetite, looking in at that despairing white face with a growing sense of its ominousness, and chafing mightily at the fact that there was no train to take me on for another two hours.

'Paper, sir?' I heard the waiter say as I trifled with the toast. I dropped my eyes mechanically on to the folded sheet; but only looked vacantly at it, or rather a headline, which, standing out from the rest, took my eyes, being definite, as the fire is in the darkness, or a candle flame, which we gaze at without noting. There was the name of my own village staring me in the face, and for a full minute I never saw it—Ranston-in-the-Vale. It was all a flash, as was my eagerness as I snatched up the paper and read the local items: 'Bellringers' Dinner—Fire at the Hall—The Approaching Marriage of Dr Robson.'

I remember the sense of paralysis, the rush of darkness to the eyes, and then the sudden return

of light as I jumped to my feet and stood a moment irresolute, with my watch in my hand. Quarter past ten—the ceremony was at eleven—three parts of an hour to do fifteen miles. A wave of helplessness swept over me, and then of hot strength—nothing less than the strength of despair, and, thank God, it carried me through.

I shall never forget that ride. The horse was fresh—the pick of the best posting stables in Worcester—and I had much to do to keep it in while we breasted Redhill to the level of the London Road. Then I gave it its head and a tip from the heels, and away we shot like two mad things. Seeing nothing but the yellow road before me, I counted every spring of the animal as he skimmed along, scarcely seeming to touch the ground with his light hoofs, and flying faster and faster as he warmed to it and heard my cries of encouragement. For half an hour I let him go, till we came to a stiff hill not three miles from Ranston. Here I pulled him up and made him walk before the final rush in. He was impatient to get on, so was I, for from the top of the hill I knew I could see the church, and maybe some of the gathering people; but I held him in and took out my watch. My heart sank—it was two minutes to eleven. I eased the reins with a shout, and in three bounds we were at the hill-top and away again. I could see the church now across the valley, and the flag at its tower, and the pigmy forms moving about the yard. But there was still hope, still a chance to snatch Doris back from her peril—for such was my purpose, and my dream had made me desperate. I set my teeth and let the good horse go.

It was all over in ten minutes, and it was Doris's doing as much as mine. She could not keep it, maybe, and it was rather sudden to jilt a man just as the vicar was asking whether she would have him or not. But so it was; and I had no sooner shown myself at the vestry door by which I had entered than she saw me, and with a 'Oh, Jack, Jack!' stumbled towards me, and fell limp in my arms, and lay there like a cut lily and as speechless. I had carried her into the vestry, and was bathing her temples with the parson's drinking water before the wedding party could realise what had come to them. *He* was the first to rush in, as was natural perhaps.

Now I would not have harmed him just then, for all his wordy spleen, if he had not laid rough hands on me as he tried to force me from my place. But when the shock of his touch went through me, I laid Doris's head down for one moment while I sprang to my feet, and, catching him by the collar and the small of the back, pitched him out of the open door with such good-will that he fell on the grass a dozen yards away and lay there, a huddled heap of blackness on the green.

When I turned round, Doris was opening her eyes and looking up at her mother, asking where she was. I knelt and looked down at her; she stared while you might count three; and then her arms were round my neck, and I raised her in mine.

'He declared his love here at this wicket, as you had, dear, before him.'

'But the letter?' I said.

'Oh, how could you believe it, Jack? The letter was my second refusal, sent a week after he had taken to his practice. He must have forwarded it to you in the cover of one of mine. How cruel and wicked of him! And you!'—She looked up, and there was such reproach in her eyes that I turned mine away, not daring to meet them.

'Jealousy made a fool of me, Doris. How can I tell it you? You see, the letter was so worded, that, coming after your silence and on top of my knowledge that he was still at Ranston, I'—

'Who told you he was still here? I avoided the subject for your sake.'

'Ill news travels fast; but don't let us speak of it. He allowed the parcel to reach you—what did you think when you opened it?'

'When I was able to, I wrote you, asking what it meant,' she said simply.

'And I never answered?'

'No.'

I gazed at her nearly choking. What had my suffering been to hers?

'And oh, I was so wretched, Jack,' she went on in her naive way; 'and when he came a third time, full of sympathy, and offering to relieve poor mother of the debts which had nearly brought the old home to the brink of breaking, I—I said yes, feeling that I had no will—that it was a duty thrust upon me.—But it is all past now, isn't it?'

Gladness made her sigh, and I could feel her sweet breath as she looked up at me.

'Do you forgive him, then?' said I, looking away, and thinking of his abject figure as he writhed under my whip an hour ago.

'Yes, yes, Jack! and you must too. You have punished him enough, and he has promised to go away. Let us forget him—let us look upon it as a bad dream. Oh, Jack, my heart nearly runs over with its gladness—surely yours has sought else in it now.'

'God bless you!' said I.

'And you, Jack!' said she.

And then we joined hands and turned to the house, becoming one in love and charity, Doris and I.

ABOUT STICKLEBACKS.

THE rivers and streams of England and Ireland teem with fish of various kinds, from the salmon to the minnow; yet I doubt if any species affords such amusement and is such an object of interest to the student of Nature as the homely Stickleback. They are everywhere to be found in rivers, ponds, and streams, and even have their cousins in the sea itself. If you like to study the habits of these hardy little creatures, which are ever so much more interesting and quite as pretty as the gold and silver fish which some time ago were so much sought after, any naturalist will procure them for you, or, better still, if you live in the country, you can catch them for yourself in almost every stream or piece of water of any description.

The writer has kept them himself for many years, and never tires of watching their pretty gambols. For the benefit of those who are not acquainted with the appearance of this little fish,

I will give a short description of it. The common stickleback rarely exceeds two and a half or three inches in length, and is in winter of an olive colour above and a silvery white beneath. This colour is retained by the female all the year round. In the male, however, in the spawning season it changes to a mingled blue and green above and a bright red underneath, extending from the gills, which are the reddest part, backwards for a short distance. The eyes of the male also turn from their natural dark colour to a pale blue. Altogether, it would be hard to find anywhere a prettier little fish than the stickleback at this time. In both male and female are found the little spines on the back, which in the common kind number three. But in some varieties, a specimen of which I have caught, the number of these spines is ten. These, however, are smaller than those of their more common brethren; and indeed the little fish themselves rarely exceed two-thirds of the length of the common variety. They are, as a rule, also darker in colour. Another species, the fifteen-spined stickleback, almost exclusively inhabits the sea. These are the largest kind, being from four to six inches in length.

The natural food of the stickleback consists of worms and water insects, of which it can consume a great number; but if very hungry, it will eat bread and attack and try to feed upon almost anything that comes in its way. Their favourite haunt is under the hollow bank of some small stream; and they especially love a shady place, where the lesser roots of some tree have grown through the overhanging bank down to the bottom of the water; here they find shelter and conceal themselves, except in the spawning-time, when they resort to the larger ponds, where the water is nearly still.

The eggs of this fish when laid are of a globular form, about the size of the head of an ordinary pin, and are generally in a clump, which closely resembles a piece of colourless and transparent jelly dotted over with minute black spots. The sticklebacks when first caught and put into a tub or vessel of some sort, swim in a compact shoal, as if exploring their new domain; but soon, if the vessel is large enough, one little fellow will take possession of a particular corner, and woe to any of his neighbours who should venture too near the boundaries of what he considers his property! His example is, if space permit, followed, and the tub is soon divided into separate houses, as it were. One perhaps prefers a shell and its neighbourhood for his abode; another, a clump of weeds; another, a little gravelly corner; and so on. But the owner of the shell strongly resists the trespass of his weedy or gravelly neighbour, and *vice versa*. Even the females are sometimes attacked, but, as far as I know, never retaliate or try to fight with the males. However, a tract in the centre is left untenanted, and forms the meeting and feeding ground of the assembly.

The sticklebacks become more interesting towards the beginning of summer, which is the spawning-time, when the gills and under part of the head of the male turn to a brilliant red. They are at this season very pugnacious and revengeful; sometimes the fights in which they are always engaged are over after a pick or two;

but I have known a battle of this kind between two particular males continue off and on for days. One of the most curious facts about these little fishes is that after a fight the colour of the gills of the victor becomes if possible a more vivid red, while in the case of the vanquished it pales off to a shade of pink. The males generally fight among themselves until the supremacy of one has been acknowledged. This hero may be easily recognised, even by a person not intimately acquainted with their habits, by the beautiful blue and green shades on his back and sides being far more brilliant and varied than those of his companions, as well as by the similar pre-eminence of the colour of his gills. He is by far the most handsome of the whole community, and he seems to know it, and 'bosses the show' with all the pleasure in life.

But the subjects of this monarch are not always as obedient as he would have them; so there are sometimes fights, and although he may in the first few battles sustain his reputation, it is not unlikely that he will ultimately be overthrown, and a new despot take his place. The happy winner is not, however, allowed to reign in peace or retain long his seat of office; but in his turn is deposed, and compelled to take up a second or even third rate place. The fights of these little animals ought to be enough to satisfy the most exacting lover of novelty. They are conducted in many different ways, one of the chief being an irregular guerilla-like warfare, in which every advantage is taken of the nature of the ground, of shells, weeds, and stones. I have seen a male stickleback remain in ambush among some green weeds until his rival all unsuspectingly swam slowly up near his hiding-place, and then, suddenly dash out and catch the other by the tail, or else strike him with all his force on the side. Sometimes the victim of this clever scheme would see the trap laid for him in time, and would go past, metaphorically, with colours flying, and swim with such speed that his enemy would miss his chance. At other times he would adroitly avoid the onslaught of his antagonist, and quickly turning, be lost to view in the weeds which had lately sheltered his opponent, there, in his turn, to lie in wait for another, or perhaps the same rival. I have also seen these cunning little fellows take advantage of a shell which had been placed in with them, and conceal themselves in or behind it till the moment for action should arrive.

But that is only a specimen of one, perhaps the chief, of their ways of fighting; if they are placed in a globe without any means of concealment, they will attack one another openly. One will make a dart across the entire breadth of the globe, and if his intended victim is quick enough, gets nothing for his pains but a sharp rap against the opposite side of the glass. Nothing daunted, however, he will turn and chase the other hither and thither round the whole area, striking him whenever and wherever he can, and will continue to do so until he is tired, or until he is himself forced to flee. They will not only fight with their own species, but if a minnow be placed with them, they will attack it with common consent, using both their mouths and spines, and will pursue it so vindictively, that soon the minnow will sink to the bottom, half-torn to pieces and

in a dying condition. In fact, they are perfect Ishmaels in their way of indiscriminately attacking any fish which is placed with them.

The stickleback not only uses his mouth and spines as weapons of offence, but is also provided with some means of defence. These consist of the hard bony substance which underlies the body from the gills to the stomach, and forms a veritable breastplate of lateral plates, which in the common stickleback extend about half-way down the body, but in some varieties reach the tail; and of two little spines, which, when not in active use, lie along the sides. These, however, when their owner is attacked, stand out quite rigidly, and are an effective piece of defensive armour. These spines are found both in the male and female, and closely resemble those on the back, except that they seem to be lined with red. This red is not noticeable when they are at rest, but is at once seen when they engage in a battle or dart at an insect.

The colour of the female stickleback is the same all the year round, and the only spot of bright colouring about her is the red lining of these defensive spines. The stickleback is very voracious, and it is amusing to see them attack and swallow the worms which are thrown to them. I have seen one little fellow devour a worm as large as himself, and swim about afterwards seeming nothing the worse for it. Perhaps the funniest sight of all is a little stickleback who has tried to swallow a worm which is too large for him, and who swims about with the tail of the said worm sticking out a quarter of an inch in front of him. Another soon tries to get the worm for himself, and then another; so that in a short time either the first possessor will have to disgorge the tempting morsel, or else run the chance of being half pulled to pieces; and I have often found, on coming down in the morning, one of the pluckiest of the little fellows lying stiff and stark at the bottom of the water with all its spines erect, and with its mouth held open by a half-swallowed piece of worm which had choked it.

Once when I had rather a large number, I discovered that they were disappearing faster than their voracity and pugnacious proclivities could account for. On keeping watch one day, I found that a pet jackdaw of mine, after making sure that the coast was clear, had got up on the edge of the tub and was deliberately waiting to see if any of the little fishes should come to the top of the water. Soon one did come up, and then the jackdaw, with a quick dart of his beak, picked him out of the water and hopped off. I found out afterwards that he ate them; though, how he managed to do so, spines and all, I can't comprehend. After that, I took summary measures to prevent the further diminution of my stock.

Sticklebacks build a very pretty nest, in which the female lays the eggs, while the male keeps the tract of water—which, I suppose, he regards as his rightful domain—free from all would-be intruders, whom nothing would delight so much as a feast of the eggs of their neighbour. Unhappily, my sticklebacks have never built a nest; I am not sure that they will do so in captivity—so I cannot give a detailed account of their manner of constructing it.

In conclusion, I would say to any one who wishes to get the maximum of amusement for the minimum of trouble, 'Just try keeping the hardy little stickleback.'

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE coming World's Fair at Chicago promises to outdo all previous exhibitions of an international character, and from the reports as to progress constantly published by the authorities, it would seem that the 'fair' will comprise hundreds of ordinary Exhibitions comprised in one. The British Government, we are glad to learn, have increased their grant from twenty-five to sixty thousand pounds—a welcome addition, which enables the Commission to cancel all charges for space. We may feel sure that this act of encouragement to British exhibitors will have a stimulating effect.

As an instance of the vast scale upon which the Chicago Exhibition is planned, we may mention that the department of 'Mines and Mining,' which is to have a distinct section of its own, will occupy a building which has a floor-space of nine acres. This will contain 'the largest array and most complete and instructive evidence of the mineral wealth and progress of the mining industry ever collected or attempted.' Here will be shown some wonderful specimens of mica or talc from Idaho, where natural ledges eight feet thick are found of that curious mineral. It is said that sheets of it twelve inches across, without a single flaw, are not uncommon, and there is some idea of using it in the windows of the mines building in lieu of glass.

Novel features are constantly being added to the wonderful electrical display at the Crystal Palace. One of these is an electrical fire-engine by Messrs Siemens, which at the touch of a switch sends a powerful stream of water one hundred or more feet in height, which would make short work of a minor conflagration, and would certainly have a marked effect upon a more serious one. In another part of the building a number of interesting new experiments are made with electrical currents of enormous strength, the effects in some cases being alarming in their intensity of light and noise.

Messrs Carwardine and Company of the City Road, London, are producing electric light from wind-power. On the roof of their premises is erected a Halladay windmill, which at a distance looks like an enormous wheel. To this is geared a dynamo machine, which delivers the electric current it generates into accumulators or secondary batteries, and the power thus stored is used for lighting purposes. This plan has before been adopted in America; but we believe that this is the first installation of the kind in Britain. At a period when the old wind and water mills for grinding corn are fast becoming obsolete through the introduction of improved machinery, this revival of a past method of obtaining motive-power is extremely interesting.

The Congested Districts Board, in their endeavours to develop the fisheries on the west coast of Ireland, were enabled last month to report a most gratifying and promising first result of their labours. They had engaged a number of Arklow boats to undertake the mackerel fishery, and had made the necessary provision of an ice hulk and other appliances. Arrangements were also made with steamboat and railway companies to convey the fish when caught as quickly as possible to the English markets. The mackerel were rather long in coming, owing, it is supposed, to the coldness of the season, but they eventually made their appearance; and on the 6th of April, six thousand five hundred prime fish—the first Galway mackerel ever imported to an English market—were sent to London. In addition to these arrangements, a Norwegian has been engaged to instruct the natives in the art of fish-curing. The people are working hard, and seem to be delighted at the novelty of finding a market for their fish.

During some recent excavations for main-drainage purposes at Endsleigh Street, in the north-western district of London, the workmen, at a depth of twenty-two feet from the surface came upon the remains of a mammoth and other prehistoric animals. A portion of one of the mammoth tusks on being brought to the surface was found to measure at its thickest part two feet in circumference, and the probable length of the tusk in its original state would be about ten feet. The loamy soil in which these remains were found also yielded many seeds of plants which were contemporaneous with them, and which have since been found to consist of twenty species. From these it is learnt that the land was at the period indicated of a marshy nature; and as certain other deposits were found overlying these remains, the geological age during which the animals lived may be included in what is known as the glacial period. At least such is the opinion of the Hon. Secretary of the Geological Society, to whose scrutiny the specimens have been submitted.

The Wellington Monument in St Paul's Cathedral, the work of Alfred Stevens, is by many considered to be the finest piece of monumental sculpture ever produced by a British artist. But at the time it was produced it was not appreciated by the Office of Works, nor by the Dean and Chapter; and instead of being placed in the position for which it was designed, it was hidden away in the side chapel where it now stands. Moreover, the equestrian figure which was intended to crown it was never placed in position, because the all-powerful Dean would not permit 'the Duke to come riding into Church on the top of his own Monument.' Sir Frederick Leighton has now interested himself in the matter of this noble sculpture, and it is now decided that it shall be removed to the site for which it was originally intended—under the easternmost arch on the north side of the nave—and that the equestrian figure shall be completed and placed in position. The removal of the Monument will cost one thousand pounds.

A series of deep-sea explorations have recently been conducted in the Mediterranean, under the auspices of the Austrian Government, by a scien-

tific party on board the ship *Pola*. The two deepest soundings taken were at a point about fifty nautical miles south-west of Cape Matapan, one indicating a depth of 2236 fathoms, and the other 2406 fathoms, each being equivalent to a depth of more than two and a half miles. Some two years ago, similar explorations were made, when it was found that the density of the water and its saltness increased with the depth; and the same thing was noticed with regard to the western portion of the Sea during the recent soundings. But in the Eastern Mediterranean the density between the various strata does not show so much variation. The water is said to be of wonderful transparency.

From a Report by the British Vice-consul at La Rochelle, dealing with the agriculture of the Nantes district, we learn something with regard to the working of a horse-breeding establishment at Saintes. Very strong views, we are told, are held in France as to the importance of any defect in the breathing organs of horses, and the smallest indication of anything wrong at once disqualifies an animal, whatever be his value in other respects. This is because those in authority are convinced that such diseases are hereditary, and it must be said that they have every opportunity of testing their theory. For the most careful returns are kept of the parentage of each horse reared; so that defects of any kind can be traced to either side.

The Dean of the Dental Hospital of London has done good service in warning the public against the numerous circulars, pamphlets, manuals, and other advertisements, by so-called dentists, which nowadays find their way into so many houses. Many of these advertisers, he tells us, are without a dental qualification or any hospital training, and as a result, a large amount of malpractice is daily carried on. He then proceeds to give the information by which the public may be able to judge between a qualified and unqualified practitioner. More than thirty years ago, the Royal College of Surgeons instituted a curriculum for dentists, consisting of two years' hospital training, and three years' study in a dental laboratory. After passing an examination, the student is placed upon the Dentists' Register, and can write L.D.S. after his name. At the end of the Medical Directory will be found a list of dentists so qualified, together with the appointments which they hold. The public, therefore, can avoid with very little trouble treatment by those who are often as likely to injure as to benefit them.

A writer in the American periodical *Electricity*, in referring to the search-light as used in the United States navy, says that in order to make a thorough examination of the ocean surface round about a ship, the light must not be rapidly revolved, but slowly—so slowly that between the flashes upon the different sections of the water, there is the danger that a quick torpedo boat would have time to run in and do damage. (A boat of this description will run two miles in five minutes.) To obviate this difficulty, he suggests that each vessel shall be furnished with a number of lights, each patrolling and illuminating its own particular section of surface. The vessel by this means would be surrounded by a complete circle of light.

The Homacoustic Speaking Tube is a great

improvement on the common form of instrument used in offices. Instead of a multiplicity of separate call-tubes, each with its whistle, the Homacoustic has only one mouthpiece, with a simple form of commutator attached, by which it can be readily connected with any communicating tube in the building. It is fitted with a pneumatic arrangement which obviates the somewhat disagreeable business of blowing down the pipe. The earpiece or receiving part of the instrument is distinct from the speaking tube proper; and for very noisy situations, such as workshops, shipboard, &c., there is a tube for each ear, so that all external sounds are for the time shut out. The system, from what we have seen of it, is far more comfortable and convenient to work with than the telephone, but of course its range is more limited.

There are so many amateur weather observers throughout the country, who, among other observations, make periodical notes with regard to rainfall, that a report of some experiments made in this direction by Professor G. Hellmann will be of widespread interest. An account of these experiments is contained in the annual Report for 1892 of the Berlin branch of the German Meteorological Society, and deals with the effects of exposure on rainfall records, and with the distance apart at which gauges should be erected, in order to give the most accurate results. After experiments extending over seven years, Professor Hellmann has found that considerable differences in the amount of rainfall are recorded at stations comparatively close together. This is attributed to the action of wind, and especially to snow; the more a gauge is exposed to wind, the less rainfall will it record, and the higher its position—owing to its greater exposure to wind—the less the record. The common instruction, to place the gauge in as open a situation as possible is therefore incorrect; but it will work well, even in an elevated position, if it be protected from the wind. He has noted differences of five per cent. in the records of neighbouring stations even in a flat country; and in stormy weather the difference may sometimes amount to one hundred per cent. Further experiments are needed, as the ones cited, although carried on for so long a period, are by no means definite in their results.

What has always been supposed to be a mere cenotaph, or empty tomb, is the beautiful shrine in Gloucester Cathedral erected to the memory of Osric, king of Northumbria, who died 729 A.D. The present Dean of Gloucester, guided by a passage in Leland's Notes—written in 1540—to the effect that the body of Osric, founder of Gloucester Abbey, after being moved twice, had finally 'been layed under a fayre tombe of stone on the north side of the high altar,' has lately had the tomb carefully examined. Upon taking out two of the stone panels, a long coffin was disclosed, lying exactly beneath the king's effigy. If, as there is every reason to believe, this should be really the remains of Osric, Gloucester will be able to boast that it holds the guardianship of the oldest known remains of the Saxon kings. Thus another point of interest is added to one of the most beautiful of our cathedrals.

The immense consumption of oysters and clams in and around the city of New York has led to an industry of which, perhaps, it would be

impossible to find a counterpart elsewhere. Instead of allowing the shells to accumulate in heaps, like the kitchen-middens of prehistoric savages, they are manufactured into quicklime, and the industry is by no means an unimportant one. The shells are burnt in huge kilns of oval section, having a grating at the bottom. Upon this grating is first of all started a coke-fire, above which is placed a stratum of shells about one foot in thickness. Over this is placed a layer of coal-dust, then shells again, and so on up to the top of the kiln. The initial fire gradually creeps through the porous mass, until in about seventeen hours it reaches the top, when the resulting quicklime is withdrawn from below, and is ultimately used for gas purification, as well as by farmers and soap manufacturers. Seven different firms in New York City and Brooklyn turn out among them between four and five million bushels of this shell-lime yearly. We glean the foregoing particulars from the *Scientific American*.

First aid to the victim of an accident is very often the only aid that can possibly be of service to him, and it is generally the case that the help, to be efficient, must be prompt. Especially is this so in cases of drowning, when often the life-saving contrivances are of too cumbrous a nature to be portable, or are locked up out of reach. A pocket life-saving contrivance is a novelty to us, although it has been in use for two years in various parts of France, and has been instrumental in saving many hundred lives. This is the Brunel Apparatus, which consists of a bobbin of fine but very strong cord, with a wooden float at one end, and a little four-pronged iron grapnel at the other. If the drowning man fails to grasp the floating part, the other end is thrown towards him, so that the points of the grapnel may catch his clothing, and he can be drawn out of the water. Custom-house officers and others engaged about quays and harbours in France carry the Brunel apparatus in a leather pocket-case, and when a man goes off duty he hands it to the one who relieves him. This useful apparatus is described and commended in the last Report of the British Vice-consul at Dieppe.

In an interesting paper read by Dr Richard Ellis before the North of England branch of the British Medical Association, the far-famed baths of Laurvik (Norway) were fully described. Laurvik is a town situated about seventy-six miles from Christiania, in the midst of most beautiful scenery. The baths were founded some twelve years ago by Dr Holm as a sequel to the discovery in the neighbourhood of both sulphureous and ferruginous springs. Among the resources of the establishment are found baths of compressed seaweed liquor, rich in iodine; sulphur baths direct from the spring, but artificially heated; fir-leaf baths, cold sulphur swimming baths, and sea and mud baths. The treatment of a patient in the last named the doctor witnessed, and the description which he gives is not altogether an inviting one. The mud is black, of the consistence of cold cream, and has an odour—well, unlike that of roses. The patient is rubbed all over with this unpleasant compound, and is finally made clean once more in a warm shower-bath.

The United States Consul at Jerusalem has

recently described the method of irrigation pursued in the orange groves at Jaffa, where about three thousand acres of ground are under cultivation. Although the orange and lemon form the chief crops, peaches, grapes, melons, &c. are produced in great abundance. It is a necessity that the orange groves should be watered during the dry season—that is, from May until October—when no rain falls. This is done by means of wells, which are fed by underground springs, the apparatus for bringing the water to the surface being of the most primitive description, and consisting of a series of wooden beams, wheels, and buckets set in motion by a horse or mule. The rainfall in the winter varies between twenty and thirty inches, and its coming is presaged by that curious atmospheric phenomenon known as the 'air-cushion.' Before the first rain comes, heavy masses of cloud roll up and cover the sky; and when they at length give up their rain, the falling water is caught up and absorbed by the dry and thirsty atmosphere before ever it reaches the earth. This goes on until the intervening strata of air become saturated, when the real deluge commences, often with injurious consequences.

Spiral springs of steel wire, which are plentifully used at the St Etienne gun factory, are now tempered by electricity. A current of the necessary strength gradually to heat the metal is passed through the spring, and when the right temperature is reached, the current is switched off and the spring dropped into a tank of water. By means of this method, a single workman can temper with unfailing accuracy between two and three thousand springs per day.

SONNET ON JUNE.

MONTH of the sunny skies, and woodlands bright;
Of roses glowing with a thousand hues
When earth once more her summer joy renews;
When birds are singing, and when hearts are light;
When the sun lingers longest, and the night
Is but a star-gemmed veil, dawn sighs to lose,
Fragrant with rose-breath, wet with moonlit dews,
 wooing the thought to yon empyreal height,
To that fair world where the June days endure,
Where chill winds never come, nor autumn steals
Green from the leaf or crimson from the rose.
Oh month of roses! promise sweet and sure
Of that which waits us, thy rich bloom reveals
The perfect beauty heaven shall yet disclose.

MARY GORGES.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.
- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the *writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL*.
- 4th. Offerings of Verse should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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MODERN PLAYWRIGHTS AND THEIR METHODS.

THERE is no branch of literature that has the same fascination for men of letters as playwriting. This is not astonishing, when one remembers that Shakespeare wrote for the stage, and the natural desire that must exist to emulate him; besides—and this, perhaps, is an equally powerful incentive—the amount of money earned in this calling far exceeds that made by authors in any other branch of literature. It is not uncommon for a dramatist to be in receipt of a hundred and twenty pounds a week from one theatre in London alone during the run of a successful piece, and the same author may have two or three such pieces running at the same time in the metropolis, as well as perhaps a dozen in America and the provinces.

It is a curious fact that our most eminent authors of modern times have almost invariably failed in dramatic work. In the case of a novelist this is not difficult to explain, the methods of construction being so dissimilar. Not only has he to learn a new art, but he is hampered by the knowledge of the art he knows. To take an example of this: in novel-writing, a great secret of success lies in the power to hoodwink one's audience—in a play the very reverse is the case, one must never deceive for a moment. But our poets have been as unsuccessful as our novelists. Plays by Browning or Shelley are never produced without the aid of their respective Societies; and though some of Lord Tennyson's pieces have certainly appeared at the Lyceum, it would be stretching a point to call him a successful playwright. Byron, Wordsworth, and Keats have also written plays, but venturesome indeed is the manager who puts them on the boards.

The men who claim our attention above all other modern dramatists from the literary point of view are undoubtedly the late Mr W. G. Wills, Mr W. S. Gilbert, and Mr A. W. Pinero. No two men could be more dissimilar in their natures and in their methods than Wills and

Gilbert, yet, curiously enough, these two went hand in hand some twenty years ago, in introducing blank-verse plays to a stage almost entirely given up to burlesque. Wills, as the older man, was the pioneer, and started writing some ten years before Gilbert; but it took nine out of these ten years for him to obtain a hearing. In later years, Gilbert has almost entirely given up writing poetic dramas, having found a so much richer vein of gold in comic opera; but he has always been indignant with a public which insisted upon treating him as a humorist only. Wills remained a blank-verse writer to the day of his death, his last great work, written a year or two ago, on the subject of the Arthurian legends, being now in Mr Irving's possession, and shortly to be produced at the Lyceum. Those who have had the pleasure of reading this play in manuscript pronounce it to be the best of his creations, and even more beautiful and pathetic than his *Charles I.* or *Olivia*.

W. G. Wills was born at Castlecomer, County Kilkenny, in 1828. He was a student at Trinity College, Dublin, but never graduated. Still—and in his case this was perhaps of more importance—he gained the Vice-chancellor's prize for English verse. It is not generally known that he was an artist; but before he became engrossed in dramatic work, he was one of some eminence, and painted several members of the Royal Family. His 'Ophelia and Laertes,' one of the most beautiful of modern pictures, shows clearly that he would have been one of the first painters of his day had not circumstances altered his career. In character, Wills greatly resembled his fellow-countryman Goldsmith—in fact, he was a thorough-going bohemian of so pronounced a type, that his living in the nineteenth century struck one as being almost an anachronism. He was also a man of genius, and, as Carlyle says of men of genius, he made his own atmosphere. He was very unmethodical in his work, and would write like Pope on the backs of envelopes or any scraps of paper that might be lying handy. These scraps were attached together anyhow,

and were usually thrown into a large wickerwork clothes-basket till the play was finished, when they were sorted out and copied by some one of his friends. He never kept a regularly paid secretary, but always had a host of admirers, who were only too ready to write to his dictation, and so feel, like the Indian servant Kipling so amusingly describes in his preface to *Black and White*, that they had a hand in the work. The result of these erratic habits was that Wills constantly mislaid his manuscripts; in fact, on more than one occasion lost them completely. I remember once I unearthed from an old box that served the purposes of a dust-bin three acts and part of the fourth of a play called *Merry and Wise*, which is still unacted. When I showed it to Wills, he was greatly delighted. 'My dear fellow,' he exclaimed, 'you have done me the greatest service in the world. This is one of the best plays I ever wrote, and I thought I had lost it years ago.'

Perhaps no literary man ever chose more extraordinary places than Wills for the purposes of composition. His favourite place, and the one in which he always used to assure his friends his best work was done, was a warm bath. Warm baths being not always procurable, and if indulged in too much, being somewhat unhealthy, Wills would betake himself to bed as being the next most congenial place, and would, when the humour seized him, lie there for days writing. The greater part of *Charles I.* was composed in bed; and about the writing of it, he used to tell an amusing story. The fourth act, which, as originally written, dealt with the execution of the king, was not approved of by Mr Henry Irving, who suggested the germ of the act as it now stands. Wills was delighted with the new idea, and went to bed immediately full of poetic ardour. In the course of the day his landlady came up to see him, and was much upset when she saw the state he was in—tears were coursing down his cheeks, and he looked the picture of misery. 'It was with great difficulty,' said Wills, 'that I persuaded her that I was not suffering from some personal bereavement.'

Wills was never able to write the pathetic passages in his plays without crying like a child, and on this occasion he was writing the king's farewell to his wife, before being led out to execution. One has only to read the passage to see the composition of it must have occasioned the deepest feeling:

Oh, my loved solace on my thorny road,
Sweet clue in all my labyrinth of sorrow,
What shall I leave to thee?
To thee I do consign my memory!
Oh, banish not my name from off thy lips
Because it pains awhile in naming it,
Harsh grief doth pass in time into far music,
Red-eyed regret that waiteth upon sorrow
Will daily grow a gentle, dear companion,
And hold sweet converse with thee of thy dead.
I fear me, I may sometime fade from thee,
That when the heart expelleth gray-stoled grief,
I live no longer in thy memory.
Oh, keep my place in it for ever green,
All hung with the immortelles of thy love,
That sweet abiding in thine inner thought,
I long for more than sculptured monument
Or proudest record 'mong the tombs of kings.

In contrast to most dramatists, who generally

write in the evening, Wills was in the habit of beginning work as early as five in the morning and continuing till noon. He rarely did any writing after twelve, when he would adjourn to his studio and paint till dusk. Wills never wrote his plays straight through from beginning to end: after completing the *scenario*, he might begin writing the last scene of the last act, or he might begin in the middle or any other part of the work as the whim seized him. If there were any method in his madness at all, it lay in the fact that he liked to get the important scenes done first, but he was not regular even in doing this. He rarely corrected his work. If the inspiration did not come at the proper time, he either laid the play on one side or did it very badly. Some of his most beautiful lines were written straight off, and never altered—all he seemed to require was a pencil and a piece of paper. He had the greatest contempt for matters of detail, and his characters or their position on the stage at any given moment were simple matters of imagination to him as he sat in a chair. He much disliked realism. In this and other phases of his character he was distinctly opposed to the scientific attitude of the day. His contemporaries, with few exceptions, have distinct models for their characters, which they study microscopically from life; and since Sardou first conceived the idea, they even construct miniature theatres, which are an exact model of the stage as it will appear when the piece is finally produced.

It is well known that Gilbert has one of these model theatres, also little blocks of wood, representing the characters, the men being a little taller than the women, which he can move about at will. Sardou, indeed, is so particular about accuracy of detail, that if he lays a scene of any of his plays in a particular town, he will pay a visit to that town and make a plan and take measurements, so that the spots represented are in exact proportion to their actual size, even to the breadths of the streets and the heights of the houses.

Owing to Wills's carelessness in these matters, it is extremely doubtful if his plays would have been as successful as they were, had it not been that, with few exceptions, they were produced by managers who were perfect masters in their own art. This no doubt accounts for the fact that Wills, after finishing and despatching a play, took very little further trouble, and rarely attended rehearsals.

Gilbert is as careful in rehearsing a piece as he is in composing it, and in carefulness of composition and minuteness of supervision during rehearsal. A. W. Pinero is almost as exacting. The latter's method of work is, however, in many respects different. Instead of preferring an arm-chair in a quiet study of his own, as Gilbert does, Pinero is known to compose best in the smoking-room of an hotel or any other place where there may be an accompaniment of chatter and noise. A very important difference, too, in their system of composition is this: Gilbert founds his plays upon some isolated idea; in other words, he begins with the plot, and the characters shape themselves from it. Pinero, on the other hand, founds his ideas or plots upon character. His habit is to go down to some country house or

rural inn, and after studying the people there, the plot naturally evolves itself from their characters. To be in the cast of a new play by Pinero is a liberal education to any young actor or actress. Having been an actor himself for many years, he knows thoroughly how his lines should be delivered, and will take the utmost pains to teach a novice how to speak them, however small his or her part may be. It is his habit to sit in the stalls; but he never stays there long. Every few minutes he will run up the orchestra steps and go through the part then under rehearsal, illustrating the business himself, which he thinks appropriate to his words.

With men who are as accurate as most of our well-known dramatists are, quick work is impossible. Pinero seldom writes more than two plays in a year; Mr Henry Arthur Jones, who is also extremely careful, seldom more than one. Wills, on the other hand, wrote very quickly; but his dramatic output was not very great, owing to the fact that he wrote poems and novels as well; besides his artistic work, which occupied no little portion of his time. Probably the most prolific writer in England is Mr Henry Pettitt. He once wagered a man that he would in seven days write, rehearse, and produce a play which would take an hour to act. He not only achieved this, but the play was a distinct success, and is, we believe, running in the provinces at the present time. Nobody knows how to appeal to popular feeling better than Pettitt. The finale of the first act of this play, we remember, roused the audience to frenzied applause. The villain of the piece is requesting the hero to do some ignoble action. 'I cannot,' replies the hero; to which the villain retorts, 'Why not?' 'Because,' the hero answers—and here the curtain descends quickly—'I am an Englishman!'

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XXI.—HE COMES FROM EDMUND GRAY.

'NOTHING,' said Athelstan, 'could possibly happen more fortunately. We have turned whispering conspirators into declared enemies. Now you are free to investigate in your own way without having to report progress every day.'

'About this new business about the letters and the things in the safe,' said Elsie. 'It looks to me like *diablerie*. Checkley couldn't do it. No conjurer in the world could do it. There must be somebody else in the office to do these things. They mean defiance. The forger says: "See—I do what I please with you. I return your letters addressed to Edmund Gray. I place placards about Edmund Gray in your safe—for which nobody has a key except yourself. Find me, if you can."'

'Yes; it's very mysterious.'

'A Person on Two Sticks might manage it. Very likely, he is concerned in the business. Or a boy under the table would be able to do it. Perhaps there is a boy under the table. There must be. Mr Dering's table is like the big bed

of Ware. I daresay fifty boys might creep under that table and wait there for a chance. But perhaps there is only one—a comic boy.'

'I should like to catch the joker,' said George. 'I would give him something still more humorous to laugh at.'

'If there is no comic boy—and no Person with Two Sticks,' Elsie continued, 'we are thrown back upon Checkley. He seems to be the only man who receives the letters and goes in and out of the office all day. Well—I don't think it is Checkley. I don't think it can be.—George, you once saw Mr Dering in a very strange condition, unconscious, walking about with open eyes seeing nobody. Don't you think that he may have done this more than once?'

'What do you mean, Elsie?'

'Don't you think that some of these things—things put in the safe, for instance, may have been put there by Mr Dering himself? You saw him open the safe. Afterwards, he knew nothing about it. Could he not do this more than once—might it be a habit?'

'Well—but if he puts the things in the safe—things that belong to Edmund Gray, he must know Edmund Gray. For instance, how did he get my note to Edmund Gray, left by me on his table in Gray's Inn? That must have been given to him by Edmund Gray himself.'

'Or by some friend of Edmund Gray. Yes; that is quite certain.'

'Come,' said Athelstan. 'This infernal Edmund Gray is too much with us. Let us leave off talking about him for a while. Let him rest for this evening.—Elsie, put on your things. We will go and dine somewhere, and go to the Play afterwards.'

They did so. They had the quiet little restaurant dinner that girls have learned of late to love so much—the little dinner, where everything seems so much brighter and better served than one can get at home. After the dinner they went to a Theatre, taking places in the Dress Circle, where, given good eyes, one sees quite as well as from the stalls at half the money. After the Theatre they went home, and there was an exhibition of tobacco and soda water. Those were very pleasant days in the Piccadilly lodgings, even allowing for the troubles which brought them about. Athelstan was the most delightful of brothers, and every evening brought its feast of laughter and of delightful talk. But all through the evening, all through the Play, Elsie saw nothing but Mr Dering and him engaged in daylight somnambulism. She saw him as George described him, opening the safe, closing it again, and afterwards wholly forgetful of what he had done.

She thought about this all night. Now, when one has a gleam or glimmer of an idea, when one wants to disengage a single thought from the myriads which cross the brain and to fix it and to make it clear, there is nothing in the world so good as to talk about it. The effort of finding words with which to drag it out makes it clearer. Every story-teller knows that the mere telling of a story turns his characters, who before were mere shadows, and shapeless shadows, into creatures of flesh and blood. Therefore, in the morning she began upon the thought which haunted her.

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'Athelstan,' she said, 'do you know anything about somnambulism?'

'I knew a man once in California who shot a grizzly when he was sleep-walking. At least, he said so. That's the sum of my knowledge on the subject.'

'I want to know if people often walk about in the daytime unconscious?'

'They do. It is called wool-gathering.'

'Seriously, Athelstan. Consider. George saw Mr Dering arrive in a state of unconsciousness. He saw nobody in the room. He opened the safe and placed some papers there. Then he locked the safe. Then he sat down at the window. Presently he awoke and became himself again. If he did that once, he might do it again.'

'Well? And then?'

'You heard yesterday about the letters and the placard and the Socialist tracts. Now Checkley couldn't do that. He couldn't, and he wouldn't.'

'Well?'

'But Mr Dering could. If he had that attack once, he might have it again and again. Why, he constantly complains of forgetting things.'

'But the letters yesterday were addressed to Edmund Gray. How do you connect Edmund Gray with Edward Dering?'

'I don't know. But, my dear brother, the more I think of this business, the more persuaded I am that Checkley is not the prime mover, or even a confederate.'

'The same hand has been at work throughout. If not Checkley's aid to make that hand possible and successful, who is there? And look at the malignity with which he tries to fix it on some one else.'

'That may be because he is afraid of its being fixed upon him. Consider that point about the control of the letters. The business could only be done by some one through whose hands passed all the letters.'

'Checkley is the only person possible.'

'Yes; he understands that. It makes him horribly afraid. He therefore lies with all his might in order to pass on suspicion to another person. You and George think him guilty—well, I do not. If I were trying to find out the man, I should try a different plan altogether.'

Her brother had work to do which took him out directly after an early breakfast. When Elsie was left alone, she began again to think about Mr Dering's strange daylight somnambulism: about his continual fits of forgetfulness: about the odd things found on his table and in his safe, all connected with Edmund Gray. Checkley could not have placed those letters on the table: he could not have put those things in the safe.

Elsie looked at the clock. It was only just after nine. She ran to her room, put on her jacket and hat, and called a cab.

She arrived at half-past nine. Checkley was already in his master's room, laying out the table for the day's work as usual. The girl was touched at the sight of this old servant of sixty years' service doing these offices zealously and jealously. She stood in the outer office watching him through the open door. When he had finished, he came out and saw her.

'Oh!' he grumbled. 'It's you, is it? Well

—he hasn't come. If you want to see Mr Dering, it's full early. If you want to see the new Partner, he isn't come. He don't hurry himself. Perhaps you'll sit down a bit and look at the paper. Here's the *Times*. He'll be here at a quarter to ten.'

He sat down at his desk and took up a pen. But he laid it down again and began to talk. 'We're in trouble, Miss. No fault of yours—I don't say it is. We're in trouble. The trouble is going to be worse before it's better. They're not content with robbing the master, but they mock at him and jeer him. They jeer him. They put on his table letters addressed to the man they call Edmund Gray. They open his safe and put things in it belonging to Edmund Gray. We're not so young as we was, and it tells upon us. We're not so regular as we should be. Sometimes we're late—and sometimes we seem, just for a bit, not to know exactly who we are nor what we are. Oh! it's nothing—nothing but what will pass away when the trouble's over. But think of the black ingratitude, Miss—oh! black—black. I'm not blamin' you; but I think you ought to know the trouble we're in—considering who's done it and all.'

Elsie made no reply. She had nothing to say. Certainly she could not enter into a discussion with this man as to the part, if any, taken in the business by the new Partner. Then Checkley made a show of beginning to write with zeal. The morning was hot: the place was quiet: the old man's hand gradually slackened: the pen stopped: the eyes closed: his head dropped back upon his chair: he was asleep. It is not uncommon for an old man to drop off in this way.

Elsie sat perfectly still. At eleven o'clock she heard a step upon the stairs. It mounted: it stopped: the private door was opened, and Mr Dering entered. He stood for a moment in the doorway, looking about the room. Now, as the girl looked at him she perceived that he was again in the condition described by George—as a matter of fact, it was in this condition that Mr Dering generally arrived in the morning. His coat was unbuttoned: his face wore the genial and benevolent look which we do not generally associate with lawyers of fifty years' standing: the eyes were Mr Dering's eyes, but they were changed—not in colour or in form, but in expression. Elsie was reminded of her portrait. That imaginary sketch was no other than the Mr Dering who now stood before her.

He closed the door behind him and walked across the room to the window.

Then Elsie, lightly, so as not to awaken the drowsy old clerk, stepped into Mr Dering's office and shut the door softly behind her.

The sleep-walker stood at the window, looking out. Elsie crept up and stood beside him. Then she touched him on the arm. He started and turned. 'Young lady,' he said, 'what can I do for you?' He showed no recognition at all in his eyes: he did not know her. 'Can I do anything for you?' he repeated.

'I am afraid—nothing,' she replied.

He looked at her doubtfully. Then apparently remembering some duty as yet unfulfilled, he left the window and unlocked the safe. He then drew out of his pocket a manuscript tied up with

red tape. Elsie looked into the safe and read the title—'The New Humanity,' by Edmund Gray,' which was written in large letters on the outer page. Then he shut and locked the safe and dropped the key in his own pocket. This done, he returned to the window and sat down, taking no manner of notice of his visitor. All this exactly as he had done before in presence of George and his old clerk.

For ten minutes he sat there. Then he shivered, straightened himself, stood up, and looked about the room, Mr Dering again.

'Elsie!' he cried. 'I did not know you were here. How long have you been here?'

'Not very long. A few minutes, perhaps.'

'I must have fallen asleep. It is a hot morning. You must forgive the weakness of an old man, child. I had a bad night, too. I was awake a long time, thinking of all these troubles and worries. They can't find out, Elsie, who has robbed me.' He spoke querulously and helplessly. 'They accuse each other, instead of laying their heads together. Nonsense! Checkley couldn't do it. George couldn't do it. The thing was done by somebody else. My brother came here with a cock-and-a-bull case, all built up of presumptions and conclusions. If they would only find out!'

'The trouble is mine as much as yours, Mr Dering. I have had to leave my mother's house, where I had to listen to agreeable prophecies about my lover and my brother. I wish, with you, that they would find out!'

He took off his hat and hung it on its peg. He buttoned his frock-coat and took his place at the table, upright and precise. Yet his eyes were anxious.

'They tease me too. They mock me. Yesterday, they laid two letters addressed to this man, Edmund Gray, on my letters. What for? To laugh at me, to defy me to find them out. Checkley swears he didn't put them there. I arrived at the moment when he was leaving the room. Are we haunted? And the day before—and the day before that—there were things put in the safe!'

'In the safe? Oh! But nobody has the key except yourself. How can anything be put in the safe?'

'I don't know. I don't know anything. I don't know what may be taken next. My houses—my mortgages, my lands, my very practice!'

'Nay—they could not. Is there anything this morning?'

He turned over his letters. 'Apparently not. Stay; I have not looked in the safe.' He got up and threw open the safe. Then he took up a packet. 'Again!' he cried almost with a scream. 'Again! See this!' He tossed on the table the packet which he had himself, only ten minutes before, placed in the safe with his own hands. 'See this! Thus they laugh at me—thus they torment me!' He hurled the packet to the other side of the room, returned to his chair, and laid his head upon his hands, sighing deeply.

Elsie took up the parcel. It was rather a bulky manuscript. The title you have heard. She untied the tape and turned over the pages. The work, she saw, was the Autobiography of Edmund Gray. And it was in the handwriting of Mr Dering!

She replaced it in the safe. 'Put everything there,' she said, 'which is sent to you. Everything. Do you know anything at all about this man Edmund Gray?'

'Nothing, my dear child, absolutely nothing. I never saw the man. I never heard of him. Yet he has planted himself upon me. He holds his chambers on a letter of recommendation from me. I was his introducer to the Manager of the Bank—I—in my own handwriting—as they thought. He drew a cheque of £720 upon me eight years ago. And he has transferred thirty-eight thousand pounds' worth of shares and stock to his own address.'

'Added to which, he has been the cause of suspicion and vile accusation against my lover and my brother, which it will cost a great deal of patience to forgive. Dear Mr Dering, I am so sorry for you. It is most wonderful and most mysterious. Suppose,' she laid her hand upon his—'suppose that I was to find out for you!'

'You, child? What can you do, when the others have failed?'

'I can but try.'

'Try, in Heaven's name. Try, my dear. If you find out, you shall be burned for a witch.'

'No. If I find out, you shall be present at my wedding. You were to have given me away. But now—now—Atheletan shall give me away, and you will be there to see. And it will be a tearful wedding—the tears came into her own eyes just to illustrate the remark—'because every one will be so ashamed of the wicked things they have said. Sir Samuel will remain on his knees the whole service, and Checkley will be fain to get under the seat.—Good-bye, Mr Dering. I am a Prophetess. I can foretell. You shall hear in a very few days all about Edmund Gray.'

She ran away without any further explanation. Mr Dering shook his head and smiled. He did not believe in contemporary Prophecy. That young people should place their own affairs—their love-makings and weddings—before the affairs of their elders, was not surprising. For himself, as he sometimes remembered—and always when this girl, with her pretty ways and soft voice, was with him—her visit had cheered him. He opened his letters and went on with the day's work.

As for Elsie, the smile in her eyes died out as she descended the stairs. If she had been herself a lawyer, she could not have worn a graver face as she walked across the courts of the venerable Inn.

She had established the connection between Mr Dering and Edmund Gray. It was he, and nobody else, who laid those letters on the table—placed those things in the safe. This being so, it must be he himself, and nobody else, who wrote all the letters, signed the cheques, and did all the mischief. He himself! But how? Elsie had read of hypnotism. Wonderful things are done daily by mesmerists and magnetists under their new name. Mr Dering was hypnotised by this man Edmund Gray—as he called himself—for his own base ends. Well—she would find out this Edmund Gray. She would beard this villain in his own den.

She walked resolutely to Gray's Inn. She found No. 22—she mounted the stairs. The

outer door was closed. She knocked, but there was no answer. She remembered how George had found his laundress, and visited her at her lodgings—she thought she would do the same. But on the stairs she went down she met an old woman so dirty, so ancient, so feeble, that she seemed to correspond with George's account of her.

'You are Mr Gray's laundress?' she asked.

'Yes, Miss; I am.' The woman looked astonished to see such a visitor.

'I want to see him. I want to see him on very important business. Most important to himself. When can I see him?'

'I don't know, Miss. He is uncertain. He was here yesterday evening. He said he should not be here this evening. But I don't know.'

'Look here.' Elsie drew out her purse. 'Tell me when you think he will be here, and if I find him I will give you two pounds—two golden sovereigns. If you tell me right I will give you two sovereigns.'

She showed them. The old woman looked hungrily at the coins. 'Well, Miss, he's been here every Saturday afternoon for the last six months. I know it by the litter of papers that he makes. Every Saturday afternoon.'

'Very good. You shall have your money if I find him.'

In the evening, Elsie said nothing about Mr Dering and her strange discovery. The two young men talked about trying this way and that way, always with the view of implicating Checkley. But she said nothing.

THE DORE AND CHINLEY RAILWAY.

It was the boast of our grandfathers about the end of last century that no considerable town or village in England was at a greater distance from a canal or turnpike road than fifteen miles; and we can easily understand how much better the boast could be sustained at the present time as regards railways. Still there are here and there districts in Great Britain of considerable extent into which the rushing sound of the express train, or the shrill scream of the locomotive whistle, has not yet penetrated. One of the most remarkable of these localities is to be found in the heart of Derbyshire. It lies in the centre of a great industrial district, and is enclosed by three great lines; yet this large, irregularly-shaped triangular space stands out white and clear on the map, perfectly innocent of all modern means of conveyance. Through this space a railway has been in course of construction for the last three years, and is expected to be open for traffic towards the end of the present year.

The Dore and Chinley Railway, as it is called, connects the Manchester and London branch of the Midland Railway at Chapel-en-le-Frith and at Chinley with the same line at Dore, on the Sheffield and Chesterfield section, piercing the mountainous district known as the Peak Forest. The new line is about twenty miles long; and besides opening up an extensive country with great attractions for the tourist, the geologist, and lover of Nature in her sternest and most imposing moods, provides a new and quicker route between

two densely populated towns hitherto but indifferently supplied with means of intercommunication, considering the vast extent of their commercial interests and relations—that is, Manchester and Sheffield; and as competition in railway matters always commands cheaper and speedier means of conveyance and traffic, the opening of the new line is looked forward to with great interest in both localities.

This branch will make what is called 'the Wonderland of Derbyshire' quite accessible and familiar. Like all mountainous districts, it abounds in old-time traditions, and has a history bordering on the marvellous. It would indeed be hard to find another space so limited in extent, at home or abroad, containing so much that is novel and attractive. Lofty mountains, on all sides enclosing romantic valleys, into which the sun cannot penetrate until near his meridian; clear and noisy brooks, of deepest blue in colour, tumbling down the sides of the hills, playing hide-and-seek among the crevices and nooks, and dashing madly over mimic waterfalls, disappearing into subterranean passages, to reappear suddenly in some cave at a much lower level; and then flowing quietly and staidly along the valleys to join together and form a stately river, the Derwent.

Then we have vast and gloomy caves of wonderful formation. The restless and searching streams above, finding their way through the limestone rocks, leave the evidence of their soluble qualities in stalactite formations of such enormous proportions and fantastic shapes and colours as would delight the heart of the mineralogist and fossilist. Caves everywhere with weird and diabolic names and character, many of which have never yet been fully explored by man. There are away on the heights remains and ruins of old castles, built more for the safety and protection than for the comfort of their inmates. Traces of Roman camps are on the hills, and of their workings in the mines. There are the homes of families located here from before the Norman Conquest, such as the Foljambes, the Lyttons—ancestors of the novelist—the Merevils, the Stathams, and many others; and here also is the home of Miss Nightingale, of Crimean fame. The district has been described as resembling more some of the wilder portions of the Highlands of Scotland, than of a county in the heart of England.

Nor is the district wanting in interest in many other ways. Sir Walter Scott has thrown around it the magic of his genius in the charming story, *Peveril of the Peak*. The 'Old Castle of the Peak' is on the heights above the village, which derives its name of Castleton from it. The view from the hills behind is remarkably fine. There are charming contrasts in the landscape around, wild moorland, fertile valleys, and here and there peaceful villages peeping out from luxuriant foliage. There are many other points of interest at the village of Hathersage, five and a half miles distant from Castleton. A needle manufactory is established, and finds employment for numbers of people. Little John, the companion of Robin Hood, was born and buried here, and his grave is regarded with great pride by the inhabitants. Norman William, who sometimes held his court in the Peak Forest, formed the

district into a favourite hunting-ground; and for some generations afterwards his descendants held it as a residence.

But the railway which is to open up this favoured though hitherto little known district is also worthy our attention, and might readily adopt as its motto, 'Hope on, hope ever,' for its central point is the village of Hope, towards which the line is being directed from both ends. It has been aptly described as 'a line of viaducts and tunnels,' is about twenty miles in length, and will cost over a million sterling. In that comparatively short distance it passes through six miles of tunnels, driven through the hard Uredale rock; over three long viaducts and fifty-four bridges, not including a large number over the line; and no doubt in the annals of railway-making it will be characterised as quite as bold and daring in conception as it has been difficult and discouraging in construction. If 'Hope' is to be its motto, the engineers must have realised to the fullest extent the truth that 'hope deferred maketh the heart sick;' for it would appear as if Nature, resenting an invasion of her favoured domain, had arrayed all her forces to prevent it.

Starting from the western end, there are two stations on the main line—Chinley on the north, and Chapel-en-le-Frith on the south. A branch from each meets and forms a junction at Chapel Milton Viaduct. This viaduct has thirteen arches, each forty-five feet span, and one hundred and four feet high. It is built on a curve, which, combined with its great height, makes it quite an imposing and picturesque feature of the landscape. Facing the end of it, Cowburn Hill stands out boldly, and here some of the difficulties encountered in making the line may be seen. During the past three years, fourteen hundred men have been burrowing their way through this hill, a distance of three thousand seven hundred yards, or nearly two and a fifth miles, the whole distance having been excavated by blasting and worked from the ends only, without shafts. It is not what is termed a wet tunnel; but at certain breaks in the continuity of the rocks the water burst through in such quantities and force as to prevent the men working with any degree of efficiency. The extensive character of the work may be estimated from the fact that twenty millions of bricks will be used in lining it. Operations were begun by driving a large bottom heading through the entire length, which allowed locomotives to be used for removing the débris. The rock-drills were worked by compressed air, three large compressors supplying the motive-power. For blasting, ten holes were made in the face of the rock, in each of which three pounds of gelignite—a new and powerful explosive—were placed and fired. Three firings were made each day, giving a progress of from two to four feet. A supply of fresh air is continually flowing into the tunnel from the air-compressors, while a large exhausting fan is drawing off the smoke and foul air. A thirty-foot fan is capable of removing one hundred and eighty thousand cubic feet of air per minute; and the men can work with comfort and safety.

On emerging from Cowburn Tunnel, we reach the first station, Edale, and from there to the great tunnel under Totley Moss there are no

great engineering difficulties in the way. The line keeps in the valley, and follows the course of the noisy little stream, the Noe, except where its windings are so great as to require bridges to be built for crossing it. Between Edale and Hope are some heavy cuttings; but the steam-navvy, which can fill a railway truck with two bites out of an excavation, makes but short work of the heaviest cuttings. It is on this portion of the line the traveller will get a glimpse of the grandeur of the scenery and some of the difficulties overcome in making it. Taking the entire length, there are six stations, or one for every three miles, so that any portion of the railway will be readily accessible without much trouble. Arriving at Edale from the Chinley end, the next station is Hope, which serves for a number of villages, such as Castleton, Bradwell, &c. A few miles farther brings us to Bamford, and then Hathersage; followed by Padley Wood Station for Grindleford, Eyam, &c., and last Dore. Each of these intermediate stations is the outlet to a cave or mine, an old ruin, or a natural curiosity of some kind.

Near Padley Wood Station is the entrance to the Dore and Padley Tunnel, the second longest in England. It runs between Padley Wood and Totley, passing under Totley Moss—famous for the number of its springs—and although not quite finished, is so near completion as to give promise of being so at the end of this year. From the very beginning this tunnel has presented almost insurmountable difficulties to be overcome, particularly in fighting against the entrance of water. In mining or tunnelling, the initial cost of removing any quantity of rock may be estimated with some certainty, but the cost of a perpetual fight with water is always an unknown quantity. In the beginning, at both ends, the water proved a serious hindrance; but as the work advanced, it found its way in, in an ever-increasing quantity and force. Every stroke of the pick seemed endowed with the miraculous power of the wand of Moses, for the water sprang after it. As we get into the tunnel, the atmosphere grows oppressive, notwithstanding the constant flow of fresh air into it. We are beyond the end of the lined portion; and where the men are working, it is narrow, jagged, and low-roofed. Looking at the men in the semi-darkness, working in their shining oilskin suits, sometimes on rafts, oftener stumbling and splashing about in the water, and with the perspiration pouring from their faces, while the water gurgles and splashes noisily around them, and thinking of the three and a half miles which must be won inch by inch under surrounding circumstances, the task does seem a hopeless if not an impossible one. High overhead is Totley Moss, where the brooks and streams are leaping and bounding on their way to join the river below; but through crevices and faults in the rocks, these have found a nearer cut to their destination, and mean to take full advantage of it, as they rush into the tunnel with every noise water is capable of making.

There is water everywhere, dripping and streaming from the roof, pouring down the sides, and springing like mimic Icelandic geysers from the floor. At one place the flood was gauged at thirteen hundred gallons per minute, and the engineer had great difficulty in inducing the men

to persevere. There was in reality no danger; but many of them could not stand it long, and the work was at times seriously delayed or impeded by it. But the engineer, whose motto must ever be, 'A difficulty is merely a thing which must be overcome,' conquered this one by building a wall of bricks and cement at or near the place where the men were working, four feet six inches thick, to keep the water back. Then a drain was made along the bottom of the tunnel, and through this drain and along the culvert by the side of the railway the flow of water was turned into the river Sheaf, one of the tributaries of the Derwent. The other or Padley end of the tunnel was quite as bad, and the flow was gauged at five thousand gallons a minute. For some time the men had to use a raft to float them into the workings; then the water rose so high that they could not force the raft against it, until a dam and shoot were constructed at the dip, to lead the water away faster. At one place the roof and floor are quite dry, and the attention of visitors is directed to the roof, which may be termed a geological curiosity or freak of nature. It is composed of a large flat and smooth slab of shale many yards in length, and completely covers in the tunnel below, forming a natural roof.

With the exception of the tunnel below the Severn, lately completed, the Dore and Padley Tunnel is, as stated, the longest in England. It will require the enormous quantity of thirty millions of bricks to line it throughout. It has been pronounced one of the most perfect tunnels made on any railway, lofty, spacious, substantial, and secure. In a few months, one of the finest holiday districts in England will be opened up; and it is anticipated that there will be a great influx of tourists and pleasure and health seekers to the 'Derbyshire Wonderland.' The principal object the railway company had in view was a shorter and quicker route between two great centres of industry, reducing the time required to something less than an hour. At the same time the Midland Railway Company deserves a meed of gratitude from the public generally for having provided a new playground and health resort in the very heart of England.

JACK MOORE'S TEMPTATION.

BY DENZIL VANE.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

'THAT fellow will be your ruin, Jack. Mark my words. He is idle, dissipated, reckless; no fit companion for any honest and self-respecting young man. I have seen with deep sorrow the marked change in your manner and conduct since you made Harcourt's acquaintance. Believe me, my dear Jack, that in arriving at this decision I am consulting your best interests. Take my advice, or rather, I should say, obey my command, and I promise you that you will live to thank me for what, I daresay, you now think my severity.'

'I think you misjudge Harcourt, uncle,' replied the young man to whom the above exordium was addressed.

'I imagine that my forty years' seniority gives

me clearer perceptions than yours. At anyrate, I have quite made up my mind on this point. You must either give up James Harcourt or—I give you up. No nephew of mine shall consort with a—dissipated young rascal.'

'Come, uncle, aren't you rather too hard on him?' remonstrated Jack Tredinnick Moore.

'Not a bit of it. He deserves every word I have said about him. He is an idle, good-for-nothing scamp, a gambler, a drunkard.'

'He goes into very good society,' murmured the younger man.

'What do you call good society, Master Jack?—And pray, why do you wish to have better society than that you can get in my house? Better society! Why, God bless me! I owe my friends an apology for naming them in the same breath with James Harcourt and his allies,' cried old Tredinnick.

For a minute or two uncle and nephew looked each other in the face. Jack was the only son of old Tredinnick's only sister. During fifteen years the prim, formal, but extremely comfortable house in Russell Square had been Jack's home, for he had lost both parents in early childhood, and old Tredinnick had done his level best to supply their place, crusty old bachelor though he was.

'I—I think you are unjust to Harcourt, uncle,' said the young man at last, his handsome but rather weak-looking face wearing an obstinate expression, as weak-looking faces not infrequently do; 'and I don't see why I should be unjust to him too.'

'Does that mean that you refuse to obey me?' said old Tredinnick, ruffling up his stiff gray hair irritably, 'that you intend to—to defy me?'

'It means that I decline to accept your estimate of my friend Harcourt,' replied Jack sullenly.

'Then you must take the consequences your determination carries with it. The stool you have occupied in my office will be vacant after to-day; and the room that has been yours since—since your poor mother's death,' added old Tredinnick with a tremor in his gruff voice, 'will be empty—after to-day.'

'Very well, uncle.'

Old Tredinnick looked across at his nephew's downcast face. The lad's eyebrows were drawn together in a frown; his rather full under lip was thrust forward in a sullen pout; his cheeks were paler than usual; and there were dark circles under his eyes, a result due to late hours rather than to the agitation of the moment.

Old Tredinnick sighed as he watched him. Then some memory of the past seemed to possess him, for his gray eyes softened, and he was compelled to bring out a red-and-yellow silk handkerchief, with which he blew his nose rather ostentatiously.

'I am sorry,' he began gruffly—'very sorry that you have allowed a mere casual acquaintance to—to come between us, Jack.—But,' he went on, resuming his former positive manner, 'I mean to be as obstinate as you. You elect to stick to your—friend, Harcourt; and I am resolved to stick to my word. You leave my office—'

nobody in my employment shall consort with fellows like Harcourt—and you leave my house.'

'Very well, uncle,' muttered Jack, turning away, as though he intended to take his departure there and then.

'Stop! What—what money have you got?'

'I—I don't know—four or five sovereigns, I believe,' said Jack carelessly.

'And how long do you suppose four or five sovereigns will keep you in bread-and-cheese?'

'Until I get some employment,' was the dogged answer.

'Nonsense! Employment isn't to be had for the asking in this overcrowded city. When I advertised for a copying clerk some months ago, how many applications do you think I had?'

'I am sure I don't remember.'

'Three hundred and fifty; and the salary offered was only a pound a week. How long do you suppose it would be before the three hundred and forty-nine unsuccessful applicants got employment?'

'Can't say; I'm not clever at making calculations,' muttered Jack with surly irony.

'No. Or I should ask you to calculate how long it will take Mr James Harcourt to make the descent of Avernus, and get himself in the clutches of the law,' retorted Mr Tredinnick dryly.

Young Moore raised his head with an aggressive air, and was about to make an indignant remonstrance. But his uncle lifted his hand authoritatively and went on: 'In spite of the—ingratitude with which you have thought proper to repay me for—for the affection I have always shown you, I do not think it right to send you out penniless into the world. Your allowance of fifty pounds a year will be paid to you as usual, quarterly.'

Here Mr Tredinnick went to his writing-table with an expression of stern justice on his rugged but kindly face, took out his cheque-book and filled in a cheque, slowly and methodically, as was his wont. Then he rose and handed the slip of paper to his nephew. 'There's the first quarter of your allowance,' he said quietly. 'So that you may start comfortably, I have made it for twenty pounds, instead of for twelve pounds ten.'

Jack took the cheque with outward reluctance but with inward relief, stuffed it into his breast-pocket, and then held out his hand.

'Good-bye, uncle,' he said with a rather unsuccessful assumption of nonchalance; 'we'll part friends, eh?'

'Certainly, my boy,' cried the old man heartily; 'and if—if you will think better of this affair, I promise to let bygones be bygones. Send Harcourt to the right about, and'—

'I think I am old enough to be allowed to choose my own friends,' interrupted the lad coldly.—'Good-bye, uncle.'

'Good-bye, my boy. I hope you won't have bitter cause to repent of your pig-headedness.—God bless you!' he added hastily. Then the red-and-yellow handkerchief was again put in requisition.

Jack shrugged his shoulders, sauntered out of the room with his hands in his pockets, and within half an hour his portmanteau was packed and hoisted on to the roof of a hansom, inside

which sat Mr John Tredinnick Moore, with his hat tilted over his forehead, his handsome boyish face wearing a decidedly sulky expression. As the hansom turned out of Russell Square, he just glanced up for a moment at the house that had sheltered him for so long, and for that moment's space he wished he had acted otherwise than he had done. But by the time the hansom had rattled along New Oxford Street and reached the corner of Tottenham Court Road, he was in high spirits. He had twenty pounds in his pocket. Harcourt and he were to dine at the Criterion, and later 'take a look in,' as Harcourt phrased it, at one or two of the haunts frequented by men of fashion like themselves, then wind up the evening with a hand at whist or écarté at Harcourt's club. It was this programme as set forth in a note Jack had received from Harcourt that morning which had brought matters to a crisis in Russell Square. Old Tredinnick had then delivered himself of an ultimatum which, as we have seen, resulted in a rupture of their friendly relations.

'I've got twenty pounds in my pocket—there's a lot of amusement to be got out of twenty pounds,' soliloquised Jack, leaning back in his cab and lighting a cigar. 'When it's gone, I'll look out for something to do. But I'll have a jolly week or two, first. After grinding away at that confounded office, I want a holiday; and I mean to have it.'

Jack's twenty pounds lasted just one week. One fine morning he discovered, to his dismay, that when he had paid the bill his landlady had presented to him the night before, he would have exactly half-a-crown in his pocket. It was clearly impossible to make half-a-crown provide for the wants of even a single day; so he sauntered down to Harcourt's sprucely furnished chambers in Suffolk Street to take counsel with his chosen Mentor.

He found Harcourt at breakfast.

'Well, old fellow, what's up? You look rather down in the mouth.—Have a brandy-and-soda?' was that gentleman's greeting.

Jack shook his head.

'You had deuced bad luck last night at écarté. Cleaned out, eh?'

Jack felt in his pocket, then showed on his extended palm the single half-crown that remained from his quarter's allowance.

'I hope you admire it,' he remarked bitterly. 'It is the only portrait of Her Majesty I possess.'

'Hum! That's serious. You'd better apply to the amiable Tredinnick, hadn't you?'

'Not I. I wouldn't face my uncle and tell him that I've spent all the money he gave me in one week for a hundred pounds,' declared Jack, getting very red in the face.

Mr James Harcourt surveyed his pupil critically through his eyeglass, pulled his long sandy moustaches thoughtfully, and then remarked coolly: 'If you won't play the part of returned Prodigal, I suppose there's nothing for it but an application to your other uncle. You wear a watch and chain, I observe; also sleeve-links, a gold pin, and a signet ring. One's jewellery usually goes first.'

'Do you mean that I am to go to a pawnbroker's and pawn the things?' cried the lad.

'I do; since you refuse to betake yourself to Russell Square. I am extremely sorry that circumstances over which I have no control compel me to repress the strong impulse which rises in my breast to—ah—come to your relief. At the present moment, my own funds are low—very low. As for—ah—the little transaction I spoke of—why, it's nothing—nothing, I assure you. Have done the thing myself scores of times, and shall again.'

Jack's face brightened. The idea of a pawnbroker's shop was associated in his unsophisticated mind with extreme poverty and general disreputableness. But, he argued, if such a superfine and fastidious man as Harcourt condescended to raise money on his personal effects, why should not he?

'What do you suppose I should get for—my watch, say? It cost with the chain five-and-twenty pounds. It was a birthday present from my uncle,' he said hesitatingly.

'Five pounds, I should say.'

'That won't last long,' grumbled Jack.

'You may have better luck to-night. I'll take you to a place where you can have a turn at baccarat. Baccarat doesn't want the skill whist and écarté demand.'

Jack's eyes brightened as he listened to his friend's minute directions as to how the necessary sinews of war were to be provided. After all, as Harcourt said, his luck might change; the five pounds he would get on his watch might be decupled that night.

An hour later, Jack returned to his lodgings the richer by five pounds, and the poorer by his watch and several shreds of his self-respect. But to all appearance he was in the highest spirits, for he walked along the pavement with a jaunty air, and laughed immoderately at dinner when Harcourt told some of his amusing stories about the astonishing ups and downs he had known during the ten years of his life in London. Harcourt 'did business' on the Stock Exchange, and, according to his own account, he was one of the acutest and most astute of the many clever fellows who there forgather.

As Harcourt had anticipated, Jack's luck at baccarat that night was extraordinary. But then the best part of his winnings disappeared the very next night with the same facility with which they had been acquired. For a month or two Jack Moore experienced the numerous vicissitudes of a gambler's life. Then he began to weary of the alternate excitement and depression inseparable from such a life. One day, when his exchequer was reduced to the lowest ebb, he announced his intention of seeking for employment; and, wonderful to relate, he was speedily successful in his search. Thanks to his honest-looking face, gentlemanlike manner, his familiarity with the French and German languages, and last, but not least, to his relationship to old Tredinnick, of the well-known firm of colonial merchants Tredinnick & Morgan, he obtained the post of corresponding clerk in the office of the Three Kingdoms Life Assurance. Harcourt seemed greatly amused by Jack's sudden return to the paths of virtue; and when he found that his pupil was no longer willing to be at his beck and call, he delivered himself of the scathing remark, that 'what was

bred in the bone must come out in the flesh; that Moore's commercial upbringing precluded his ever being a man of fashion.' And so a coolness arose between Mentor and his follower.

CURIOUS AMERICAN OLD-TIME GLEANINGS.

'THE only true history of a country,' said Lord Macaulay, 'is to be found in its newspapers.' Sir George Cornewall Lewis expressed his conviction that the historian of the future will find all his materials in the *Times*. The American historian Mr Bancroft seldom saw a newspaper without drawing from it materials for his works. The story-teller often obtains from the daily and weekly press suggestive notes. Charles Reade made excellent use of the romantic episodes recorded in the newspapers. His scrap-books containing clippings from the papers were numerous and valuable, and amongst his most cherished treasures. Many modern men of letters might be mentioned who are alive to the importance of preserving facts drawn from the journals of the day.

Professor James Davie Butler, LL.D., a few years ago wrote an amusing and at the same time a valuable paper on Scrap-books. He related how he had corrected, through seeing in an old Connecticut newspaper an advertisement, statements made by the leading historians of America. It was respecting the horse of General Stark, the hero in the American War who broke Burgoyne's left wing. Headley says, 'Stark's horse sunk under him.' Everett states, 'The General's horse was killed in the action.' Irving writes, 'The veteran had his horse shot under him.' They were led to make the statement from a postscript of a letter the General wrote saying, 'I lost my horse in the action.' Here is the advertisement referred to:

TWENTY DOLLARS REWARD.—Stolen from me, the subscriber, in the time of action, the 16th of August last, a Brown Mare, five years old; had a star in her forehead. Also a doeskin seated saddle, blue housing trimmed with white, and a curbed bridle.—It is earnestly requested of all Committees of Safety, and others in authority, to exert themselves to recover the said Mare, so that the thief may be brought to justice and the Mare brought to me; and the person, whoever he be, shall receive the above reward for both; and for the Mare alone, one-half that sum. How scandalous, how disgraceful and ignominious, must it appear to all friendly and generous souls to have such sly, artful, designing villains enter into the field of action in order to pillage, pilfer, and plunder from their brethren when engaged in battle!

JOHN STARK, B.D.G.

Bennington, 11th Sept. 1777.

The foregoing may be regarded as a good proof of the value of historical facts gleaned from newspapers.

In recent years several interesting works have been compiled from old newspapers. Perhaps the most important is a set of volumes entitled 'The Olden Time Series,' prepared by Mr Henry M. Brooks, a painstaking antiquary, and published

in Boston, Massachusetts. Not the least interesting of volumes is one devoted to the *New England Sunday*. The opening page proves that neither the rich nor the poor were permitted to break the strict Sabbath regulations. In Connecticut, in 1789, General Washington was stopped by the officer representing the State authorities for riding on the Sunday. The circumstances were reported in the columns of the *Columbian Centinel* for December of that year. 'The President,' it is stated, 'on his return to New York from his late tour through Connecticut, having missed his way on Saturday, was obliged to ride a few miles on Sunday, in order to gain the town, at which he had previously proposed to attend divine service. Before he arrived, however, he was met by a Tythingman, who, commanding him to stop, demanded the occasion of his riding; and it was not until the President had informed him of every circumstance, and promised to go no farther than the town intended, that the Tythingman would permit him to proceed on his journey.'

In the old days, little attempt was made to render the places of worship attractive, or even to warm the rooms in which the preachers delivered their long sermons, although the people were obliged by law to attend the services unless they were sick. It was a serious matter not to be a 'meeting-goer;' it was, as Mr Brooks says, to be ranged with thieves and other outlaws. Mr Felt, the compiler of the *Annals of Salem*, has brought together some items of interest bearing on the introduction of stoves into the churches of the district. 'For a long period,' writes Mr Felt, 'the people of our country did not consider that a comfortable degree of warmth while at public worship contributed much to a profitable hearing of the gospel.' He states that the first stove heard of in Massachusetts for a meeting-house was put up by the first Congregation of Boston in 1773. Two stoves were placed in the Friends' Society meeting-house at Salem in 1793, and one in the North Church, Salem, in 1809. 'Not a few remember,' writes Mr Brooks, 'the general knocking of feet on cold days and near the close of long sermons. On such occasions, the Rev. Dr Hopkins used to say now and then: "My hearers, have a little patience, and I will soon close."'

One of Mr Brooks's volumes deals with *Strange and Curious Punishments*, and it gives particulars of many harsh and cruel laws. It appears, from an address delivered before the Essex Bar Association in 1885, that the old-time punishments in America were much milder than the criminal laws of England at the time, and the number of capital offences was greatly reduced. Persons were frequently whipped. The following is an example drawn from the Essex County Court Records: 'In 1643, Roger Scott, for repeated sleeping in meeting on the Lord's Day, and for striking the person who waked him, was, at Salem, sentenced to be severely whipped.'

Whipping appears to have been a common means of punishing offenders who transgressed the laws. In the month of January 1761 we see it stated that four men for petty larceny were publicly whipped at the cart's tail through the streets of New York. We gather from

another newspaper report that a man named Andrew Cayto received forty-nine stripes at the public whipping-post for house-robbery—namely, for robbing one house, thirty-nine stripes; and for robbing the other, ten stripes. It appears in some instances prisoners had, as part of their sentence, to sit on the gallows with ropes about their necks. We read: 'At Ipswich, Massachusetts, June 1763, one Francis Brown for stealing a large quantity of goods, was found guilty; and it being the second conviction, he was sentenced by the Court to sit on the gallows an hour with a rope round his neck, to be whipt thirty stripes, and pay treble damages.' The man was a native of Lisbon, and described as a great thief. 'We hear from Worcester,' says the *Boston Chronicle*, November 20, 1769, 'that on the 8th instant one Lindsay stood in the pillory there one hour, after which he received thirty stripes at the public whipping-post, and was then branded on the hand; his crime was forgery.' It appears that it was the custom to brand by means of hot iron the letter F on the palm of the right hand.

We find at this period persons found guilty of passing counterfeit dollars were sentenced to have their ears cropped.

To illustrate his subject Mr Brooks draws from Felt's *Annals of Salem* not a few quaint items. It is stated that 'in 1637, Dorothy Talby, for beating her husband, is ordered to be bound to and chained to a post.' We see it is stated that 'in 1649 women were prosecuted in Salem for scolding,' and probably in many cases whipped or ducked. The ducking-stool appears to have been frequently employed. Under date of May 15, 1672, we find it stated: 'The General Court of Massachusetts orders that scolds and railers shall be gagged or set in a ducking-stool, and dipped over head and ears three times.'

We find particulars of one Philip Ratclif for making 'hard speeches against Salem Church, as well as the Government,' sentenced to pay forty pounds, to be whipped, to have his ears cropped, and to be banished.' The date of this case is 1631. In the *Annals of Salem*, under date for May 3, 1669, it is recorded that 'Thomas Maule is ordered to be whipped for saying that Mr Higgenson preached lies, and that his instruction was "the doctrine of devils."'

The Quakers were very severely dealt with. At Salem, for making disturbances in the meeting-house, &c., Josiah Southwick, Mrs Wilson, Mrs Buffum, and other Quakers, were whipped at the cart's tail through the town. After being banished, Southwick returned to Salem, and for this offence was whipped through the towns of Boxbton, Roxbury, and Dedham.

In bygone times, hanging the remains of persons executed was general in England; but in America it was an uncommon practice. Mr Brooks, however, gives particulars of a few instances. At Newport, Rhode Island, on March 12, 1715, a man named Mecum was executed for murder; and his body hung in chains on Miantonomy Hill, where the bodies of some Indians executed three years previously were then hanging. A negro hanged at Newport in 1769 was gibbeted on the same hill.

A few lighter passages than those we have studied brighten up the records of American punishments, which were very severe, but not

more severe than those of England of the same period. A prisoner in February 1789 escaped through the jail chimney at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and wrote on the wall as follows: 'The reason of my going is because I have no fire to comfort myself with, and very little provision. So I am sure if I was to stay any longer I should perish to death. Look at that bed there! Do you think it fit for any person to lie on?'

If you are well, I am well;
Mend the chimney, and all's well!

To the gentlemen and officers of Portsmouth, from your humble servant, WILLIAM FALL.

'N.B.—I am very sorry that I did not think of this before, for if I had, your people should not have had the pleasure of seeing me take the lashes.'

Curiosities of the Lottery is the title of another volume of Mr Brooks's 'Olden Time Series.' Selling lottery tickets was regarded as a respectable calling. 'The better the man,' says Mr Brooks, 'the better the agent. Indeed, it was generally thought to be just as respectable to sell lottery tickets as to sell Bibles; and we have them classed together in the same advertisement.' In England, we must not forget the fact that the business was conducted on the same lines in bygone times. The first lottery in this country was drawn day and night at the west door of St Paul's Cathedral, London, from the 11th of January to May 6, 1569. The profit, which was considerable, was devoted to the repair of harbours. The prizes consisted of pieces of plate.

In the United States, lotteries were instituted for a variety of objects, including building bridges, clearing rivers, rebuilding Faneuil Hall, raising money to successfully carry on the work of Dartmouth College, Harvard College, and other seats of learning. The advertisements were extremely quaint, and illustrated with crudely drawn but effective pictures, supplying 'a speedy cure for a broken fortune.' Poetry as well as pictures was largely employed in advertisements for lotteries. Much has been spoken and written against lotteries; but, nevertheless, in some of the States of the Union they are still lawful.

With a dip into a volume called *Days of the Spinning-wheel*, we will bring our old-time gleanings to a close, leaving several of Mr Brooks's books unopened. The items we will cull relate to a trade once very general in the United States, but happily now a thing of the past. Advertisements similar to the following appeared in all the American newspapers, and not a few of the publishers took an active part in the trade of buying and selling human beings. 'To be sold,' said the *Boston Evening Gazette*, 1741, 'by the printer of this paper the very best negro woman in this town, who has had the smallpox and measles; is as hearty as a horse, as brisk as a bird, and will work like a beaver.' The same publisher stated that he also had on sale 'a negro man about thirty years old, who can do both town and country business very well, but will suit the country best, where they have not so many dram-shops as we have in Boston. He has worked at the printing business fifteen or sixteen years; can handle axe, saw, spade, hoe, or other instrument of husbandry as well as most men,

and values himself and is valued by others for his skill in cookery.'

In the *Gazette* of May 12, 1760, is offered for sale 'a negro woman about twenty-eight years of age; she is remarkably healthy and strong, and has several other good qualities; and is offered to sale for no other reason than her being of a furious temper, somewhat lazy. Smart discipline would make her a very good servant. Any person minded to purchase may be further informed by inquiring of the printer.' It will be gathered from the foregoing that the faults of the slaves were clearly stated.

Children were often given away; and many announcements like the following, drawn from the *Postboy*, February 28, 1763, appeared: 'To be given away, a male negro child of good breed, and in good health. Inquire of Green and Russell.'

Runaway slaves gave considerable trouble to their owners, and the papers include numerous advertisements, details respecting appearance, speech, dress, &c., of the missing persons. After describing his runaway slave, the owner concluded his announcement thus: 'All masters of vessels and others are cautioned against harbouring, concealing, or carrying off the said negro, if they would avoid the rigour of the law.'

AH MOON'S GHOST.

I WENT out to Japan in the year 1871, a time when the old order of things in that fascinating and romantic country had by no means altogether given way to the new. Truly, a railway was in process of construction; there was a telegraph system; the army and navy were rigged out in European uniform; and all civil officials were supposed to have one evening dress suit of imaginary European cut. But the mass of the people still clung to their ancient customs and prejudices and notions and superstitions and costume, and, above all, to their jealousy and suspicion of the *tojin baka*, the 'stupid foreigner.'

Europeans and Americans were not the only objects of dislike. The arrogant Chinaman came in for a large share, and a certain community of language enabled the Japanese to revile him more caustically and effectively than he could the usually unlinguistic European. Our Comprador—the Chinese head of the native department of the office—was one Ah Moon. He was about as thoroughly hated a man as could be found, although he was a good and upright servant to us—perhaps too good and upright to suit the gentle native. More than once he had been waylaid, attacked, and beaten by Japanese whom he had offended by a too rigorous execution of his duty; and more than once his life had been threatened. The result was that he became soured and vindictive, and changed from merely a strict performer of his duty into a tyrant and a bully.

One afternoon in November I was engaged in the daily duty of checking the amount of bullion

and coin in the Treasury—the large strong-room attached to every office. Ah Moon was at my side, taking down the contents of dollar bags and 'yen' boxes in a book, when suddenly the book fell from his hands, an expression of insufferable agony came to his face, he pressed his hands to his sides, uttered an awful cry, which I can never forget, and fell to the floor. When we picked him up, he was dead. A post-mortem examination revealed no traces of poison—simply one tiny piece of powdered glass. We therefore knew that he was the victim of one of the most subtle, insinuating, and terrible forms of poisoning known to nations addicted to that science.

Efforts of course were made to trace the perpetrators of the crime, but without success. Arrests were made by the native authorities for the sake of appearance, and a number of poor wretches were put to the torture in Tobé Prison; but the crime, which was undoubtedly the work of many, could be brought home to nobody, and the affair soon ceased to occupy at any rate European minds. But from the evening of Ah Moon's death, the Treasury was regarded as haunted, and from that day, only one Chinaman could be found who would, without the muttering of much jargon, pass through its great barred entrance. This man was Ah Moon's successor in the post of Comprador, the late head 'shroff' or native cashier, a man named Hai Ling, a shrewd clever fellow, who, strange to say, was as popular with the Japanese as his predecessor had been the reverse.

He was a good-looking man of fifty, with one of these calm, unruffled, expressionless faces which generally characterise the statues of Buddha Nirvana. He was very European in his tastes, inasmuch as he took a great interest in pony-training and racing, and, *mirabile dictu*, for a Chinaman, was not at all a bad rider. He spoke English beautifully, without the smallest infusion of that childish jargon known as 'Pidjin' English; and upon one occasion I saw him knock an offending coolie down in a very scientific fashion, and asked him where he had learned to hit, he replied: 'On board an English man-o'-war.'

So Ah Moon was ceremoniously laid to rest in the Chinese Cemetery near the racecourse, and Hai Ling reigned in his stead.

Hitherto it had been our custom to employ Chinamen as night-watchmen, partly because they were more reliable than Japanese, and partly because they kept awake better. But after Ah Moon's tragic death, not a Chinaman would consent to sit up through the long silent watches of the winter's nights in the neighbourhood of the Haunted Treasury. Hai Ling laughed at his countrymen's superstitious fears; but they were not to be moved, and so Japanese were put on.

But gradually the Japanese became infected with dread, and solemnly declared that at the dead of night they could hear the spirit of the murdered Ah Moon striving to burst its grave-bonds, and groaning terribly all the while. I pooh-poohed the notion, and sent the cowards about their business; but the men who replaced them, strangers from Tokio, who knew nothing about the tragedy, heard the same sounds, and

refused to remain. So, although I was utterly devoid of superstition, I determined to watch myself one night. I did so. Not a sound did I hear from eleven at night until four in the morning—the troublous period for Ah Moon's spirit, and I turned into bed railing at the natives for a lot of chicken-hearted idiots.

Still, as the complaints were renewed during the following days, I thought that, in order to guard against the possibility of a trick being played, I would watch one night without having given notice of my intention to do so. So I quietly hid myself in a corner of the outer office just before eleven o'clock, and waited. Shortly after that hour I heard sounds which certainly came from the direction of the Treasury—scraping, grating sounds, intermingled occasionally with a deep groan, which, I must say, sounded inexpressibly weird and solemn in the stillness of the night. They were not regular sounds, but arose by fits and starts; and even I could quite realise how in the native mind they might be associated with the struggles of an uneasy, restless spirit. I crept softly along to the Treasury door and listened. The sounds did not seem to be in the Treasury, but near it, on the road side of the wall. What did it mean? I confess I was mystified.

The next morning I made a thorough search in the Treasury and about it for some clue to the strange noises. That night I watched again, and at as nearly as possible the same hour as on the preceding night the mysterious noises commenced, the moaning and groaning being heart-rending. It was comical to note the effect upon the fellows watching on the veranda outside—for as a concession to their fears we had doubled the watch—they clapped their hands to their ears, muttered prayers to the Fox God and the Mercy Goddess and the Japanese Pantheon generally, and stood huddled together in a corner, of about as much use in a real emergency as a couple of women. Now a curious circumstance happened.

Opposite to our premises was the 'compound' of a large bungalow which had long remained untenanted and was fast falling to ruin. One morning we heard that the bungalow had been taken by some Japanese—probably men of the modern school, who imagined that they could not better stamp their fervour for the new order of things than by taking to themselves a European house. In times gone by there had been a pleasant garden round this bungalow; but long years of neglect had brought it to the condition of a wilderness, and it was now a mere tangled, uncared-for thicket. A prominent feature was a fine shrub which sprang up almost in a perfect cone, close to the wall dividing the property from the main road; and upon this shrub our manager had long cast covetous eyes, with a view to transporting it to his own garden on the Bluff, a hill outside the Settlement, whereon were situated the private residences of our local aristocracy.

Upon the night after my second vigil at the office, I was dining at a house on the Bund. It was a fine starlit night as I walked thither, and I remember remarking how clearly and distinctly the pyramidal shrub stood out against the deep blue sky. But when I returned at

two o'clock the next morning the shrub was not there! To be sure I had dined, and, after dinner, at the card-table, may have had a couple of brandy-and-sodas, but no more; and it was assuredly no habit of mine to get intoxicated, so that I could only imagine that the manager had got the shrub.

But—next morning the shrub was in its place! From which I had to arrive at the humiliating conclusion that my vision had been clouded—well, by circumstances over which I had no control.

I went up-country shooting for three or four days. When I returned, I asked about Ah Moon's ghost. The Comprador replied that the coolies said it was still walking, and would continue to walk until the body was laid in its final resting-place in China; but expressed his own contempt for their fears. As I walked down to the club that evening, I noticed that the shrub was in its usual place. The bungalow was lighted up; and just as I passed the gate, out came Hai Ling, who saluted me and went on. I dined out that night, and came by the bungalow compound wall shortly after midnight. The shrub was still there, so that my suspicions as to my condition upon the night when I had failed to see it were confirmed beyond a doubt.

Still the mystery of Ah Moon's ghost continued. I *knew* that it could be accounted for, and yet I was utterly at a loss to account for it. In reply to my questions, the watchmen said that the groanings were terrible. They were men I could trust, and their fear was too palpably genuine to be a subject of mirth.

Up to now I had confided the affair to no one, but I now told the manager and the accountant. Of course they laughed me to scorn; but agreed to sit up with me and listen. Not a sound broke the stillness of that night; the laugh against me was renewed and redoubled, and I was pointed out at the club next day as the fellow who believed in ghosts.

But I had heard the sounds, and I determined to find out their cause. I arrived at the conclusion that the more quietly I went to work the better; for it was remarkable that upon the one occasion when I had announced my intention of watching, I had heard nothing; and that upon the other, when the manager and accountant had been with me, there was a similar absence of sounds. So one evening I got the duplicate Treasury key from the manager, and at midnight I slipped quietly into the office, which adjoined our dwelling-house. The watchman was promenading the veranda, click-clacking his pieces of wood in the old-fashioned, idiotic Oriental fashion. I passed him without attracting notice, lit a dark-lantern, noiselessly opened the Treasury doors, and slipped in, carefully locking the doors after me. Presently the unearthly noises began. They were closer to me and more distinct than before; and if I had been asked, I should have said that Ah Moon was busily engaged in hewing out his own grave, and that from his groanings and lamentation he was finding the task a hard one. I racked my brain for the cause. I thought of rats, of the wind, of some hidden force of nature; but the more I thought, the more unaccountable seemed the phenomenon. I sat until I was half frozen, for it was mid-winter; there was half a

foot of snow on the ground outside, and the floor, walls, and roof of the Treasury were of iron.

I got out as I came, and as I passed through the office looked out. The shrub was there, but I could have sworn that its position had been shifted, and somehow or other I got to associate the shrub and the sounds in the Treasury together.

Next morning, I walked over and had a good look at the shrub. It was certainly in its place; but I noticed that the snow all about it was much trampled and marked with footprints.

'Comprador,' I said to Hai Ling when the office opened, 'they are friends of yours who have taken the bungalow over there—aren't they?'

'Yes, sir,' he replied, with—perhaps I fancied it—a little hesitation in his tone, and a faintly perceptible rise of colour into his yellow face. 'They are Japanese gentlemen—two-sworded men: they are very busy getting in their furniture. You can see the carts. They are rich, and will be valuable connections.'

Sure enough, there were drawn up in front of the bungalow three or four carts laden with packing-cases.

The English mail came in that morning, and I went to the club to read the newspapers she had brought. Suddenly a paragraph in one of them arrested my attention. I slapped the paper down with an exclamation of joy, and rushed straight away home, for I felt sure I had solved the mystery of Ah Moon's ghost and of its connection with the shrub.

That afternoon, after the office had been closed for the day, I went in to the manager. He must have seen that I was excited with news, for he said, 'Hullo! Any news about Ah Moon's ghost?'

'Yes,' I said gravely; 'and I want you and Lawson to be with me to-night in the Treasury.'

'Nonsense!' he laughed. 'I thought that old game was played out.'

'Well,' I replied, 'I have the best of reasons for asking you, and perhaps some day you will thank me for it.'

'All right,' he said. 'But mind, if nothing comes of it, you stand Lawson and me a dinner at the Grand Hotel.'

'Done!' said L. 'Bring your six-shooter with you.'

I gave the same invitation to Lawson the accountant, and then went down to the Saibansho or Town Hall, and engaged two policemen to be held at my disposal.

There was evidently a big dinner on at the bungalow opposite that evening, for the whole place was brilliantly lighted up, and I met Hai Ling going in dressed in his clothes of state. At midnight, the manager, Lawson, and I crept downstairs, through the office, and into the Treasury. It was a wild night of snow and wind, and the watchmen were curled up in their corners fast asleep. We took up our positions in the Treasury, each one behind a pile of dollar bags or 'yen' boxes, each of us with a dark-lantern, and each armed with a revolver. In a few minutes there was a grating sound just in front of and under the pile of bags behind which I was hidden. It continued for some time, and was intermingled with occasional groans. Then there was a crack, and a thin ray of light was visible in the iron

floor. Scarcely daring to breathe, so great was my interest, I watched. Gradually the line of light grew broader, and presently the whole plate, some two feet broad by four feet long, was raised up, gently and gradually, and laid over. Then a head appeared. The light below shone on the face, and I at once recognised our Comprador, Hai Ling. He emerged from below quietly and quickly, and stood so close to me that I could have touched him. A second head appeared. It was that of a Japanese, and he stood alongside the Comprador. A third came up, also a Japanese. They had walked beautifully into the trap.

They remained for a few moments listening; then swiftly and quietly they commenced to hand the boxes of gold 'yen through the opening in the floor to somebody below. At that moment I gave a low whistle, and all three of us sprang out with cocked revolvers, and each seized his man. Hai Ling and his friends were so completely surprised by the suddenness and swiftness of our action that they neither uttered a sound nor made the least show of resistance. We turned our lanterns full on, and called in the watchmen—whose amazement at the scene presented to them can be better imagined than described—and then, having secured our prisoners, proceeded to explore their mode of access.

We found that a neat little tunnel had actually been cut through the concrete foundation of the Treasury, passing under our front garden and the road, and coming out exactly on the site of the shrub in the garden opposite. Here we found two Japanese gentlemen, who had taken flight along the tunnel when they heard the arrest of their friends, held fast by the policemen I had engaged.

So at one blow I laid Ah Moon's ghost. If I had not happened to read in the London newspaper how at Pompeii there had been discovered a tunnel cut from the surface and leading into one of the buried buildings, by treasure-hunters, the skeleton of one of whom was found, I should have been too late; the robbers would have carried out their design, and the Bank would have been the poorer by many thousands of dollars.

Mr Hai Ling got his deserts. His Japanese accomplices would have been executed on Tobé Hill but for the intervention of the British Consul; and I got promotion for my share in the laying of Ah Moon's Ghost.

GREEN: ITS SYMBOLISM.

THE symbolism of colours is a subject that covers a very wide field. In love and in war, in ecclesiasticism, in folklore, in dress, in art—in almost every department of life and of thought, colour, as a visible type or symbol of the unseen feeling or thought, has always played a very prominent part. The symbolism of Green is varied and curious, and not a little contradictory. Green is emphatically the colour of hope, of freshness, and of youth. The early ecclesiastical painters all associate it with hope. The wings and robes of Dante's angels that visited the souls in purgatory were green. This association may explain why Armado, in *Love's Labour's Lost*, declares that 'green is indeed the colour of lovers,' a sentiment

in which Shakespeare is supported by Browne, the sweet Devonshire singer, who says that

Green well befits a lover's heate,
But blacke bessems a mourner.

This view of the colour's symbolism may also perhaps explain the many and appreciative references to green eyes to be found in the poets. Green eyes would hardly be reckoned as an element in either masculine or feminine beauty by most plain people; but the poets of many different countries have combined to celebrate their charm; and who have greater claims to be considered authorities on beauty than the poets? In *Romeo and Juliet*, the nurse, expatiating on the perfections of Romeo's rival, says:

An eagle, madam,
Hath not so green, so quick, so fair an eye,
As Paris hath.

Dante, describing his meeting with Beatrice on the summit of the Purgatorial Mount, gives her eyes of this colour. Calderon, Cervantes, and other Spanish writers praise the eye of the emerald hue, in which they are imitated by Longfellow, in his *Spanish Student*, where he speaks of the 'young and green-eyed Gaditana.' But perhaps the poets do not intend to be so precise in their definition of colour as their words might imply. Green is of many shades, and poetical praise of emerald eyes may perhaps be best interpreted by Swinburne's beautiful lines in *Félice*:

O lips, that mine have grown into,
Like April's kissing May;
O fervid eyelids, letting through
Those eyes the greenest of things blue,
The bluest of things gray.

So much praise of green eyes is somewhat curious, when one recollects that the colour is so intimately associated with jealousy—the 'green-eyed monster' of Iago. But this is only a part of the contradictoriness of the symbolism of this chameleon-like colour. Green is the colour of lovers, and at the same time the colour of jealousy and of fickleness, and, if we may believe Chaucer, it is also the colour of avarice. In the *Romaunt of the Rose* he thus describes this unlovely personage:

Ful sade and caytif was she eek,
And also grene as ony leek.

But whatever may be the colour of avarice, the belief in green as a symbol of fickleness is very general. Chaucer's ballad *Against Women Unconstant* has for burden the line: 'Instead of blue, thus may ye wear all green;' and 'green, forsaken clean,' is a familiar saying; or, as it is often more elaborately put:

Green's forsaken;
Yellow's forsworn;
Blue's the colour
That must be worn.

In some country parts, when a younger sister

is married first, the elder is said to 'wear the green stockings;' and years ago in Scotland it was actually a common joke, when such an event happened, to send a pair of these undesirable stockings to the elder sister, to be worn at the dance which in the evening brought the wedding festivities to an end. It is perhaps partly owing to this association with inconstancy, and partly to the general ill-luck connected with green, that this colour is so generally tabooed in wedding costumes:

Married in May, and kirked in green,
Baith bride and bridegroom winna lang be seen.

One reason given for the avoidance of green in wedding dresses is that it is the chosen colour of the fairies; and the little people, as every one knows, are very quick to resent anything that may appear to them to be intended as an insult. At Lowland Scotch marriages of past times, even green vegetables were looked at askance, and kale was not allowed to adorn the table with its curly head. The combination of white and green appears to be particularly portentous, according to the old lines:

Those dressed in blue
Have lovers true;
In green and white
Forsaken quite.

It is another example of the curious inconsistency of the symbolism of green that the colour which is pre-eminently that of hope and of youth—with which it seems strange to connect aught but good fortune—should be also so generally regarded as unlucky. In some parts of the south of England rustic folks regard green with such aversion that they will not use it at all, either in dress or in the furnishing or decoration of their homes. A few years ago, a learned German, Dr Cassel of Berlin, published a little book on the emerald colour, in which he lays it down that green is the colour of the devil and of demons generally, and this position he supports by a multitude of instances gathered from various parts of Europe, showing its diabolical associations. The belief in demoniac agency and activity underlies a great part of those curious notions and observances of our forefathers which are now rapidly dying out, and this association of such agency with the colour green is doubtless at the bottom of the very general belief in its unluckiness.

Of course there have always been many people who have disregarded all such beliefs, and green has been worn many a time and oft. Planché tells us that about 1680 it was the favourite colour in clothes; and no idle superstition kept our archers and huntsmen of old from wearing suits of Lincoln green. A conspicuous instance of the love of this colour in costume is found in the person of Manfred, the famous South Italian king. We are particularly told that when, in the summer of 1259, he waited on the quay at Trani, in Apulia, to welcome his bride, the Princess Helen of Epirus, he was dressed in his favourite green, 'the colour of hope and youth.' On the other hand, and apart from the general superstition, there are particular families that regard the colour as of specially ill omen if worn by one of their members. It is held in ill repute by both the Ogilvies and the Grahams; and the

Sinclairs of Caithness look upon it as unlucky, because their forefathers, who fought and fell, almost to a man, at Flodden Field, were dressed in green on that fatal day.

A MOTHER'S GARDEN.

I SEE her in the dear, dead years,
Blest in her apt and tender ways;
I catch some sweet or humorous phrase;
She smiles; and then all disappears
In a quick mist of burning tears.

A minute, and she comes again,
And loiters where she loitered oft
Upon the long lawns, close and soft,
Tending the blossoms that might wane
With thirsting for the summer rain.

Like her own children, well she knew
The children of her garden-reach,
And ministered to all and each,
From woodbine striving for the blue,
To homely lavender and rue.

She loved the phlox on swaying stem,
The yellow lilies' brief, sweet bliss;
The delicate gray clematis,
And rustic Star of Bethlehem;
She watched and tended all of them.

And many a fragrant flower that yet
In fancy I can smell again
At eve, or after summer rain;
The stocks, so sweet when dewy-wet,
With pansies, wall-flow'rs, and mignonette.

And lavish roses; still I see
Her 'mid them; hear the names I know,
'The Moss Rose,' 'General Jacqueminot,'
'Saffroni,' and the dear old tree
'Tea-scented,' sweet as it could be.

But 'mid the many flowers that were
One might not thrive, and still apart
The childish longing takes my heart,
'Would that the Daphne had lived there,
Since this was so desired by her.'

But ah! what matter now; the grace
Is vanished of her gentle touch;
The heart that cared for all so much,
The noble mien, the loving face,
Have passed unto a higher place.

The walks, the lawns, the rustling trees,
The mimic wood for many a fern,
Expect no more her slow return;
New names, new voices catch the breeze,
And all is changed save memories;

But these are ours until life's slope
Dips down into the darkened dale;
And 'tis by these the Dead avail
To help us still, as still we grope
Toward their high, accomplished hope.

KATE CARTER.

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GROUSE DISEASE.

MAN is not the only sufferer from epidemics. These dreaded scourges are indeed the heritage of all flesh, and there are good grounds for the statement that no family of living beings can claim a happy exemption. The fact is becoming daily more apparent that man and animals are common subjects for many similar diseases, of which tuberculosis, anthrax, and diphtheria are not the least frequent; and many readers will call to mind how, during the recent epidemics of influenza, a somewhat similar sickness was extensively prevalent among horses. Such considerations should surely quicken our sense of kinship in suffering with the lower animals; and it is satisfactory to reflect that they have participated in no small degree in the beneficent application of hygienic laws.

But the epidemic which this paper will treat of is, like salmon disease, one which, so far as we yet know, does not affect the animals more closely associated with man in the domestic relations of life. It is the mysterious Grouse Disease, an illness of great fatality, and whose origin has given rise to a large amount of controversial literature. Grouse disease is in many respects an exceedingly interesting one, illustrating as it does a law of widespread generality among epidemics, that whenever the population becomes excessive, disease sets in apparently with the purpose of restoring by violence the balance of living creatures.

It was only at the beginning of the present century that a hitherto unrecognised disease, fatally affecting the grouse of our British moors, began to be talked about; and as the century grew older and grouse moors became more and more valuable, the sickness increased in severity, and in the enormous number of birds which fell under its ravages. As the value of moors became more apparent to the proprietors, great efforts were made to increase the head of game; and the natural enemies of the grouse—the native *Carnivora* and *Falconidæ*—were exposed to the

destructive hostility of gamekeepers. The result was overstocking; the diseased and weakly individuals no longer fell a natural prey to the hawks and weasels, and just as in human communities, where a like condition of over-population prevails, epidemic disease arose, sweeping away multitudes of the healthy along with the weakly and unfit.

To the modern mind the term epidemic, as applied to disease, instinctively calls up the idea of fever and germs spread broadcast over the land. But for many years the true nature of grouse disease was ill understood.

We will briefly mention some of the theories once stoutly maintained. Cold and protracted springs, the extension of sheep-farming, improper management of the heather, unsuitable food, the presence of intestinal worms, have severally been held responsible by their various advocates. Be it remarked in passing that most of the above causes are depressing in their nature, and liable to diminish the vitality of the birds. Another very obvious suggestion was that the destruction of animals which preyed upon the grouse allowed a weakly stock to survive, which became the starting-point of disease.

The pillar of the theory that grouse disease is caused by intestinal worms was the late Dr Cobbold, a great authority on the subject of Entozoa. The grouse, like many other animals, is extremely prone to become the host of parasitic worms, and its alimentary tract is often found crowded with those inconvenient guests. The tapeworm is very common in the grouse; but in those birds found dead or dying on the moors, Dr Cobbold often found immense numbers of an extremely minute hematode worm, which, from its fineness, he named *Strongylus gracilis*. Grouse disease he considered was due to this minute annelid.

But there were many things about grouse disease which were inexplicable on this theory alone. The immense and rapid mortality was sufficient to suggest doubts, along with the fact that many of the birds dead of grouse disease were in good condition and of full plumage, a

state inconsistent with the slow wasting which would ensue from such a cause as entozoa. Consequently, speculation took another direction, and the opinion—previously held by some close observers—gained ground that grouse disease was an epidemic of a highly infectious and fatal kind, comparable in its causes and progress to the epidemic scourges of man. This theory was strongly held by Dr Farquharson, now member of Parliament for Aberdeenshire; and by their careful post-mortem examinations, Professor Young of Glasgow University, and Mr Andrew Wilson, found strong confirmatory evidence in the presence of constant anatomical lesions of the lungs, liver, alimentary tract, and lining membranes. Among the most recent workers on the subject has been Dr Klein, the eminent authority on micro-organisms. He has put the matter on the firm basis of experiment by discovering the germ which produces the disease, and by its inoculation into other animals showing its communicability.

The micro-organism of grouse disease is an extremely minute bacillus, whose elongation is so slight that at first sight it is hardly distinguishable from a coccus. It is found in the blood of the affected grouse, in the lungs in great quantity, in the liver, and in the walls of the alimentary tract. The lungs are acutely inflamed, and this is indeed the essential and characteristic feature—the disease is an infectious pneumonia. But besides this, other organs are sometimes inflamed or congested. Birds inoculated with the bacillus soon show symptoms of severe illness. They become listless and heavy, the breathing is rapid and laboured, the appetite disappears, there is thirst, and often diarrhoea; finally, they become comatose, and die or gradually recover. At an early stage the plumage is ruffled, and the eyes are dim. On the moors where the disease is severe the grouse are found dead or dying in great numbers in the vicinity of water, having flocked there in order to quench the severe thirst caused by the fever.

To sum up briefly—grouse disease is an epidemic fever, the chief symptom of which is inflammation of the lungs. It is caused by a bacillus; and the predisposing causes are overpopulation, undoubtedly assisted by any depressing conditions to which the grouse may be exposed, such as protracted cold and wet spring-times, and unsuitable or insufficient food. Of recent years the disease has been less virulent on our moors. This is largely due to systematic reduction of the head of game within reasonable limits. The eagle, the falcon, and their kindred, are again becoming more numerous on our hillsides with beneficial results; and by the proper exercise of these prudent methods, there is every reason to believe that grouse disease will be prevented from again assuming disastrous proportions. At the same time, little hope can be afforded of its extinction. The grouse cannot be readily caught and vaccinated, even if it were likely that a preventive vaccine were ever to be discovered. And there are good grounds for the belief that grouse disease is not confined to one family of birds. It is quite possible that it may be a general avian scourge. Dr Klein's researches on this point are not yet completely worked out. Inoculation of the pigeon produced no result; crows were found to be slightly susceptible, as also were sparrows;

the common yellow bunting took the disease with extreme readiness, not only by inoculation, but by infection. Some inoculated birds were on one occasion, in Dr Klein's laboratory, placed beside a cage of untouched and healthy buntings. In a couple of days most of the latter had succumbed, and the bacillus of grouse disease was on microscopic examination found abundantly in their tissues. A more excellent illustration of the highly infectious nature of the illness could hardly be obtained. Inoculation of the common mouse also proved highly successful, suggesting that this form of infectious pneumonia may not be confined to the Aves alone, but may also affect certain of the lesser mammalia. The fact is that infectious forms of pneumonia belong to a class of diseases widely prevalent among the higher animals. It is fortunate that they seldom assume so excessive a degree of severity as when sweeping the feathered denizens of our Highland hills away by tens of thousands.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XXII.—I AM EDMUND GRAY.

ON Saturday afternoon, the policeman on duty at Gray's Inn was standing near the southern portals of that venerable Foundation in conversation with the boy who dispenses the newspapers, from a warehouse constructed in the eastern wall of the archway. It was half-past three by the clock and a fine day, which was remarkable for the season—August—and the year. The sun poured upon the dingy old courts, making them dingier instead of brighter. Where the paint of the windows and door-posts is faded and dirty—where the panes are mostly in want of cleaning—where there are no flowers in the windows—where there are no trees or leaves in the Square—where the bricks want pointing, and where the soot has gathered in every chink and blackens every cranny—then the sunshine of summer only makes a dingy court shabbier. Gray's Inn in July and August, unless these months are as the August of the year of grace 1891, looks old, but not venerable. Age should be clean and nicely dressed: age should wear a front to conceal her baldness: age should assume false teeth to disguise those gums stripped of their ivory. It was felt by the policeman. 'We want a washin' and a brightenin' in this old place,' he remarked to the journalist. 'We want somethin' younger than them old laundresses,' said the newspaper boy. Great is the Goddess Coincidence. Even while he uttered this aspiration, a young lady entered the gate and passed into the Inn.

'Ha!' breathed the policeman, softly.

'Ah!' sighed the journalist.

She was a young lady of adorable face and form, surpassing the wildest dreams either of policeman or of paper-man—both of whom possessed the true poetic temperament. She was clothed in raiment mystic, wonderful, such as seldom indeed gets as far east as Gray's Inn, something in gray or silver gray with an open

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front and a kind of jacket. She passed them rapidly, and walked through the passage into the Square.

'No. 22,' said the policeman. 'Now, who does she want at No. 22? Who's on the ground-floor of 22?'

'Right hand—Architects and Surveyors. Left hand—Universal Translators.'

'Perhaps she's a Universal Translator. They must be all gone by this time. The first floor is lawyers. They're all gone too. I saw the clerks march out at two o'clock. Second floor—there's Mr Carstone on the left, and Mr Edmund Gray on the right. Perhaps it's Mr Carstone she's after. I hope it isn't him. He's a gentleman with fine manners, and they do say a great scholar, but he's a Lushington, and a sweet young thing like that ought not to marry a man who is brought home every other night too tipsy to stand. Or there's Mr Gray—the old gent—perhaps she's his daughter. What's Mr Edmund Gray by calling, Joe?'

'Nobody knows. He don't often come. An old gentleman—been in the Inn a long time, for years. Lives in the country, I suppose, and does no work. Lives on other people's work—my work—honest working-men's work,' said the boy, who was a Socialist and advanced.

'Ah! There's something up about Mr Gray. People are coming to inquire for him. First, it was a young gentleman: very affable he was—and free with his money—most likely other people's money. He wanted to know a good deal about Mr Gray—more than I could tell him—wanted to know how often he came, and what he was like when he did come—and would I tell him all I knew. He went to the old laundress afterwards.—Then it was a little old man—I know him by sight—uses the *Salutation Parlour* of an evening—he wanted to know all about Mr Gray too. No half-crown in that quarter, though. He's been spying and watching for him—goes and hides up the passage on the other side of the Square. Kind of spider he is. He's watching him for no good, I'll bet. Perhaps the young lady wants to find out about him too.—Joe, there's something up at No. 22. The old gentleman isn't in his chambers, I believe. She'll come out again presently, and it'll be: "Oh, Mr Policeman, could you very kindly tell me how I can find Mr Edmund Gray?" With a shilling perhaps, and perhaps not. I wonder what she wants with Mr Edmund Gray? Sometimes these old chaps break out in the most surprising manner. Joe, if you ever go into the service, you'll find the work hard and the pay small. But there's compensations in learnin' things. If you want to know human nature, go into the Force.'

'There's old Mr Langhorne, up at the top.'

'So there is. But no young lady wants to see that poor old chap. He's got no friends, young nor old—no friends and no money. Just now, he's terrible hard up. Took a shillin' off o' me last Sunday to get a bit of dinner with. Fine thing—isn't it, Joe?—to be a gentleman and a Barrister all your life, isn't it—and to end like that? Starvation in a garret—eh?—Look out. She will be coming down directly.'

But she did not come down. Two hours and more passed, and she did not come down.

The visitor was Elsie Arundel. She walked

up the stairs to the second floor. Here she stopped. There was a black door, closed, on the right of her, and another black door, closed, on the left of her. On the lintel of one was the name of Mr F. W. Carstone. On the lintel of the other was that of Mr Edmund Gray. Elsie knocked with her parasol at the latter door. There was no reply. 'The old laundress,' she murmured, 'told me that Saturday afternoon was my best chance of finding him. I will wait.' She sat down with hesitation on the stairs leading to the third floor—they were not too clean—and waited.

She was going to do a very plucky thing—a dangerous thing. She had made a discovery connecting Mr Dering directly with this Edmund Gray. She had learned that he came to the office in a strange condition, hypnotic, bringing things from Edmund Gray. She now suspected that the only person who carried on the forgeries on Mr Dering was Mr Dering himself, acted on and controlled by Edmund Gray—and she wanted to find out who this Edmund Gray was. She would confront him and tax him with the crime. It was dangerous, but he could not kill her. Besides, he was described as quite an elderly man. He was also described as a benevolent man, a charitable man, a kindly man: and he wrote letters brimful of the most cheerful optimism. Yet he was carrying on a series of complicated forgeries. She resolved to wait for him. She would wait till sundown, if necessary, for him.

The place was very quiet. All the offices were closed and the clerks gone. Most of the men who lived in the Chambers were away, out of town, gone on holiday, gone away from Saturday till Monday. Everything was quite quiet and still: the traffic in Holborn was only heard as a continuous murmur which formed part of the stillness: the policeman, who had now said all he had to say to the newspaper boy, was walking slowly and with heavy tread round the Court. The Inn was quite empty and deserted and still. Only, overhead there was the footfall of a man who walked up and down his room steadily, never stopping or ceasing or changing the time, like the beat of a pendulum. Elsie began to wonder, presently, who this man could be, and if he had nothing better to do than to pace his chamber all day long, when the sun was bright and the leaves on the trees and the flowers in full bloom?

The clock struck four: Elsie had been waiting half an hour: still Mr Edmund Gray did not arrive: still the steady beat of the footstep continued overhead.

The clock struck five. Still that steady footfall. Still Elsie sat upon the stairs waiting in patience.

When the clock struck six, the footsteps stopped—or changed. Then a door overhead opened and shut and the steps came down the stairs. Elsie rose and stood on one side. An old man came down—tall and thin, close-shaven, pale, dressed in a black frock-coat, worn to a shiny polish in all those parts which take a polish—a shabby old man, whose hat seemed hardly able to stand upright: and a gentleman—which was perfectly clear from his bearing—a gentleman in the last stage of poverty and decay.

He started, surprised to see a young lady on the stairs.

'You are waiting for Mr Carstone?' he asked. 'He is out of town. He will not be back till Monday. Nobody ever comes back before Monday. From Saturday to Monday I have the Inn to myself. All that time there are no slammers and no strangers. It is an agreeable retreat, if only'— He shook his head and stopped short.

'I am not waiting for Mr Carstone. I am waiting for Mr Edmund Gray.'

'He is very uncertain. No one knows when he comes or whither he goeth. I would not wait if I were you. He may come to-day, or to-morrow, or at any time. He comes on Sunday morning, often. I hear him coming up-stairs after the chapel bell stops. He is a quiet neighbour—no slammer or tramp. I would not wait, I say, if I were you.'

'I will wait a little longer. I am very anxious to see Mr Gray.'

'He should wait for you,' Mr Langhorne replied, politely. 'The stairs are not a fit resting-place for you. This old Inn is too quiet for such as you. Mirth and joy belong to you—Silence and rest to such as me. Even slamming does not, I daresay, greatly displease youth and beauty. Chambers are not for young ladies. Beauty looks for life and love and admiration. They do not exist here. Run away, young lady—leave the Inn to the poor old men, like me, who cannot get away if they would.'

'Thank you.—I must see Mr Edmund Gray, if I can. It will not hurt me to wait a little longer.'

'You wish to see Edmund Gray. So do I. So do I. You are a friend of his. Perhaps, therefore, you will do as well. Those who are his friends are like unto him for kindness of heart. Those who wish to be his friends must try to be like unto him. Young lady, I will treat you as the friend of that good man. You can act for him.'

'What can I do if I do act for him?' But there was a hungry eagerness in the man's eyes which made her divine what she could do.

'It is Saturday.' He replied without looking at her. He turned away his head. He spoke to the stair-window. 'To-morrow is Sunday. I have before this, on one or two occasions, found myself as I do now—without money. I have borrowed of Mr Carstone and of Mr Edmund Gray. Sometimes, I have paid it back—not always. Lend me—for Mr Edmund Gray—if you are not rich, he will give it back to you—the sum of five shillings—say, five shillings. Otherwise, I shall have nothing to eat until Monday, when Mr Carstone returns.'

'Nothing to eat? Nothing at all to eat?' Beggars in the street often make the same confession, but somehow their words fail to carry conviction. Mr Langhorne, however, did carry conviction.

The old man shook his head. 'I had some food yesterday at this time. Since then I have had nothing. There was neither tea nor bread in my rooms for breakfast. When the clock struck six, my dinner hour, I thought I would walk along the street and look at the things to eat which are placed in the shop windows.

That relieves a little. But to-morrow will be a bad time—a very bad time. I shall lie in bed. Oh! I have gone through it before. Sometimes'—he dropped his voice—'I have been sore tempted to take something—No—no; don't think I have given way. No—no. Why—I should be disbarred. Not yet—not yet.'

Elsie opened her purse. It contained two sovereigns and a shilling or two. 'Take all,' she said eagerly. 'Take all the gold, and leave me the silver. Take it instantly.' She stamped her foot.

He hesitated. 'All?' he asked. 'All? Can you spare it? I can never repay'—

'Take it!' she said again, imperiously.

He obeyed: he took the gold out of the purse with trembling fingers. Then he raised his rickety old hat—was that a tear that stole into his eyes, or the rheum of old age?—and slowly walked down the stairs, holding by the banisters. He was weak, poor wretch! with hunger. But it was his dinner hour, and he was going to have his dinner.

Elsie sat down again.

It was half-past six—she had been waiting for three hours—when other footsteps entered the house. Elsie sprang to her feet: she turned pale: her heart stood still; for now she realised that if this step was truly that of the man she expected, she was about to confront a person certainly of the deepest criminality, and possibly capable of villainy in any other direction. The steps mounted the stairs. I really think that the bravest persons in the world are those who before the event look forward to it with the utmost apprehension. They know, you see, what the dangers are. Elsie was going to face a great danger. She was going to find out, alone and unaided, who this man was, and why and how he worked these deeds of darkness.

The footsteps mounted higher: from the door to the top of the stairs it took but a single minute, yet to Elsie it seemed half an hour, so rapid were her thoughts. Then the man mounted the last flight of steps. Heavens! Elsie was fain to cry out for sheer amazement. She cried out: she caught at the banisters. For, before her, taking the key of Mr Edmund Gray's Chambers from his waistcoat pocket, was none other than Mr Dering himself!

Yes. An elderly man, of truly benevolent aspect, his coat open flying all abroad, his face soft, gracious, smiling, and full of sunshine, his hat just the least bit pushed back, his left hand in his pocket. Elsie thought again of her portrait at home, in which she had transformed her guardian—and here he was in the flesh—transformed according to her portrait!

She stared at him with an amazement that bereft her of speech and of motion. She could only stare. Even if her mother's voice were suddenly to call out to her that it is rude for little girls to stare, she could not choose but stare. For Mr Dering looked at her with that kind of surprise in his eyes which means, 'What have we here to do with beautiful young ladies?' There was not the least sign of any knowledge of her. He looked at her as one suffers the eyes to rest for a moment without interest upon a stranger and a casual passenger in the street.

He opened his outer door, and was about to

walk in, when she recovered some presence of mind—not much. She stepped forward. 'Can you tell me, please, how I could find Mr Edmund Gray?'

'Certainly,' he smiled—'nothing easier. I am Edmund Gray.'

'You!—you—Edmund Gray? Oh! No—no. You cannot be Edmund Gray—you yourself!' All her beautiful theory of hypnotic influence vanished. No mesmerism or magnetic influence at all. 'You yourself?' she repeated, 'you—Edmund Gray?'

'Assuredly. Why not? Why should a man not be himself?'

'Oh! I don't understand. The world is going upside down. I took you—took you for another person.'

He laughed gently. 'Truly, I am none other than Edmund Gray—always Edmund Gray. My first name I can never change if I wished, because it is my baptismal name. The latter I do not wish to change, because it is our name ancestral.'

'I asked because—because—I fancied a resemblance to another person. Were you ever told that you are much like a certain other person?'

'No; I think not. Resemblances, however, are extremely superficial. No two living creatures are alike. We are alone, each living out his life in the great Cosmos, quite alone—unlike any other living creature. However, I am Edmund Gray, young lady. It isn't often that I receive a visit from a young lady in these chambers. If you have no other doubt upon that point, will you let me ask you, once more, how I can help you? And will you come in and sit down?'

'Oh! it is wonderful,' she cried—'wonderful! most wonderful!' Again she controlled herself. 'Are you,' she asked again, 'the same Mr Edmund Gray who wrote the letter to the *Times* the other day?'

'Certainly. There is no other person, I believe, of the name in this Inn. Have you read that letter?'

'Yes—oh, yes.'

'And you have come here to talk to me about that letter?'

'Yes—yes.' She caught at the hint. 'That is why I came—to talk about that letter. I came in the hope of finding the author of that letter at home.'

He threw open the door of his sitting-room.

'Will you step in? We can talk quite quietly here. The Inn at this hour on Saturday is almost deserted.' He closed the outer door and followed his visitor into the sitting-room. 'This,' he went on, 'is the quietest place in the whole of London. We have not, in this Square, the stately elms of the old garden, but still we have our little advantages—spacious rooms—quiet always in the evening and on Sundays. A few rackets young men, perhaps; but for one who reads and meditates, no better place in London.—Now, young lady, take the easy-chair and sit down. We will talk. There are very few people who talk to me about my theories. That is because I am old, so that I have lost my friends, and because my views are in advance of the world. No man is so lonely as the man born before his time. He is the prophet, you know,

who must be stoned because he prophesies things unintelligible and therefore uncomfortable—even terrifying. I shall be very glad to talk a little with you.—Now, allow me first to open these letters.'

Elsie sat down and looked about her. She was in a large low wainscoted room, with two windows looking upon the Square. The room was quite plainly but quite well furnished. There was a good-sized study table with drawers: a small table between the windows: a few chairs, a couch and an easy-chair: and a large bookcase filled with books—books on Socialism, George had told her. A door opened upon a smaller room: there was probably a bedroom at the back. A plain carpet covered the floor. Above the high old-fashioned mantel were two or three portraits of Socialist leaders. The room, if everything had not been covered with dust, would have been coldly neat: the chairs were all in their places: the window-blinds were half-way down, as the laundress thought was proper—millions of Londoners always keep their blinds half-way down—a subject which must some day be investigated by the Folklore Society: the curtains were neatly looped: it wanted only a Bible on a table at a window to make it the Front Parlour of a Dalston Villa. There were no flowers, no ornaments of any kind.

Mr Edmund Gray opened half-a-dozen letters lying on his table and glanced at them. There were a great many more waiting to be opened.

'All are from people who have read my letter,' he said. 'They share with me in the new Faith of a new Humanity. Happy is the man who strikes the note of leading at the right moment. Happy he who lights the lamp just when the darkness is beginning to be felt.—Yes, young lady, you are not the only one who has been drawn towards the doctrines of that letter. But I have no time to write to all of them. A letter makes one convert—a paragraph may make a thousand.'

Elsie rose from her chair. She had decided on her line. You have heard that her voice was curiously soft and winning—a voice that charms—a voice which would soothe a wild creature, and fill a young man's heart with whatever passion she chose to awaken. She had, besides, those soft eyes which make men surrender their secrets, part with their power and their strength. Did she know that she possessed all this power?—the girl who had no experience save of one man's love, and that the most natural, easy, and unromantic love in the world, when two who are brought up side by side and see each other every day, presently catch each other by the hand and walk for the future hand in hand without a word. Yet Delilah herself, the experienced, the crafty, the trained and taught—could not—did not—act more cleverly and craftily than this artless damsel. To be sure, she possessed great advantages over Delilah in the matter of personal charm.

'Oh!' she murmured softly, 'it is a shame that you should be expected to waste your valuable time in writing letters to these people. You must not do it. Your time is wanted for the world, not for individuals.'

'It is,' he replied—'it is. You have said it.'

'You are a Master—a Leader—a Prince in Israel—a Preacher—a Prophet.'

'I am—I am. You have said it. I should not myself have dared to say it. But I am.'

'No one can doubt it who has read that letter. Be my Master—too—as well as the Master of—all these people who write to you.'

'Be your Master?' He blushed like a boy. 'Could I desire anything better?'

'My Father and my Master,' she added with a little change of colour. Girls take fright very easily, and perhaps this old gentleman might interpret the invitation—well—into something other than was meant.

'Yes—yes.' He held out his hand. She took it in her own—both her own soft hands, and bowed her head—her comely head—over it.

'I came to-day thinking only'—Oh Delilah!—'to thank you for your great and generous and noble words, which have put fresh heart into me. And now that I have thanked you, I am emboldened to ask a favour'—

'Anything, anything.'

'You will be my Master—you will teach me. Let me, in return, relieve you of this work.' She laid her hand on the pile of letters. Let me answer them for you. Let me be your Private Secretary. I have nothing to do. Let me work for you.' She looked into his face with the sweetest eyes and the most winning smile, and her voice warmed the old man's ear like soft music. Ah, Circe!—'Now that I have seen you—let me be your disciple, your most humble disciple, and'—Ah, Siren!—'let me be more, Edmund Gray—I cannot say Mr Gray—let me be more, Edmund Gray.' She laid her hand, her soft-gloved, dainty, delicate hand upon his, and it produced the effect of an electric battery gently handled. 'Let me be your Secretary.'

It was ten o'clock before Elsie reached home that evening, and she refused to tell them, even her own brother and her lover, where she had been or how she had spent her evening.

WHAT A TORPEDO BOAT IS LIKE.

ALTHOUGH it may safely be predicted that most of the excitement and romance of the next great naval war will be centred round the deeds of Torpedo Boats, it is curious that amongst most Englishmen the greatest ignorance exists as to the description and peculiarities of these 'wasps of the sea.' The fact of their being of such comparatively recent construction probably accounts for this, as the first torpedo boat ever built in this country was launched only so long ago as 1877. In that year an English mechanic had suddenly brought before the world, after years of anxious work and thought, the most terrible and wonderful weapon of naval warfare that had ever been invented, and in such a state of perfection that it disarmed all criticism. This weapon was the Whitehead torpedo, so named after its inventor. There had been several different kinds of torpedoes invented before this, but they were all of a very crude and unwieldy pattern. The Whitehead torpedo, on the contrary, was a marvel of mechanical construction.

It may be briefly described as being made of steel, about fourteen feet long, with a diameter of fourteen inches, and shaped like a cigar. In its nose, or pointed end, is contained the explosive; abaft this comes the air-chamber, containing the motive-power of the torpedo—namely, air compressed to a pressure of one thousand pounds to the square inch; abaft this, again, come the engines; then the chamber containing the apparatus for regulating the depth of the torpedo in the water; and astern of all, the two propellers for driving the weapon through the water.

The torpedo is fired or thrust out from a tube on the deck of the ship or torpedo boat, and immediately it touches the water, it adjusts itself to a depth of about ten feet, and makes a bee-line for the object aimed at. If it misses the enemy, a valve opens, and it sinks to the bottom beyond recovery, though this expensive contingency is avoided in peace-time. If it strikes a ship, however, the charge is exploded, and tears and rips the vessel's bottom right open; while the shock at the same time throws all her engines out of gear, and in fact cripples her completely, if indeed it does not send her to the bottom in a few minutes, as in the case of the *Blanco Encalada* last year. The latest development of this torpedo is a weapon eighteen inches in diameter, with a speed of thirty knots, and carrying two hundred pounds of gun-cotton!

Although the Whitehead torpedo was soon made part of the armament of every modern man-of-war, its advent also called into existence a class of vessel which was of a type entirely different from anything that had been seen afloat before. It was seen that the best way of using the torpedo effectually was to fire it from a vessel of great speed and small size, so that it might be brought all the more quickly into close range with the enemy; for it must be remembered that the aim of a torpedo becomes most uncertain at a greater distance than eight hundred yards; at the same time it was necessary at such close quarters that the vessel should offer as little target as possible to the enemy. The result of such a demand was the building of the class of vessels known now as torpedo boats.

The first torpedo boat ever launched was named the *Lightning*, built in 1877 by the firm of Messrs Thornycroft at Chiswick. Though only ninety feet long, her speed was nineteen knots, and this result was considered so remarkable that orders were given for several other boats of the same type. Russia and France lost little time in following suit. Since then the demand for greater length and higher speed has gone on increasing, and there seems no sign of the limit being reached as yet. The latest development is a boat built for the French Government with a length of one hundred and forty-seven feet, and a speed of twenty-six knots on the measured mile!

The full speed of the best English boats, however, does not show such a record as this, the highest obtained being only twenty-two and a half knots, a speed which is quite sufficient, however, for all likely purposes. There are two classes of torpedo boats in our navy—namely, first and second class, the latter being of a very small type, and mostly used for coast defence. The first-class boats, however, are meant for work at sea and for harassing an enemy's ports, and it is of a boat of this class, and of the life and surroundings of those on board her, that the following description is given.

'No. —, first-class torpedo boat,' was the name and style of the little craft which the writer commanded during last year's naval manœuvres. She was only a fairly modern type of torpedo boat, being built by the firm of Thornycroft in 1885, and could at a push work up to a speed of about eighteen knots. Although only sixty-five tons in weight, and one hundred and twenty-five feet in length, her engines were seven hundred and fifty horse-power, or nearly twelve horse-power to every ton, an enormous amount of energy to store up in such a small compass. One would imagine that to stand such a strain the boat would have to be built of very strong and rigid materials; yet she was only made of a mere skin of steel, less than a quarter of an inch thick, supported by light beams and frames of the same material. The deck, also of steel, was flush fore and aft, and would have made quite a decent promenade if it had not been so crowded up with gear and fittings. Right astern was perched the 'ship's boat,' a tiny little dingey, just about fit to carry one passenger and a crew of two men. Then came the 'quarter-deck,' the only decently clear space along the whole length of the deck; and before this, the after 'conning tower,' with a torpedo tube on each side of it; farther on, amidships, came the engine-room hatchways and the large raking funnel; and before the funnel, again, a Nordenfelt machine gun, and another conning tower and torpedo tubes. Aft the funnel also stood a large electric search-light projector, the light for which was supplied by a small dynamo, down on the lower deck. The two torpedoes which the boat carried were placed one in the forward pair of tubes, and one aft in one of the after pair. A small impulse charge of about four ounces of powder was all that was necessary to thrust the torpedo out of the tube into the water, the aiming being done by training the tube in the direction required. The fore-castle was comparatively clear; but little advantage could be derived from that fact, as once in a seaway the forepart of the boat was practically under water. It can easily be seen, therefore, that there was little room to stretch one's legs whilst at sea; but as a matter of fact there was quite enough to do in hanging on to the rails round the deck and preventing one's self from being pitched or rolled overboard.

Although the hull of the boat had but three feet of freeboard, there was far more room down below than would be imagined on looking at her from the outside.

The three officers—namely, captain, sub-lieutenant, and gunner—had a very decent little crib, consisting of a pantry and a neatly-fitted

and compact little 'wardroom'; the upholstered locker seats on each side of the table served the purpose of a couch for the night, for of course there was no such luxury as hammocks or beds on board; and the bed-clothes consisted of a thick warm 'duffle suit,' similar to that worn by the figures in the Arctic Show at the Naval Exhibition. The quarters for the crew of thirteen men forward were very roomy, too, considering the size of the boat; and the sleeping accommodation consisted of cork mattresses laid on the deck, with duffle suits also, to sleep in. The seats and mess tables were made to hinge back from the wall, so that they could be placed out of the way when not actually in use. Of course there were storerooms for provisions and other necessities; and taking the boat altogether, one might easily imagine on a fine day, when everything was dry and clean, that torpedo-boat life was not half a bad one.

So long as the sea is quite smooth and the weather warm this inference may be fairly true; but directly the wind gives a sign of freshening, or the sea begins to get the slightest bit rough, then indeed life on board a torpedo boat becomes a trying one with a vengeance. Men who have never known what sea-sickness is during all their life at sea get thoroughly 'turned up' with the awful motion and vibration. As the flying little craft cuts through the waves, a continual deluge of swirl and foam rushes over and along her deck from bow and stern; all the hatches are perforce screwed down, and those below have to exist on what little air gets down through the ventilators. Every few seconds the vessel's bow is caught by a wave, thrown up in the air high enough to take the keel out of water, and comes down with a smacking thud that almost threatens to rip her bottom right open. At times a bigger wave than the others will come toppling over and look as if it were going to overwhelm the little craft completely; but still she manages to come up again all right, only with the disadvantage, perhaps, of having the sea down the funnel and the furnace fires nearly out. Although the fittings of the boat are all fixed and made to stand a lot of knocking about, it is wonderful what a pandemonium the deck below soon becomes in bad weather. The wardroom table, although screwed firmly down to the deck, is shaken and wrenched from its fastenings, and ends by collapsing altogether; the little cooking-range forward suffers a like fate, and the cook has a merry time of it picking up a mixture of red-hot coals, pots and pans, and half-cooked eatables; or perhaps a thumping green sea smashes in the after-skylight, floods the cabin, and makes pea-soup of everything in the place. The men in the engine-room have to be very careful if they do not want to get uncomfortably mixed up with the machinery; but the men in the stoke-hole, curiously enough, are the best off in the boat; being amidships and down below, they experience the least motion, and it is fortunate they do, for stoking the fires of a torpedo boat under forced draught is difficult work, and decidedly trying in rough weather.

The boat during action is steered from inside the conning tower; but on other occasions the deck-wheel is used, as almost any amount of spray and cold weather is preferable to being

half suffocated below. A few days' life in a sea-going torpedo boat is enough to harden any man; and yet, in spite of its many hardships, there is no life more really liked by the officers and men of the navy. Its chief charm no doubt lies in the fact that it is what blue-jackets call a 'piratical life,' with none of the monotony of an ordinary man-of-war, but with every element of excitement and adventure; and whatever the warlike usefulness of torpedo boats may be, there can be no doubt that they are the best training-ships in the world for instilling into our sailors an enormous amount of energy and pluck.

JACK MOORE'S TEMPTATION.

CHAPTER II.

ONE day Jack made up his mind to pay a visit to Russell Square and beg his uncle's forgiveness for his past folly. After office hours he turned his face towards Bloomsbury with a lighter heart than he had known for many a day. But when he reached the familiar house, a board stared him in the face on which was inscribed, 'To Let.'

Jack's heart sank like lead. He was so utterly nonplussed by this unexpected rebuff, that he turned away without the idea occurring to him that it would be quite easy to go down to the office of Tredinnick & Morgan and ascertain his uncle's present address. The sight of the deserted house had bewildered him.

As he walked down Oxford Street, as ill-luck would have it, he met Harcourt, who greeted him with apparent heartiness, and invited him to dine with him at his club. Jack accepted the invitation mechanically; and the two friends jumped into a hansom, and were driven off to the delectable resort known as 'The Revellers.' It is unnecessary to record how the evening was spent. It resulted for Jack next morning in a racking headache, a dull feeling of remorse, and empty pockets. Worse still, he had given Harcourt his note of hand for fifty pounds, in order to pay his losses at cards to sundry 'Revellers' who demanded payment in cash.

Then the old dissipated life began again. Jack had the sense to keep his post at the Three Kingdoms Assurance Office, and to do his work there in a satisfactory manner. But his evenings were spent with Harcourt, who seemed to have regained all his former influence over him. Sometimes Jack thought of seeking out his uncle and confessing everything; but he always put off doing so under one pretext or other. Every quarter he received a cheque for twelve pounds ten, enclosed without a letter, though the envelope was always addressed in his uncle's small precise writing. And that was the only communication he had had from him for nearly two years.

Jack was rapidly growing morose and discontented. Harcourt began to get tired of his frequent fits of temper, and more than once showed him pretty plainly that he no longer cared for his society. Jack Moore, a humble clerk in the Three Kingdoms Assurance Office, was not quite

so desirable an acquaintance as Jack Moore, the reputed heir of old Edward Tredinnick, the wealthy merchant. And so, without any compunctious visitings of conscience as to his own share in Jack's misfortunes, Harcourt gradually dropped his former ally and pupil.

The process of being dropped is never a pleasant one, especially when the person undergoing it is conscious that, by rights, their relative positions should be reversed. Jack soon saw what Harcourt was at; and then he realised what a fool he had been to quarrel with his kind old uncle for the sake of such a broken reed as his quondam Mentor.

By the exercise of a great deal of self-denial, he contrived to pay Harcourt the money he owed him. But he still shrank from making any appeal for pecuniary assistance to his uncle, or from taking any steps to bring about a more satisfactory state of things between them. He bitterly resented the apparent harshness with which he had been treated, and the callous indifference which had condemned him to complete banishment from his old home.

Jack's character was undergoing a hardening process, which might have had most unfortunate results, but for a seemingly trivial incident that brought a new interest into his life. In fine weather he usually walked down to his office; but on wet days he indulged in the luxury of an omnibus. One cold and rainy morning in October, Jack started for the City in a mood as dismal as the weather; the omnibuses were crowded, but after some difficulty he secured a seat. Hurrying into the vehicle, he squeezed himself into one of the farther corners; next to him was a preternaturally stout woman, burdened with a big parcel, a baby, and an umbrella that would not have disgraced Mrs Gamp herself. Facing him was a young girl, with a pale oval face, a great deal of ruddy-brown hair, and a pair of the loveliest gray eyes he had ever seen. She was very neatly and simply dressed; her manner was characterised by a certain quiet self-reliance and self-possession, though she was apparently quite young, certainly not more than twenty. Somehow, the sight of the girl's gentle serene countenance made Jack forget the jolting omnibus, the muddy streets, the soaking rain, and the uncomfortable propinquity of his neighbour's Brobdingnagian umbrella. It was impossible to be ill-tempered and discontented when this delicate girl bore the discomfort of her surroundings with such sweet serenity.

She was probably a governess or a lady-clerk, he decided, forced to brave all weathers. For the first time in his life, Jack thoroughly appreciated the excellence of an omnibus as a place for the study of the human face divine. It is not an easy thing to watch one's *vis-à-vis* without seeming to stare rudely, and perhaps Jack would not have accomplished the feat had not the young lady produced a book from the black bag she carried, and immersed herself in it so deeply that she seemed quite oblivious of his scrutiny.

But by the time the Strand was reached the young lady's self-possession was completely upset. When the conductor called out 'All fares,' she put her hand in her pocket, then searched hurriedly in her bag. The colour flooded her cheeks, and her hands shook nervously as she

again turned over the contents of her bag. Then she looked up and met Jack's eyes.

'You have left your purse at home?' he said with a smile.

'Yes—I am afraid so.'

Instantly the necessary pence were handed by Jack to the conductor. Waterloo Station was the young lady's destination.

'Fortunately, I always carry my season ticket in my bag, or I should be obliged to go back home, and then I should miss my train,' she said naively when she had thanked Jack for his courtesy.

In her hurried search for her purse the book she had been reading had slipped from her lap and fallen face downwards on the floor of the omnibus. Jack stooped to pick it up; there was an inscription on the fly-leaf, at which he could not refrain from glancing quickly: 'Mirah Lester;' then followed a date, which he had not time to read.

Just then the omnibus stopped at the corner of Wellington Street. Jack handed the volume to its owner, who, with a bright smile and a hasty 'Thank you,' got out, and was soon lost in the crowd.

The whole affair had not occupied more than five minutes; but as the omnibus rumbled on down Fleet Street and up Ludgate Hill, Jack's thoughts were turned into a new and delightful channel, and he blessed the happy chance which had caused him to enter that particular vehicle.

'Mirah Lester—what a pretty name! It suits the owner. Wonder who she is and where the season ticket carries her?' he soliloquised mentally. 'I suppose she travels down from Waterloo every day. Wonder if I shall ever meet her again?'

Several weeks passed, but Jack did not see the young lady with the gray eyes, though he never failed to look out for her on his way down to the City. He purposely travelled daily by omnibus, in the hope of having her for a fellow-traveller. On one occasion he fancied he caught a glimpse of her at Oxford Circus; but the slight figure vanished before he could ascertain its identity.

Had he not been obliged to be at his office punctually at ten o'clock, it is possible that he might have hung about the Waterloo terminus, and ascertained for what station on the South-western line Mirah Lester was daily bound. He did so after office hours; but his quest was vain. In all probability she returned to town earlier or much later in the afternoon. The difficulties he experienced only added to the interest he felt in her; and the constant watching for a glimpse of the sweet face that had so deeply impressed him with a certainty of the goodness and innocence of its owner, diverted his thoughts from brooding over his own grievances and wrongs.

There was still, however, a latent smouldering of anger in his breast when he thought of his uncle. He considered that he had been treated badly, and he was as determined as ever not to make any advances towards him.

'He bade me leave his house. If he wishes to see me, he will send for me,' he thought sullenly.

One morning he found a letter on his break-

fast table, at sight of which his smouldering wrath momentarily blazed up. 'The quarterly cheque sent without a word—flung at me, like a bone to a dog!' he said, taking up the letter and scrutinising the superscription.

On looking at it more closely, he fancied the handwriting was less clear and distinct than formerly. Keeping the letter still unopened in his hand, he continued to scan the address with knitted brows. 'The old fellow is as hard as flint,' he muttered. 'In two years he has not made a single attempt to see me or to make any effort to win me back. I wonder how he can reconcile it to his conscience to treat me with such contemptuous indifference.' Then he glanced moodily at the letter in his hand. 'I have half a mind to throw this in the fire,' he said aloud. 'Wonder if he would take any notice if the cheque was never presented for payment? Wonder if he would think me dead? Wonder if he would care?'

He moved a step or two nearer the fire, burning dully in the narrow grate. Just then a German band in the street below struck up a merry *Volkslied*. Jack paused to listen. The gay, lilting air was surely very familiar to him. He began to seek in his memory for the association connected with it. And then there suddenly flashed on his mind a scene of his early childhood: his young mother, with a smile on her pretty, winsome face, bribing him with the promise of a song to be good and not cry when Uncle Tredinnick asked him to kiss him. The song she had sung had been that very *Volkslied* the street band was then playing under his window. The sullen look died out of Jack's eyes.

'Poor old boy!' he muttered, looking at the unopened envelope. 'I won't burn the cheque; perhaps he has written a line or two this time.'

As the music floated up through the murky air, he at last tore open the envelope. It contained a letter, but no cheque. The letter began 'DEAR JACK;' but when he had read it through, a look of perplexity came into his face; then the blood rushed to his cheeks and the hand holding the letter began to shake violently. He read it a second and a third time, and then he thoroughly understood what had happened. The letter ran as follows:

THE BAY TREES, WIMBLEDON, Nov. 17, 188-.

DEAR JACK—The change of residence, necessitated by my weakened health, has not had the beneficial result I anticipated. During the last few days I have had various unfavourable symptoms, which make me fear that my time in this world will be short. I therefore think it is my duty to set my house in order.

Please draw up a Will as follows: £1000 each to the various London Hospitals; an annuity of £50 to my faithful servant Jedidiah Thrupp; £1000 to be invested in Consols in the name of my nephew, John Tredinnick Moore, the interest to be paid to him, by you, quarterly. The residue of my property, real and personal, to be left in trust to my friends, James Heritage, clerk in Holy Orders; and Philip Morgan of Arnitt Hall, Beckenham, Kent. This trust-money I desire them to employ in founding a College for the Higher Education of deserving Young Men of

the Working-classes, who shall be nominated by the various School Boards of the United Kingdom. The candidates will be required to pass a competitive examination, conducted by eight Professors of the London University.

Kindly follow these instructions, and bring the Will to my house to-morrow afternoon. I am anxious to get it signed without delay.—Yours sincerely,
EDWARD TREDINNICK.

JOHN POUNCEMORE, Esq.,
Lincoln's Inn Fields.

For at least five minutes Jack sat motionless, his hands interlaced and resting on the letter, which he had spread out on his knees; his eyes staring at the line of gray sky visible above the tops of the opposite houses. 'So that is what it means,' he said at last under his breath; 'I am to be practically disinherited.' Then he held out the sheet of paper at arm's length and read it slowly through again from beginning to end. 'Higher Education of deserving Young Men of the Working-classes—indeed,' he exclaimed indignantly; 'and I am cut off with a paltry thousand! A nice way to treat your sole surviving relation, Uncle Tredinnick, upon my word! A thousand pounds! The old skinflint! Even Thrupp, the butler, comes off better than I. Too bad! Yes, I'm shot if it isn't too bad!'

He rose from his chair, took two or three turns up and down the room, gazed savagely out at the leaden clouds, through which a pale sun tried to force its way, made an irritable snatch at the blind with a grumbling remark about the 'glare,' and dragged it half-way down the sash. Then he glanced with disgust at the fried bacon, the rolls and coffee, his landlady had set on the table. The perusal of his uncle's letter had effectually destroyed his appetite. He threw himself again into his chair with the open letter in his hand. The envelope had fallen to the ground; he picked it up and read the address. 'Put the letter into the wrong cover—he wouldn't have made such a mistake two years ago,' he meditated. 'Hints in his letter that he is breaking up. Shouldn't wonder if he is—and serve him right for treating me so badly.'

Then Jack's face grew very pale; he clenched his teeth, and a sudden light came into his eyes. An evil thought had that moment darted into his brain. Why should he send on the letter to old Pouncemore? If his uncle misdirected his envelopes, that was no business of his!

Underlying this thought was another, embodying a most subtle temptation. His uncle was ill, so ill, perhaps, that by the time it was discovered that the letter to Pouncemore had miscarried, he might be incapable of giving instructions for drawing up a will. If he died intestate, Jack, as his next of kin, would succeed to the whole of his uncle's fortune. And, argued the tempter, was not he the only son of old Tredinnick's only sister, and had he not therefore a better right to his uncle's wealth than a set of unknown deserving young men of the working-classes?

Two red spots began to burn in Jack's pale cheeks, and his eyes shone feverishly as he thus dallied with the specious temptation. Then he tried to make terms with his better self. If he did evil by suppressing the letter, he would do

good by bestowing certain gifts to the charities enumerated by his uncle. He would use his wealth worthily. He would turn his back for ever on Harcourt and his dissipated friends. He would begin life over again.

Then he pictured what sort of existence would be his if that unjust will were made and signed, and if his uncle died without revoking or destroying it. He would have the interest of one thousand pounds, and the one pound a week he earned at the office of the Three Kingdoms Life Assurance, to live on, with little prospect of bettering his position. What a life of sordid drudgery awaited him! Surely it was not right that his uncle should be so unforgiving as to carry his resentment beyond the grave! And, reasoned the tempter, was it not by a direct interposition of Providence that the letter had come into his hands? Why should he interfere with its decrees? He had only to remain passive, and things would right themselves. But for a sentimental memory invoked by a gay strain of music, he would have thrown the letter unopened into the fire, and there would have been an end of it. He wished he had. His conscience would not then have been troubled by any tiresome doubts. He wished he had destroyed the letter unread.

Then he thought of his mother, of her hatred of untruth, of the prayers she had taught him, of the songs she had sung as lullabies in winter firelights and summer gloamings. What would she have thought of this contemplated baseness of his? And yet—was he not her only son—was he not old Tredinnick's nephew? Who could have a better right to his fortune! He looked at the letter and then at the fire. One movement of his hand, and the letter would be as if it had never been written.

Just then the clock on the mantel-piece struck half-past nine. He would be late at his office; he must take an omnibus though the morning was fine. He smiled bitterly as he thought of the small economies and cheese-parings of his life. His uncle's fortune amounted to fully sixty thousand pounds. All that money might be his if he just omitted to send on a misdirected letter!

ST OLAF'S DAY IN THE FAROES.

ST OLAF'S Day, the 29th of July, is a very great day indeed in Thorshavn, the capital of the Faroes. That very remote little town, of about twelve hundred inhabitants, cannot be said at any time to be remarkable for its liveliness; but such diversion as it can offer to the stranger seems all compressed into the sixteen or eighteen hours of daylight on this most festive of anniversaries.

It is a day of responsibility for the Governor of the islands, who ordinarily has little enough to do, and whose somewhat frigid drawing-room does not receive many visitors of the diplomatic or aught other kind. He has to represent His Majesty King Christian, and, with a certain amount of state, open the Lagthing, or local House of Parliament. He has also, in the evening, to preside at the traditional banquet, over the claret of which the esteemed members of the Lagthing

become almost indecorously noisy as the speeches proceed and the number of empty bottles increases. Nor does this end the day. For after the procession to church, the opening of Parliament, the afternoon receptions, and the evening feast, there is further a famous dance in one of the Thorshavn rooms, and the populace will think it kind of him if he will squeeze into their midst and perspire with them for a few minutes. This last is the worst ordeal of all. But even in humdrum Faroe it is well for the representative of royalty to be as democratic as his temperament will permit. Here are no cables with the mainland to keep the Faroese posted in the movements of the Reds and the Labour struggles. For all that, the islanders are sufficiently intelligent to know that the days of Harold the Fairhaired are long past, and that every man is nearly as good as every other man.

Almost from daybreak the little harbour of Thorshavn (Thor's port) assumes gala dress on this great festival. The gunboat which may chance to have called at the Faroes on its way from Greenland to Copenhagen is gay with bunting, and fires a gun periodically. The two or three Norwegian barques here for codfish, and the green-hulled Spanish ship in the North seas for the same purpose, pay the like tribute of bunting to the saint of the day; and anon send their men ashore to drink cheap wines and smoke cheap cigars with the rest of the world. But these are trivial manifestations compared with the excitement of the arrival of one boatload of people after another from the other islands. It is no joke facing the currents and squalls of the Faroe seas; but the Faroese are not to be deterred from their annual revel by any terrors of this kind. They come in their best clothes, with clean red-and-black mob caps on their heads—blue-and-black if they are in mourning—and attended by a swarm of their blue-eyed, flax-haired female relatives of all ages. And they are greeted in Thorshavn by their kindred with the utmost warmth; and all day long they are free to eat cake, drink wine, and smoke cigars in honour of the saint, King Christian, and the blood-ties that make hospitality a duty as well as a pleasurable privilege.

Every one who can attends church in the morning, and listens with interest to the patriotic oration which it behoves the Dean of the Isles to deliver from the pulpit. His Excellency the Governor, with cocked-hat and gold lace and sword, sits by the altar, and bows a great many times during the service; and afterwards he shakes hands with the Dean, and having—as it seems—whispered word of the evening banquet, at which the ecclesiastic must by no means forget to be present, he marches down the aisle, followed by the Sheriff, the Sysselman, and the other principal members of this island community of about eleven thousand individuals. The organ peals, the little pigtailed damsels from outlying islets stare wonderingly, and the more irreverent of the Thorshavn boys follow the great folks until they have dispersed each one to his own house, to recruit and prepare for the parliamentary ordeal to ensue in an hour or two.

This second stage in the day's proceedings is quite diverting. Among the thirty or forty mem-

bers of Parliament present, some are sure to be new, not only to senatorial work, but perhaps also even to such metropolitan magnificence as little Thorshavn can offer them. They are stiff big-boned fellows, and they have not changed their usual homespun serge for anything like a black coat. They are embarrassed by their hands and feet; and much embarrassed by the gaze of their more veteran comrades, some of whom are not above being cynical in a mild way at their expense. They even seem to envy the usher—in untanned cowskin moccasins—who directs them into their places with so fine an air of easy authority. One knows as well as if their minds were laid bare to the world, that they are longing to be back in their snug little farms, among the hay and the litter of codfish heads which tell so eloquently of the fine catch of yesterday in the fiord hard by.

Parliament House itself is not, however, a building that ought to appal them. They probably have barns at home quite as large, if less lofty, and provided with fewer windows. It is only some fifteen paces in length by about five in width; and for furniture it contains nothing more striking than a tall old clock, a bust of the king, and a horseshoe table neatly set out with inkpots, pens, blotting-paper, and Reports of the work of the previous session. They themselves give animation to the room; and so do the two or three dozen members of the commonalty who take places in the gallery allotted for the public.

On this the opening day no routine work has to be done, unless the methodical handshaking with the Governor and the 'Hip! hip!' of patriotic joy at mention of King Christian's name may be so regarded. Still the session lasts some little time. Papers have to be signed—a lengthy business for some of the members, who are evidently not at home with their pens. Senatorial gossip warms their hearts, and sets the more modest of them somewhat at their ease. One does not doubt their chatter is of no exalted kind. It is talk about oxen and crops and codfish catches. No matter. The bust of the king dignifies it; and so, when the sitting is dissolved, every one moves cheerfully, as if possessed by the pleasing consciousness that he has done his duty, both as a citizen and a member of the Lagthing.

Once again on the edge of the moor—purple with heath—it is well to return to the town and see how the honest Faroese are enjoying themselves. A few of them are perhaps by this time a little tipsy, even thus early in the day. But Thorshavn is a free port; wines and spirits are so cheap, and St Olaf's feast is such an important one, that the islanders cannot altogether restrain themselves. The calls of hospitality, too, are distinctly onerous. The man from Kalsoe—that rugged northern isle—has a score of friends in the capital. He sees them perhaps twice a year, perhaps only on the 29th of July. Shall he chill their affection for him by refusing to drink with them? He cannot be so churlish; and it is these constant 'skalds' that make him a little hilarious ere two o'clock. His wife, good soul, laughs joyously at his predicament. She would think less well of him if he carried a demure,

chilling face with him wherever he made his calls. Such are the simple habits of the Faroese.

For centuries it has been the custom in Faroe thus to make the most of St Olaf's Day. An old island writer reminds us of it: 'When the Thing [or Lagthing] business was over, the evening was given up to recreation or familiar intercourse; the bards stood forth and sang ballads about the chief events of long-distant and recent times. Men who seldom met now disclosed their minds to each other. Buying and selling were stopped, and gave place to other engagements. The young men on this occasion made acquaintance with the maidens who attended their fathers or near relatives, and many a one journeyed to the Thing to get a bride, or returned therefrom as a bridegroom.'

It is interesting in the light of this reading to mark the processions of girls and youths on the rugged little roads which stretch for a mile or so outside the town. They are exceedingly vivacious, and the blue eyes of the chubby damsels sparkle with latent or evident coquettishness. The lads follow with less alacrity. They have not studied courtship as a fine art. They are rather perplexed, indeed, between the sense that as suitors they are not playing the part that best becomes them, and that sweet instinct of yearning which will not allow them to turn their backs upon the girls and betake themselves to some more active and manly form of exercise. Thus they are led up and down among the basalt blocks and heather of the suburbs, and perhaps as far as the great waterfall at the foot of the mountains where they rise towards the ancient ecclesiastical settlement of Kirkebo. They resolve to atone for this futile dalliance later in the evening, when the great ball opens.

Of the parliamentary banquet towards eight o'clock much of a serio-comic kind might be written. It takes place in the room under the Senate Chamber. Great is the concourse of candles and dishes and bottles; and while the members, with the few privileged guests, stand talking together outside in the cool air, they see the pasties and cakes and things carried past them from the town into the banquet-room. It is essentially a speech-dinner. The Governor proposes 'the King' almost as soon as the first pie is passed round; and no time is lost in following up one toast with another. This circulates the claret rapidly. Sandwiches of ham and beef and cheese follow the pie; then buttered biscuits and sweet cakes. These last are a feature of the repast. They stand about the tables tall and ornate with sugary decorative work, like so many bridecakes. Nor can it be denied that they taste very good—although the hypercritical stranger may be oppressed with grim fancies that whale oil is one of their constituent parts instead of butter. Indeed, they prove so attractive to the banqueters that the temptation to pocket sections of them is irresistible to more than one member of Parliament, who doubtless wishes to share his pleasure with those little round-faced effigies of himself which consecrate his farm a score or so of miles away. But the Governor condones this larceny, even as he condones the condition of certain other members long ere the feast is ended. He may not think much of the civilisation of the Faroese. Yet he knows that Den-

mark has relatively few colonies, and that in his application for removal from this little archipelago he may, for aught he can tell, be sentencing himself to Greenland or Iceland, both even more distant from Copenhagen than the bleak stone residence above the Bay of Thorshavn. St Olaf's Day, like Christmas, comes but once a year; some license may therefore be permitted to accompany it.

Throughout the feast there is a constant ripple of speeches. One gentleman after another rises to say something, to flourish his wine-glass, nod enthusiastically to his particular friends, and finally collapse upon his chair, exhausted by the oratorical strain, or pulled thither by his neighbours, who conceive that he has said as much as becomes him. For the Church, of course the Prost or Dean responds. He is one of the handsomest men in Faroe, with a demeanour almost regal; and exceedingly well suited to him is the white neck frill of office, which recalls the Elizabethan ruffs in England. Law and medicine, too, each have to be answered for. The doctor probably makes a jest about 'la grippe,' which in one form or another—notably as the Kruim, or epidemic of colds, which seems a characteristic of spring and the arrival of strangers here, as in St Kilda—often afflicts little Faroe, though it does not seem to be a very fatal scourge. As for the law, it cannot be said to flourish in the archipelago. An island community of this kind, where most people are cousins to each other, and the tenures of property are of a simple nature, is a bad field for litigation. Still, for the sake of effect, there are two or three advocates in the isles, though they no doubt sigh for the animation and clients of Copenhagen with all their heart.

If a stranger be present, his own health will in all probability be drunk, and he may be toasted in French. Of the assembled members of Parliament naturally not one in ten understands anything of the language of Molière. It is an accomplishment that pertains to those only who have lived their student days in the Danish capital. Nor do they claim to be very expert in it. There is not much intercourse with France up here. The claret and cognac in the Thorshavn stores do not necessarily come direct from Bordeaux in French bottoms. Only once in a way a warship flying the tricolour looks in at Thorshavn after a spell off the Iceland fishing-banks, where she has been dallying for a number of weeks to protect the interests of the French fishers for cod.

At length, however, there is a general rise from table; and the Scandinavian tournament of hand-shaking begins. This is a most laborious affair for a man unused to the exercise. It behoves a person to touch palm with every one present, after which only is he free to go his way with a clear conscience. As some of the guests are by this time 'merry,' it is a lengthy business to part from them. Their friends do their best to enable them to make a pretence of dignity during the last few minutes of the official day; but one wonders how they will be got home through the darkness outside and up and down the miry rough alleys which are Thorshavn's apologies for streets.

From the banquet-room to the ballroom is a

very proper transition for the more enterprising of the feasters. The room is hired by subscription. It is not waxed, nor is it decorated with aught except oil lamps. One steers for it by the heavy sound of many feet on the boards. At the entrance the Thorshavn children stand in a crowd, gazing with admiration at the shadowy procession of men and maids at the upper windows. They are not old enough to be admitted. We others, however, are able to please ourselves; and so, with considerable effort, we squeeze into the midst of the mass of hot Faroe folk, whose faces are streaming with perspiration. There is not much to learn in a Faroe national dance. We do no wrong, therefore, to the symmetry of the dance by joining hands in one of the circles which exist as best they can in so close a compass. The fiddle squeaks, and from men and maids goes forth a low song, while their feet begin to move. The circle tries to rotate. It does not succeed very well, but still the song continues. The words of the song are old Faroese—a language that has no grammar, and which rarely gets printed. 'Love-nonsense' of course is the foundation upon which they are built. And in the pressure of hands during this solemn pretence of a dance, and in the tender glances between one red face and another, one discerns more 'love-nonsense.'

Adjacent to this big room, in which the fishermen and girls find their pleasure, is another smaller one, where the daughters of the officials and others dance politer dances with the students of law, medicine, and theology home for the holidays, and with the sons of the more considerable towns-people. The fun here is of a milder kind. But here, as well as in the big room, the sport lasts for hours after the members of Parliament have been led to their beds by their devoted wives. Indeed, St Olaf's Day is past and over ere the dance in honour of it is at an end.

It was in the year 1024 that Olaf the Holy was acknowledged king in Faroe. Every 29th of July ought to recall to Faroese minds this sacrifice of the island independence nearly nine centuries ago. As a matter of fact, the day is one of mere enjoyment, quite unattended with patriotic pangs of any kind.

THE ISLAND OF THE DEAD.

A WEST-AFRICAN ADVENTURE.

BY DAVID KER.

'MISTARE KER, now sall ve give you sometings to write to your papere. This day you come vid me up de rivare, you zee von island vere live all de dead men in dis countree!'

So spoke a hospitable Dutch trader on the 'Ivory Coast,' who had sheltered us ever since a huge wave dashed up on to the beach at his very door, six days earlier, the water-logged boats in which Mrs Ker and I and our fellow-passengers were escaping from our sinking ship. He and his partner—the only white men in the whole district—had treated us with the utmost kindness, at great inconvenience to themselves; and he was now about to make a journey of several miles up the Cestos River—at the mouth of which we had

been cast away—solely to obtain a fresh supply of food for us from Jenor-Flan, one of the half-dozen black 'kings' of the neighbourhood.

Despite the flagrant 'bull' with which good Mynheer Evert's speech ended, it was abundantly impressive; for the chance of seeing a real native burial-place in this wild region—which was what I supposed 'the island where dead men live' to be—was not to be thrown away. I agreed at once, and we set off that very afternoon.

Not the least difficult part of the voyage is the getting into our boat to begin it; for in West Africa, as on the Upper Nile, a 'landing-place' means simply a wide waste of thick brownish-black mud, in all stages of unsoundness, from the unsubstantial beauty of treacle to the sturdy compactness of Welsh-rabbit. Through this delectable stuff you are carried pickaback by a stalwart native; and should your bearer slip or stumble, you are likely to realise in all its terrible fullness the story of the Irishman who came shouting into a village to seek help for his master, who was 'up to the ankles in a bog.' 'If he's no deeper than that,' said a man, 'he can surely get out by himself.' 'Yis,' cried Paddy; 'but he wint in head first!'

In this new character of 'public burdens,' we have a rather awkward embarkation. Our worthy Mynheer's long gaunt limbs, struggling in the clutch of a powerful black, suggest a negro Lao-coön fighting two remarkably active snakes; and our brawny Scotch engineer, borne with difficulty by two men together through the shallow lagoon, looks somewhat wrathful when I hint that he would make an excellent illustration of Tennyson's famous couplet:

Broad-based upon the people's will,
And compassed by th' inviolate sea.

But all is at length ready, and, propelled by six stalwart Kroomen—who are attired in a uniform consisting chiefly of two brass rings and a leopard's tooth—we soon lose sight of the little trading hut, perched on a bush-clad neck of land between the river and the sea.

And now, in one instant, the gloomy horror of the dreariest place on earth—the mouth of an African river—falls around us like a pall. Look which way we will, nothing is to be seen but the black shadowy masses of the leathery mangroves, thrusting themselves out over the thick, foul, slimy water; while through the dark leaves that coil around each other like writhing snakes, the rank white fever-mist creeps sullenly upward, like a breath of pestilence sent forth from the jaws of Death himself. Ever and anon, the swirl of the eddies in the wake of our boat leaves bare a broad flat mudbank, into the black, glistening surface of which the gaunt, white, claw-like mangrove roots dig themselves hungrily, as if sucking their vampire nourishment from the fathomless depth of slimy rottenness below.

But more gloomy by far than all the outward hideousness of this evil place is its sinister, tomb-

like silence. No sight, no sound of life breaks the horrible and unnatural repose of this ghastly maze of distorted vegetation, which realises grimly that awful forest seen by Dante in the regions of the dead, every tree of which was an agonised human form, writhing in torture as the merciless beaks of the harpies tore its living boughs. The desolation of untamed abundance—worse a thousand-fold than that so-called 'desolation' of barrenness which I have seen in the depths of the Sahara and the great Tartar deserts—is around us in all its terrors.

About a mile and a half up the river, we pass a projecting sand-spit on our right, upon which the riven trunk of a huge tree, white and blasted and dead, stands gauntly up against the dark background of thickets.

'This reminds me of "Demon's Point," on the Lower Gambia,' said I, 'where there is a blasted tree standing out into the stream, just like this one; and the negroes, whenever they pass it, throw food and other things into the water as an offering to the evil spirits. This place seems to produce a similar effect upon the nerves of your bold mariners here, Mynheer.'

In fact, our native boatmen—ordinarily as brave fellows as ever faced a lion or a crocodile—were now beginning to show visible signs of terror, which Mynheer Everts explained by telling me in a whisper that we were now nearing the Island of the Dead. Such an announcement, made amid the voiceless gloom of a region that seemed given over to death and decay, could scarcely be heard without some emotion, even by those who were proof against the superstitious terrors of the savages around us. None of us could tell what we might be about to see; and I, remembering the hundred human skulls which I had found piled up in the king of Bonny's 'fetich-house,' felt more excited than I would have cared to own when, a few minutes later, we turned suddenly to the right just at the point where this gloomy stream was widened by the junction of a smaller river, and glided beneath a curtain of overhanging boughs, which, amid the cheerless twilight that filled this world of shadows, looked weirdly like skeleton hands outstretched to seize us.

And now the dreaded spot lay before us at last—a small, irregular mass of bare rock, cut off on every side by the sullen waters from the living world of men. At all points but one it was hopelessly steep and slippery; but close to where we had halted, a low, flat ledge of rock offered a convenient landing-place, and here I swung myself ashore by the overarching branches, Mynheer Everts cautioning me in an undertone, as I did so, not to remain so long as to offend the prejudices of the superstitious savages beside us, who were already beginning to seem rather restive at what must have appeared to them a most daring and wanton impiety.

Scrambling over three or four rugged and slippery boulders, I came suddenly upon a tableau, which, with its strange mingling of grotesqueness and horror, would have made a worthy study for Doré or Vereshtchagin. Before me lay a deep, narrow hollow, not unlike a grave itself, in which, just where the goblin shadows of the distorted trees overhead fell deepest and blackest, stood two rude wooden cases, partly covered with those

coarse striped cloths familiar to all who have been on the 'Kroo Coast.' What the ghastly contents of these strange caskets might be, was not hard to guess; but, as if to place the matter beyond a doubt, there lay strewn around them a number of human skulls and bones, white and sapless—for in this fearful place there was not even earth enough to hide the dead, and their corpses were left uncovered beneath the open sky, to moulder slowly away.

After what I had already seen of African customs, I needed no one to tell me that the scattered bones were those of slaves who had been slaughtered beside the corpses of their chiefs, in accordance with that grim and seemingly world-wide superstition which, in the Far West, once buried the Indian chief's war-horse in his master's grave, and, in the Far East, consumed the Hindu widow on her husband's funeral pile.

But with the black horror of a scene that might have matched the weirdest fancies of Nathaniel Hawthorne or Nikolai Gogol was grotesquely mingled an alloy of coarse and farcical absurdity. All around the fatal spot, the rocks were thickly strewn with potsherds, old hats, broken clay pipes, fragments of bottles and dishes, snapped knife-blades, tin pans, and greasy shreds of clothing, with which the bones of the murdered slaves were hideously intermingled; for, according to the childish superstition of the African savage, the slaying of a chief's retainers on his tomb, and the destroying there of all the articles which he used when in life, will send the ghosts of the slaves to serve their master with pipe and cup in the world of spirits as in that of men.

Even this dismal den, however, is not wholly unredeemed. Over the miserable wrecks of mortality that lie strewn around it, the graceful syringa has twined lovingly its bright and tender blossoms, combating with its rich fragrance the foul reek of corruption—a mute but eloquent parable of how, amid the worst decay and degradation of man, spring up inexhaustibly the love and mercy of God.

And so I have seen all, and may depart. In truth, it is full time; for so overpowering is the hot, stifling air sent forth from this place of death, that even my experience of Eastern plague-hospitals cannot enable me to bear up against it. But, in the hurry to get away from it, I make more haste than good speed; for my foot slips as I leap from one boulder to another, and I narrowly escape following down into the river a huge stone dislodged by my stumble. At the splash, an answering ripple breaks the oily surface, and up through the thick sullen waters starts ghost-like—a fit sentinel indeed for this ghastly spot—the horny snout, flat ugly head, grinning fangs, and broad, scaly, mud-plastered back, of a gigantic crocodile!

At sight of their favourite game, our stalwart Kroomen, shaking off in a moment the nightmare influence of the dreaded island, break the tomb-like silence with a joyful clamour, and make a snatch at their knives and muskets, as if meaning to attack the monster forthwith. But the river-pirate, finding himself balked of his expected prey, gives a vicious snap of his mighty jaws, and, turning himself round with one powerful sweep of his huge notched tail, vanishes spec-

trally into the gloomy depths below, while I scramble back into the boat again, having learned in those few minutes how even death itself can be made at once frightful and ridiculous.

NOT GENERALLY KNOWN.

EACH time we reach the end of December, we should think with satisfaction that we have got over the most dangerous month, since in this country more deaths are said to occur in December than at any other time of the year. A subject for serious reflection is it that thirty-five millions of people die every year—few of these from old age. In a doctor's opinion, nearly as many people shorten their career by over-eating as from excessive drinking; while in England alone three hundred persons are annually cut off through accidental poisoning.

It seems that we have the choice of two hundred and seventy religions in the United Kingdom; and our taste for sensational novels is shown when thirty per cent. of books published belong to that class. Some of the busiest steel pens of the three and a half millions said to be daily used all over the world are wielded by the fictionists.

In this country, it appears, we have one horse for every twelve persons, and only an average of four hours of daily sunshine in which to ride or walk. A celebrated *aéronaut* asserts, after patient investigation, that the ninth day of the moon is the most rainy of the whole twenty-eight, and four o'clock in the afternoon the rainiest hour of the day.

It may not be generally known that four men in every six use tobacco; yet a medical man in Vienna asserts that diphtheria is thrice as prevalent amongst smokers as those who deny themselves the luxury of the weed.

We are told that children's hair grows more quickly than that of adults. Some say that light-haired people are longer lived than their brethren with dark locks, which is not so consoling to the latter, since more than half of the inhabitants of this country have dark-brown hair.

As a rule, women require one hour of sleep more a day than men. Fewer of the latter reach the age of fifty than the former, but afterwards the sterner sex has the best of it. It has also been found that single women live longer than single men, while married women on an average live two years longer than single ones. A woman's chance of getting married is calculated to be only two and a half per cent. when she reaches her fortieth year. As there are still more men than women in the United States, more of the fair sex should emigrate; as it is, four men emigrate to three women. There is said to be only one sudden death amongst women to eight amongst men. A medical man tells us that the habit among women of biting off the thread when sewing is the chief cause of blood-poisoning. It seems that twenty-five per cent. of the women of this country earn their own living; but one would scarcely believe that there are nearly three hundred and fifty female blacksmiths in England, which, however, sounds no

stranger than the statement that women may now be seen driving cabs in New York.

Few blue-eyed people are said to be colour-blind, and we are told that women as a rule have better eyesight than men; but, on the other hand, three women have false teeth to every two men that wear them. This, we take it, is owing to their greater regard for personal appearance, than that the fair sex is more dentally deficient than their admirers. It is not without interest to note that not a few people living have double rows of natural teeth; while we are assured by an artist that only one person in four thousand eight hundred has a perfect nose.

Though we are told that blindness is on the decrease, it is sad to reflect that three hundred thousand people in Europe suffer from this dreadful affliction. Spain appears to be the greatest sufferer in this respect. An oculist tells us that scarcely one in twenty of watchmakers suffer from weak eyes; and we learn from a doctor that stammering is almost unknown amongst savages. Is this infirmity, then, one of the penalties we pay for civilisation? It would seem that nearly a quarter of all cases of insanity are hereditary, and animals are not free from this visitation.

We hear, on the authority of a recruiting sergeant, that few men have legs of equal length, and that in every thousand men in the British army only eighteen are over six feet in height, which our national vanity prompts us to remark seems a small number. The conclusion is arrived at, that a man's full mental power is not reached before the age of twenty-five, and the development of talent is most marked between the ages of thirty and forty-five years.

Those who notice the rapid growth of their finger-nails should be happy, for it is considered to indicate good health. Yorkshire is said to be the most healthy county in England; but it is a reflection when we are reminded that in Great Britain the yearly loss in wages through ill-health is about eleven millions sterling, and it is estimated that forty per cent. of those who start in business fail, March being considered the slackest month for business. Yet, as a set-off to this discomfiting intelligence, it is affirmed that the average duration of life is considerably longer in this country than in France, for example. Is this because nearly three times as much meat is eaten by us as by the French? No wonder the average Britisher is as strong as two Hindus. Quakers are said, we know not with what truth, to be unusually long-lived.

It is also asserted that the proportionate number of births in Russia is nearly double that of France; while the German population increases faster than that of any other country. France has the cheapest rate of postage, but possesses a capital in which it is said more murders take place in six months than occur in London, Berlin, and Vienna together, in twice that length of time; but altogether more murders take place in the United States than in any other country. The Americans must not be very fond of tea, when they drink eight times as much coffee as the beverage that does not inebriate. A yearly outlay of five millions shows their enterprise in advertising.

It may be interesting to note that Belgium is declared to be the most intemperate country in Europe; that Italy sends five million eggs to England every week; that Spain has fewer daily papers than any other European country; and that most German papers are owned and edited by Jews. In Germany, married men wear wedding rings, a custom which many writers have advocated in this country. Only ten per cent. of German school-boys are said to go in for athletics. We are assured by an employer of German clerks that they work twenty per cent. slower than English ones.

Consumption is believed to be more prevalent in Ireland than in either England or Wales. Four times more Irishmen reside in the United States than Englishmen. It is more difficult to believe the statement that sixty thousand people in the Emerald Isle speak Irish only; or another, that there are forty thousand mud cabins in that country consisting of but a single room. Yet this is the country in which we are told suicide is less prevalent than in any other, which speaks volumes for Pat's light-heartedness. It has been noticed how women mostly commit suicide by drowning, and men by shooting. By the way, suicide is less common amongst miners than any other class of people; and self-destruction, strangely enough, is said to be most prevalent amongst soldiers. Speaking of the military, it may be mentioned that there are eight soldiers located in Ireland to one in Scotland, and that over twenty boys under eighteen years of age have won the Victoria Cross.

Sad is the thought that an average of three British seamen lose their lives every day by drowning, and that three hundred British steamers and sailing-vessels are lost at sea yearly. It is a subject for congratulation to think that of the total number of ships which annually pass through the Suez Canal, nearly eighty per cent. fly the British flag. The speed of our fastest ocean steamers is now greater than that of the express trains on Italian railways. Express trains in Russia rarely travel faster than twenty-two miles an hour. These are very slow expresses, indeed, to ours, yet a railway guard assures us that the fastest trains are always the safest. It is satisfactory to learn that during last year only one person in forty-five million passengers was killed by a railway accident.

We are told that the English of our day is considered by a high authority almost perfect, alike for the purpose of the orator, the philosopher, the lecturer, and the poet. The purest English is said to be spoken in Lincolnshire. There are four times as many words in our language as there are in the French, yet a philologist estimates that the coinage of new words in our tongue goes on at the rate of one hundred annually.

Each person in this country sends on an average forty-four letters yearly through the post, which only lets twenty go astray out of every million letters which go through it. It may not be uninteresting to mention that one person in every nine is left-handed, or that clergymen come next in number to mechanics under the head of inventors. Edison states that very few people know the sound of their own voices.

It is not inspiring to hear that only fifty-four per cent. of the poor-rates are spent in relieving the poor, and to reflect that over a quarter of each generation die before attaining the age of seventeen; but a man thirty-two years of age may expect to live for another thirty-two.

If you wish to increase your chances of life, marry, for, as a rule, married men live longer than bachelors; yet we are told that out of every thousand persons in England more than six hundred are unmarried.

THE SWALLOW'S RETURN.

BLACKBIRD.

Ah, you're welcome from your travels, from across
the ocean, Swallow!

Did you long for daisied meadows and the gold of
gorsy fells,
For the violets in the woodland and the hawthorn of
the hollow,
And the mists of bluebells gleaming in the sheltered
hazel dells?

SWALLOW.

Nay; for months I never wearied of the mosques, and
domes, and towers;
Of the saffron eves and morning, and their still,
unbroken calm;
Of the tamarind's scented blossoms; of the champale's
sacred flowers;
Of the red flamingos resting by the stately cocoa-
palm:

Till I saw a soldier dying once as day broke in its
splendour—

I had seen him very often pacing down the garden
here,
While a maiden clasped his arm, she smiling at the
phrases tender
That I heard him from my dwelling whisper in her
willing ear.

And I thought of chestnut blossoms, and of budding
beech boughs swinging,
As I heard him in his anguish name that maiden
o'er and o'er,
And I longed again to listen to you, Blackbird, gaily
singing,
And the brown bees softly humming round the
lichened nest once more.

BLACKBIRD.

So he's dead! Then that's the reason of the maiden's
tears and sighing;
That is why she would not hearken to my gayest,
loudest strain;
That is why I hear them whisper that she's surely,
slowly dying
For her lover!—Well, friend Swallow, you are
welcome back again.

M. ROCK.

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THE MAFIOSI.

THE Italian Mafia of to-day is not a complex organisation with constitution, ordinances, and bylaws, but a community of sentiment striving to preserve the feudal institution of personal vengeance, and warring against State interference with individual license. There are, however, within this great solidarity of malefactors numerous bands of criminals having a formal organisation, and special fields of action as brigands, cattle-thieves, contrabandists, intimidators, and extortioners, in family or personal groups, such as the Posa, FratuZZi, Amoroso, Stoppaglieri, Fratellanza, Cosca, Mala Vita, and Carciolo. All these societies have their officers, rules, oaths, and penalties—or usually one penalty, Death.

A direct outgrowth of feudalism, the Mafia originated in Florence and Genoa at a time when the retainers of the later mediæval nobles lounged about the now deserted palaces, waiting for the bidding of their masters to carry out some new assassination in the constant campaign of private vengeance. Unlike Nihilism, the Mafia is not strictly a secret society; it is non-political, and is the development and perfection of a supreme power directed to every kind of evil; it is the instinctive solidarity, brutal and selfish, that unites—to the injury of the State, of laws, and of organised society—all individuals that desire to obtain their living not by labour, but by violence, trickery, and intimidation.

In every part of Italy it is undoubtedly a power of malignant activity, which in these days of unrest and anarchy is rapidly extending its nefarious influences. The difference between the rich and the poor Mafiosi is merely one of degree. The wealthy proprietor becomes an ally either to carry on an hereditary feud, to make himself a beneficiary of past crimes, or merely to gratify a desire for power. If he is not in voluntary sympathy with the offenders, he is constrained to lend himself directly or indirectly to their schemes. Otherwise, a gun-shot, a general slaughter of his cattle, a fire that con-

sumes his harvest, a threatening letter or sequestration of his person, reminds him that, while the law has many formalities and delays, the action of the Mafia is summary. He rarely hesitates longer as to where he shall attach his interests; if he does, his own life pays for the delay. It happens thus that a family may be obliged to witness the murder of a relative and remain silent, rather than incur the further action of the Mafia, as they would do by having recourse to the criminal courts.

A similar interest impels the peasant to seek the protection of the lawless, no matter what his better inclinations may be. Should he seek a livelihood by honest labour alone, he will find himself despised, oppressed, and almost starved; but if he violates the law, the Mafia protects him, conceals him, provides him with funds, and contrives that he shall escape punishment. Then the obscurity in which he has dwelt hitherto is exchanged for the esteem of all other delinquents, by whom he is acclaimed as a man of honour, and one who has proved himself worthy of a place in the ranks of those who have shielded him. There is a distinction between the Mafiosi of the mountains and those of the sea-shore, especially those of the commercial cities. In the mountains the crimes are of a ruder sort—stealing and slaughtering cattle, incendiarism, and other outrages; along the coast and in the cities, the alliance works with fraud, extortion, and assassination, with a cunning skill that attains to the perfection of a fine art.

The most important and general of the meeting-places of the Mafia are the great cattle fairs, of which a regular series is held from April until October. Here they assemble from Palermo, Girgenti, Caltanissetta, Trapani, and other provinces; and allies of every grade adjust their reciprocal interests, devise their criminal projects, and plan the execution of them. These fairs are the interprovincial congresses of the organisation, and especially of the agricultural members. For the interchange of opinion they use a certain jargon, intonation, and gesticulation

of their own. For instance, the word for prison is 'collegiu' (college); for manacles, 'curuna' (rosary); for sword, 'statia' (steelyard); 'Be'lassalu stari' (Let him alone) is to be translated: 'This man deserves a severe lesson; now is not the time; we'll meet him alone, and take him while he is off his guard.' The true Mafiosi are polished villains. They assume towards their enemy the language and bearing of fraternal good-humour, or ingenuousness, and suffer a blow without remonstrance; but at night assassinate him. The keynote of the whole alliance is 'Omerta,' the exact etymology of which has long been in dispute. The majority of Italian writers believe it to be derived from 'uomo' (man), that is, to be a man; but Alonghi, one of the most authoritative writers on the subject of criminal bands in Italy, thinks that it signifies 'humility'—a definition that finds support in the assumed humility of the real Mafiosi. To a member of the society, 'Omerta' is the one virtue that includes and supersedes all others.

Members of the Mafia have many secret maxims, which are learnt by heart on admittance to the alliance. The following are some of these rules of conduct: The poor resort to force, fools resort to law. Take the life of whoever makes you lose the means of living. Be respectful to officers of the law, but stand afar off. If I die, I will be buried; if I live, you will be. Of what does not concern you say neither good nor evil. Testimony is good unless given against your neighbour. He that dies is buried, he that lives gets married. An influential friend is worth more than a thousand 'lire' in your pockets. Imprisonment, sickness, and misfortune prove the hearts of friends.

The essence of the constitution of the various bands of the alliance, in city and country alike, is as follows: 1st, Ready, passive, and constant obedience to the Head of the band. 2d, Absolute silence as to the composition and enterprises of the band. 3d, Material, moral, and pecuniary aid to all members, and especially when arrested. 4th, Never to have recourse to legal authority, but to refer all disputes to the leader of the band. The penalty for a violation of any of these obligations is invariably death.

In all the societies the character of initiation is the same. The candidate takes his place before a table on which the effigy of a saint is displayed. The neophyte then offers his right hand to the two associates who have presented him for membership, and they cut his thumb until enough blood has flowed to smear the effigy. He then takes the oath and sets fire to the saint. The candidate is afterwards required to shoot at a crucifix as a symbol of his willingness to assassinate any person, however dear to him. Colacino, in his 'Rivista di Discipline Carcerarie,' gives the oath of the Fratellanza as: 'I swear on my honour to be faithful to the Fratellanza as the Fratellanza is faithful to me. As this saint is buried and these drops of my blood, so will I shed all my blood for the Fratellanza; and as these ashes and this blood cannot be restored, so can I never be released from the Fratellanza.'

The formula for the recognition of one member by another is somewhat interesting. The colloquy begins with a familiar question: 'Have you a cigar stump? My tooth aches.' 'Yes.'

'What time is it?' 'My watch is thirty minutes slow.'—'How long since?' 'Since the 25th of March, the day of the Annunciation.'—'Where were you on that day?' 'I was at'—(here he names the place where he was initiated).—'Whom do you adore?' 'The sun and the moon.'—'Who is your god?' 'Aremi' (a playing-card).

The Mala Vita, the organisation of which is very elaborate, is divided into three sections—the Camorristi, Picciotti, and Giovinnotti. The oath of initiation is comprehensive: 'With one foot in the grave and the other in chains, I swear to abandon father, mother, wife, children, and all kindred in order to make war upon the infamous and to protect the humble.' The object of this society is theft, the fundamental principle being that 'those who possess nothing have a right to live at the expense of those who have property.' The license to steal is given to all members; but they are required to divide the spoils with the Camorristi. The other obligations imposed upon members are similar to those already mentioned.

If a member of the Mafia is arrested, the machinery of the fraternity is put into play at once, and much ingenuity is displayed to secure his release. Should it happen that the case is referred to the criminal court, there commences a series of intrigues and intimidations that continue until the jury have given a verdict. The names of the jury are first procured, and attempts are made to influence those who may be engaged. A possible jurymen hears intimations that the prisoner is the victim of the plots of his enemies, but that he also has many powerful friends, who will defend him at any cost, and, if necessary, punish his persecutors. Remarks of this last kind rarely fail of their purpose, for cases are known where jurymen and witnesses have been murdered the day following that on which a prisoner has been found guilty. Money is used with both jurymen and witnesses, if they are susceptible to that argument; and the organisation seldom fails in its efforts to secure an acquittal. In fact, it is impossible for a jury to do its duty with the Damoclean sword of the Mafia hanging over its head.

When the society is short of money, subscriptions are requested with a politeness so formal as to be humorous. The preliminary movement is a threatening letter, full of 'humility,' and couched in artful terms of diplomacy. It begins with a flourish of titles: 'Your Excellency and your illustrious Lady have an abundance, and it is necessary to make an appeal to your generosity, though it is unfortunate that your Excellency should be disturbed. Some poor fathers of family are in great destitution, and ask for' [here the amount is inserted] 'because their dependents are many.' They are sure he will grant their request, and beg to assure him of their eternal gratitude and unconditional devotion, and they also add that he will be left in peace. If, after some days, no response is made, a second letter follows, in which the writer intimates that, because of the delay, he himself is being suspected of treachery to his fellow-sufferers, who are now discussing the use of harsh measures. Then, if the recipient of these communications still remains silent, woe betide him!

The heads of family issue their final warning: 'You are a dead man!' or, 'You will pay dearly for this!' The police are informed, and make a fruitless search for the offender and his accomplices. For a time, when the informer goes out, he takes a protective escort of a few friends or servants; but lulled to a sense of security by two or three months of immunity from attack, he finally ventures out alone, is assassinated, and all the neighbourhood knows whence the blow fell.

That the strength and influence of the Mafia is recognised with apprehension by the Italian Government is undeniable; and facts revealed at the recent trials at Bari and New Orleans tend to confirm the opinion that it is now closely allied with the Anarchist movement. Notwithstanding the efforts of the Italian police, its power is rapidly increasing, and its attitude towards both Government and society is certainly the reverse of reassuring.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XXIII.—MASTER AND DISCIPLE.

It was Sunday afternoon in Gray's Inn. The new Disciple sat at the feet of the Master, her Gamaliel: one does not know exactly the attitude adopted by a young Rabbi of old, but in this case the disciple sat in a low chair, her hands folded in her lap, curiously and earnestly watching the Master as he walked up and down the room preaching and teaching.

'Master,' she asked, 'have you always preached and held these doctrines?'

'Not always. There was a time when I dwelt in darkness—like the rest of the world.'

'How did you learn these things? By reading books?'

'No. I discovered them. I worked them out for myself by logic, by reason, and by observation. Everything good and true must be discovered by a man for himself.'

'What did you believe in that old time? Was it, with the rest of the world, the sacredness of Property?'

'Perhaps.' He stood in front of her, laying his right forefinger in his left forefinger and inclining his head. 'My dear young scholar, one who believes as I believe, not with half a heart, but wholly, and without reserve, willingly forgets the time when he was as yet groping blindly in darkness or walking in artificial light. He wishes to forget that time. There is no profit in remembering that time. I have so far drilled and trained myself not to remember that time, that I have in fact clean forgotten it. I do not remember what I thought or what I said, or with whom I associated in that time. It is a most blessed forgetfulness. I daresay I could recover the memory of it if I wished, but the effort would be painful. Spare me. The recovery of that Past would be humiliating. Spare me, scholar. Yet, if you wish—if you command'—

'Oh, no, no! Forgive me.' Elsie touched his hand. He took hers and held it. Was it with

a little joy or a little fear that the girl observed the power she already had over him? 'I would not cause you pain. Besides—what does it matter?'

'You know, my child, when the monk assumes the tonsure and the triple cord, he leaves behind him, outside the cell, all the things of the world—ambition, love, luxury, the pride of the eye—all—all. He forgets everything. He casts away everything. He abandons everything—for meditation and prayer. The monk,' added the Sage, 'is a foolish person, because his meditation advances not the world a whit. I am like the monk, save that I think for the world instead of myself. And so, spending days and nights in meditation, I know not what went before—nor do I care. It is a second birth when the new faith takes you and holds you together, so that you care for nothing else. Oh child!—upon you also this shall come—this obsession—this possession—so that your spirit shall know of no time but that spent in the service of the Cause. Nay, I go so far that I forget from day to day what passed, except when I was actively engaged for the Cause. Yesterday, I was here in the afternoon. You came. We talked. You offered yourself as my disciple. I remember every word you said. Could I ever forget a disciple so trustful and so humble? But—before you came. Where was I? Doubtless here—meditating. But I know not. Then there are things which one must do to live—breakfast, dinner—of these I remember nothing. Why should I? It is a great gift and reward to me that I should not remember unnecessary things—low and common things. Why should I try to do so?'

'No—no,' murmured the catechumen, carried away by his earnestness. 'Best forget them. Best live altogether in and for the Cause.' Yet—she wondered—how was she to bring things home to him unless he could be made to remember? He was mad one hour and sane the next. How should she bridge the gulf, and make the mad man cross over to the other side?

The Master took her hand in his and held it paternally. 'We needed such a disciple as you,' he went on, slightly bending his head over her. 'Among my followers there is earnestness without understanding. They believe in the good time, but they are impatient. They want revolution, which is terrific and destroys. I want conviction. There are times when a great idea flies abroad like the flame through the stubble. But men's minds must first be so prepared that they are ready for it. The world is not yet ready for my idea, and I am old, and may die too soon to see the sudden rise of the mighty flood, when that doctrine shall suddenly cease in all mankind. We need disciples. Above all, we need women. Why do women, I wonder, throw themselves away in imitating man, when there are a thousand things that they can do better than any man? I want women—young, beautiful, faithful. I can find work for hundreds of women. Hypatia would be worth to me—to us—far more than he of the Golden Mouth. Child—your sweet voice, your sweet face, your sweet eyes—I want them. I will take them and use them—expend them—for the great Cause. It may be that you will be called upon to become the first martyr of the Cause. Hypatia was murdered by a raging

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mob. You will have against you a mob worse than any of Alexandria. You will have a mob composed of all those who are rich, and all who want to be rich, and all the servile crews at their command. Happy girl! You will be torn to pieces for the cause of humanity. Happy girl! I see the roaring, shrieking mob. I see your slender figure on the steps—what steps? Where? I hear your voice, clear and high. You are preaching to them: they close in round you: you disappear—they have dragged you down: they trample the life out of you. You are dead—dead—and a name for ever. And the Cause has had its martyr.'

It was strange. She who had offered herself as a disciple with deception in her heart, thinking only to watch and wait and spy until she could see her way plain before her, who knew that she was listening to the voice and the dreams of a madman. Yet she was carried away: he made her see the mob: she saw herself dragged down and trampled under their heels. She shuddered, yet she was exultant: her eyes glowed with a new light: she murmured: 'Yes—yes. Do with me what you please. I am your disciple, and I will be your martyr, if you please.'

Great and wonderful is the power of Enthusiasm. You see, it matters nothing—nothing in the world—what a man has to preach and teach—whether he advocates Obi or telepathy, or rapping, or spirits who hide teacups in coat-pockets—it matters nothing that there is neither common-sense nor evidence, nor common reason to back him, if he only possess the magnetic power, he will create a following: he will have disciples who will follow him to the death. What is it—this power? It makes the orator, the poet, the painter, the novelist, the dramatist: it makes the leader of men: it made the first King, the first Priest, the first Conqueror.

'Come,' said Mr Edmund Gray; 'the time passes. I must take you to my Place.'

They walked out together, Master and Scholar. The man who was mad walked carelessly and buoyantly, his coat flying open, one hand in his pocket, the other brandishing his walking-stick, his head thrown back, his face full of light, and, though his words were sometimes strong, always full of kindness. Now the sane man, the man of Lincoln's Inn, wore his coat tightly buttoned, walked with a firm precise step, looked straight before him, and showed the face of one wholly occupied with his own thoughts. There was a man who was mad and a man who was sane: and certainly the mad man was the more interesting of the two.

'This place,' said the Master, meaning Gray's Inn, 'is entirely filled with those who live by and for the defence of Property. They absorb and devour a vast portion of it while they defend it. No one, you see, defends it unless he is paid for it. Your country, your family, your honour—you will defend for nothing; but not another man's Property—no. For that you must be paid. Every year it becomes more necessary to defend Property; every year the hordes of mercenaries increase. Here they are lawyers, and lawyers' clerks—a vast multitude. Outside there are agents, brokers, insurers, financiers—I know not what—all defending Property. They produce nothing, these armies: they take their toll: they

devour a part of what other people have produced before they hand on the residue to the man who says it is his Property.'

'Oh!'—but Elsie did not say this aloud—'if these words could only be heard in Lincoln's Inn! If they could be repeated to a certain lawyer! From time to time she looked at him curiously. How if he should suddenly return to his senses? What would he think? How should she explain? 'Mr Dering, you have been off your head. You have been talking the most blasphemous things about Property. You would never believe that even in madness you could say such things.' No; he never would believe it—never. He could not believe it. What if his brother, Sir Samuel, were to hear those words? Meantime, the Apostle walked along unconscious, filled with his great Mission. Oh heavens! that Mr Dering—Mr Dering—should believe he had a Mission!

The Master stopped a passing tramcar. 'Let us climb up to the roof,' he said. 'There we can talk and breathe and look about us, and sometimes we can listen.'

On the seat in front of them sat two young men, almost boys, talking together eagerly. Mr Edmund Gray leaned forward and listened shamelessly. 'They are two young atheists,' he said. 'They are cursing religion. There is to be a discussion this evening at Battle Arches between a Christian and an Atheist, and they are going to assist. They should be occupied with the question of the day: they cannot, because they, too, are paid defenders of Property. They are lawyers' clerks. They are poor and they are slaves: all their lives they will be slaves and they will be poor. Instead of fighting against slavery and poverty, which they know and feel, they fight against the Unknown and the Unintelligible. Pity! Pity!'

They passed two great Railway Termini, covering an immense area with immense buildings.

'Now,' said the Sage, 'there are millions of Property invested in railways. Whenever the railway servants please, they can destroy all that Property at a stroke. Perhaps you will live to see this done.'

'But,' said Elsie timidly, 'we must have things carried up and down the country.'

'Certainly. We shall go carrying things up and down the country, but not in the interests of Property.'

The tram ran past the stations and under broad railway arches, called Battle Arches—where the two young atheists got down, eager for the fray, always renewed every Sunday afternoon, with the display of much intellectual skill and much ignorance. It is a duel from which both combatants retire, breathed and flushed, proud of having displayed so much smartness, both claiming the victory, surrounded by admiring followers, and neither of them killed, neither of them hurt, neither of them a bit the worse, and both ready to begin again the following Sunday with exactly the same attack and exactly the same defence. There are some institutions—Christianity, the Church of England, the House of Lords, for instance—which invite and receive perpetual attacks, from which they emerge without the least hurt, so far as one can perceive. If they were all abolished to-morrow, what would the spouters do?

The car stopped again, and two girls mounted—two work-girls of the better sort—not, that is to say, the sort which wears an ulster and a large hat with a flaming feather in it: working-girls, dressed quietly and neatly. They ought to have been cheerful and even gay, for they were both young, both good-looking, both nicely dressed, and it was Sunday afternoon, warm and sunny. Yet they were not cheerful at all. One of them was in a rage royal, and the other, her friend, was in a rage sympathetic—quite a real rage. They were talking loudly on the kerb while they waited for the tram: they carried on their conversation as they climbed the stair: they continued it while they chose a seat, and before they sat down, without the least regard to those who sat near them whether they overheard or wished not to hear—or anything. They were wholly occupied with themselves and their rage and their narrative. They neither saw nor heeded any one else—which is the way that the angry woman has.

"So I told her—I up and told her, I did. "Yes," I sez, "you and your fifteen hours a day and overtime," I sez—"and your fines—so as to rob the poor girls of their money, and your stinkin' little room, as isn't fit for two, let alone a dozen—and your flarin' gas," I sez, "to choke us and poison us—and your dinners—yah! your dinner," I sez—"fit for pigs; and your beast of a husband comin' round with his looks and his leers"—"You let my husband alone," she sez—"his looks and his leers," I sez. "Some day the girls'll take him out and drown him head first, in the gutter," I sez. "And a good job too!"

"You didn't say all that, Liz?" asked the other, admiringly. "My! What's she say to that? Her "beast of a husband?" And his looks and his leers? Did you really, Liz, and her that jealous?"

"I did. Oh! I let her hear it. For once, she did have it. Then I took my money and I went off.—Never mind what she called me; that don't matter. She got the truth for once."

"What do you make of this, disciple?" asked the Master.

"It seems a quarrel between the girl and her employer."

"These are the makers of Property. They are not the soldiers who defend it. They are those who create it. The girls are employed by the sweater, who stands on the lowest rung of the ladder of Property, and steals the things as fast as they are made."

"One of them has been turned out. What will she do? Will she find another place?"

"I don't know. What becomes of the young? It is a difficult question. No one knows. Some say this and some say that. We know what becomes of the old when they are turned out. They die. But as for the young, I know not. You are young, and you are a woman. Go among the young women who have been turned out and find for yourself—for the world—what does become of them."

They passed an immense churchyard, with an ancient church standing in the midst—the churchyard now cleared of its headstones and converted into a beautiful garden, after the modern fashion, in which we have abandoned the pretence of remembering the dead, and plant

flowers and turf above their graves for the solace of the living. Why not? Let the nameless dead be remembered by the nameless dead. Their virtues, if they had any, may live after them in their descendants.

"See," said Mr Edmund Gray, moralising. "Here they lie, those who are soldiers of Property and those who are slaves of Property. They are mostly the poor of their parish who lie in that garden. No headstones mark their grave. They were born: they toiled for others to enjoy: and they died. Is this the life that men should most desire?"

"Nay," said the disciple. "But there must be strong and weak—clever and dull: there must be inequalities."

"Yes. Inequalities of gifts. One man is stronger, one is sharper, one is cleverer than another. Formerly, those gifts were used to make their possessor richer and more powerful. The strong man got followers and made slaves. The clever man cheated the dull man out of his land and his liberty. Henceforth, these gifts will be used for the general good. Patience! You shall understand all in good time."

He stopped the tram, and they descended.

Lying east of the Hampstead Road and Camden High Street, and bounded on that side by the canal—the great space occupied by the Midland and Great Northern Goods Depôt, by gas-works, wharfs, and railway arches, there is a network of streets very little known to any but the parish clergy. No part of London is less interesting than this district. It used to be called Somers Town, but I think that the old name has almost died out. It is about a hundred years old, regarded as a settlement: it possesses three churches at least, two workhouses, one almshouse, and three burial-grounds turned into gardens. It is also cheered by the presence of a coal depôt. Many small industries are carried on in this quarter: there are many lodging-houses: the streets are rather grimy, the houses are rather shabby, the people are rather slipshod. They are not criminals: they are, in a way, respectable—that is to say, tolerably respectable. It is not a picturesque suburb: dullness reigns: it is a dull, a dull, a dully dull quarter. There are children, but they lack mirth: and young girls, but they lack the spring of youth: one would say that there was a low standard in everything, even in the brightness of dress: the place looks better in winter than in summer. To-day, the bright sunshine only made the shabbiness of the streets more shabby.

"Is your place here?" asked Elsie.

"Yes; it is here.—You wonder why I came here. Because the people here are not all working-people. Some of them are small employers—those of whom I spoke—who stand on the lowest rung of the ladder and steal the things as fast as they are made, and take toll, and hoard them up. The working-man is generous and open to others, compared with these people. I planted my place down in the midst of them. But you shall see—you shall see."

It was like a dream. Elsie walked beside her conductor. Yesterday she made the acquaintance of this man for the first time: she had never seen him before except in his sane condition: he was a mad man—a real dangerous madman—stark

staring mad: he was taking her she knew not where—to some place among strange people: she walked beside him without the least fear. She who would have fled before the most harmless lunatic; and she was going with him as his disciple.

'George,' she said afterwards, 'I do not know how it happened. I could not choose but go with him. I could not choose but to become his disciple: he compelled me. I lost my will. I even forgot that he was a madman: I gave up my reason and all: I followed him, and I believed all that he told me. How did he get that power? Directly I left him, I became myself again. I perceived the mad enthusiast. I saw Mr Dering caricatured and proclaiming foolishness. But in his presence I was his servant and his slave.'

'Here we are,' he said. 'This is my Place. Let us go in.'

SUNFLOWER-FARMING IN RUSSIA.

It has been noticed as a curious fact in connection with the famine in Russia, that almost the only crop in the stricken provinces which last year reached respectable dimensions was that of Sunflowers. Yet the cultivation of the sunflower on a commercial scale is quite a modern industry, and the extent of it is even now but little understood in this country. The first province in Russia in which the cultivation began was Voronesh, where a farmer called Bokareff began, in 1842, to grow sunflowers in his fields for the sake of the seeds, or rather for the sake of the oil which he expressed from the seeds. His example was followed by his neighbours, and Voronesh became, as it is now, the great centre of sunflower cultivation in Europe.

From Voronesh the industry gradually extended to the adjacent provinces of Tambov and Saratov, of Simbirsk and Samara—in fact, to the great Volga basin, which has been the scene of so much privation and distress through the failure of the wheat-crops. In the whole of South-east Russia the sunflower has within the present generation become a prominent product of most of the farms. To show the rapidity with which the cultivation has spread, it may be mentioned that while, in 1881, there were 367,800 acres of Russian land under sunflower crops, in 1887 there were about 704,500 acres—nearly double.

One can hardly find an adequate representation of the fruits of this large acreage in the export lists of Russia. The oil which is made from the seeds is now almost entirely consumed at home. In 1885 some hundreds of tons of the oil were exported; but since then the quantities sent beyond the Czar's dominions have been insignificant. On the other hand, the residuum which remains after the oil has been all, or nearly all, expressed, makes excellent feeding-stuff for cattle, and under the name of 'Sunflower Cake' is shipped to the extent of about forty thousand tons per annum, chiefly to Great Britain, Denmark, and Germany; Sweden also takes a great deal, but Great Britain and Denmark are the largest consumers. The value of sunflower cake at the place of production is, roughly, about four shillings

and sixpence per hundredweight; but of course there are heavy charges for land and sea carriage before it reaches the consumer.

All the sunflowers grown are not suitable for oil-making. In fact, the farmers cultivate two kinds—one which has small seeds, which yield a large percentage of oil; another with large seeds, which yield little oil, and are consumed by the peasants and the poorer towns-people, as our own people consume hazel-nuts, that is to say, as a sort of cheap luxury. These large seeds are in great favour; and one can well imagine that, whether palatable or not, they must contain a good deal of nutritious matter.

The sunflower oil expressed from the smaller and richer seeds is extremely nutritious, and has a pleasant flavour; so much so, that it has now almost entirely superseded olive and rape oil in Russia for culinary and domestic purposes. When the grower himself is rich enough to be able to put up an oil-press, the combined business of cultivation and oil-making is said to be very profitable. These cases, however, are comparatively rare; and it is most usual for the farmers to sell the seeds to regular oil-producers, who set up their mills in some convenient district. Of late, the tendency has been to concentrate this industry in the larger towns of each province.

One reason why the cultivation has so rapidly extended is that it has a double basis. Thus, while there is a constant and growing demand at home for the oil, there is also a constant and growing demand abroad for the residual cake. Besides these two products, the shells or husks of the seeds form a valuable article of trade as fuel, where wood is scarce. And still further, the seed 'cups' are prized by farmers as food for sheep. There are thus four sources of income in the sunflower plant.

It has been said that land under sunflower crops yields about twice as much in money-value per acre as land under any other crops cultivated in Russia. This estimate we have no means of testing; but it is noteworthy that, as a rule, sunflower culture is more in the hands of the peasants than of the large farmers. Thus it has probably not yet been tried in a systematic and scientific manner, and on true commercial lines.

The sunflower for proper development needs a fertile and yet a firm soil. The stalk of the plant will grow to a height of eight feet, and will be two or three inches in diameter. It will have many 'heads,' or flowers, measuring sometimes more than a foot in diameter, and holding, perhaps, a couple of thousand seeds each. A mixture of black mould and sand is said to form the best soil for the plant, which in thin soils yields small flat seeds, instead of the round and heavy seeds which indicate fullness of oil. The sunflower does not thrive on sandy soils, both moisture and a firm support for the weight of the plant being needful to good growth. Another thing is, that it is not, on account of its size, adapted to exposed situations, and has to be cultivated on low and sheltered lands. It thrives best on low lands near a river, where it can get plenty both of warmth and moisture. It also thrives well after crops of rye and oats, if the soil is not too much exhausted.

The method of cultivation, however, is somewhat erratic, and is the subject of much difference

of opinion. Some of the Russian farmers invariably sow sunflower after wheat or rye, and others only after oats. Others, again, advocate sowing after clover; and some consider it most profitable to put sunflower into land which, after five or six crops, has lain fallow for a couple of years. On the other hand, it seems generally admitted to be a mistake to sow grains immediately after a sunflower crop, an interval of a year being necessary to rest the land.

A very common yet curious practice among the farmers of the province of Voronesh is to sow sunflower in the same fields for seven years in succession; then to sow buckwheat; and then, after a year's rest, rye.

The seeds are of various kinds—white, gray, brown with gray stripes, and black. The black is avoided as containing too much colouring to yield a pleasing oil. Then there is division into large and small classes. The small seeds, something like the shape of coffee beans, yield the most oil, and therefore fetch the highest price. The large seeds sell at a lower price, and in proportion to their virtues in taste, smell, and weight.

A careful sunflower farmer buys or selects his seeds in the autumn, choosing the ripest, and hanging up the seed-cups in a dry place for the winter. In the spring he shakes the seeds out of their cups, dries them in an oven, and puts them aside for sowing. The proper time for sowing is in early spring as soon as the snows have melted; but in some parts of Voronesh the seed is sown at the very end of autumn, too late for it to sprout before winter. In spring-sowing the seeds are not put very deep, only about a couple of inches below the surface, and about six inches apart, in rows. On the larger farms, or where labour is scarce, it is often, however, sown broadcast, although the sowing in rows both produces the best result in the plants and allows of the ground being more easily kept clear of weeds. Good seed should sprout and reach the surface in about eight days, the first sprouts being like those of the cucumber. After a fortnight or so, thinning is necessary, so as to preserve a space of about a foot and a half between the plants. When these reach the height of about six inches, the field is very carefully weeded. When they have grown to three feet or so, the offshoots are cut away, leaving only four or five flowering heads on each stalk. And this is said to be all the care needed until the crop is ready for harvest.

The harvest-time varies with locality and character of soil. In the south part of the area we have described, the crop ripens about the middle of September; in the north, from a fortnight to a month later. In Voronesh, harvesting is earlier than elsewhere—on the best lands about the middle of August. Even that is later than the grain-crops in Russia; and one advantage of sunflower farming is that the harvesting does not interfere with the ingathering of the other crops. Care has to be taken not to allow the sunflowers to become over-ripe, for when the flower withers the leaves covering the seeds drop off and the seeds crack open.

On small farms, where hands are few, the ripe heads are cut off first, and the rest of the field in stages as it ripens. The flowers so cut are spread out on the ground all day; but are

covered up and placed under shelter at night until they are quite dry. Then the stalks are cut off and piled away for firewood. For large farms this process is too slow, and the plants are cut off at the bottom of the stalk and piled with the seeds upwards until they are quite dry. This method, however, is said to be inferior to that of the small farmer, inasmuch as it leaves a considerable proportion of unripened seeds, which deteriorate the quality of the oil. Others cut the seed-cups, but leave them on their own stalks to dry.

Consul-general Crawford, in reporting to the United States Government lately on the agricultural industries of Russia and the methods of farming practised, refers to the harvesting of sunflowers as we have described. He says: 'These are the methods most generally adopted by the large farmers, as their imperfect methods of farming do not enable them to handle such large crops without a sacrifice of quality. The same criticism obtains also in the methods of harvesting wheat, rye, and other cereals. In comparing the two methods of harvesting sunflowers most generally adopted by the large farmers, it will be seen that in cutting the plant at the root the field may be cleared promptly, whereas when the stalks are left the entire field must be gone over twice in order to clear it. Then, too, the stalks left in the field form a regular forest, greatly interfering with the work of carrying off the seed-cups. On the other hand, this method has the advantage that the seed-cups, being left on their own stalks, are dried quicker and better than those stored in piles, and that in carrying away the heads without the stalks no seeds are wasted.'

The drying and airing of the sunflower in large heaps is not desirable. The heads when piled away tend to destroy the seed by their weight, and the want of fresh air encourages mildew and decay. The mode of drying the seed in the open air adopted in Russia is generally defective. The head which contains much moisture does not dry well, but withers easily under the influence of the air and the sun, and is apt to be ruined by rains. Thus the Russian farmer is often glad to get even a half-crop of oil from a full crop of seed. The plan recommended, but not yet adopted to any great extent, is to erect drying-sheds for the proper curing of the seed.

Thrashing begins as soon as the flower is dry. Here, again, the method differs according to the size of the farm. The small farmer whips the seed-cups one by one with a stick, so as to shake out the seeds. The large farmer uses the flail; but what he gains in speed he is apt to lose in quality, for when the shells get broken, as they frequently do with the flail, the seed becomes bitter, and so deteriorates the oil. When the thrashing is finished the seeds are screened, or fanned, to drive off the superfluous matter; and then, after being thoroughly dried, either in the sun or in kilns, are sorted, by means of gauze-screens, into sizes.

The larger seeds, which form the larger portion of the crop, and of which a single acre of sunflowers may yield as much as 2700 pounds, are sold to dealers, who retail them among the peasants and labourers. The consumption is very large, and the trade is becoming a very considerable one. The smaller seeds are sold to the oil-

mills, when the farmer has not a press of his own. The average yield of an ordinary sunflower farm in a favourable locality is about 900 pounds of oil-seed and 1400 pounds of edible seed to the acre of plants. While this is about the average, some farms are specially rich in the oil-seed, and have been known to produce 2000 pounds of that quality to the acre, yielding about two and a half hundredweight of oil.

This oil, when expressed from well-cultivated and carefully-treated seed, should be as delicate in colour and flavour as the best salad-oil of France or Italy. In Russia it has completely taken the place of poppy-seed oil and hemp-seed oil, which, while cheaper than olive, were coarser and ranker. But these oils have now almost completely gone out of use in Russia, where the pure and delicate sunflower oil at present reigns supreme for table purposes.

The treatment in the oil-mills is very simple. The seed as brought in by the farmers is sorted and thoroughly cleaned; then it is passed through millstones, which simply crush the shells and release the kernels. These are separated from the husks, dusted, and put into a press and mixer. From this emerges a pasty mass, which is put through vessels heated by steam to soften it. From these it is lifted, and, wrapped in thin camel-hair cloth; is put under another press, which squeezes out the oil into pipes, which convey it into tanks.

The large oil-mills are now driven by steam; but until comparatively recently they were all worked by hand. There are now between eighty and a hundred mills in Russia devoted to sunflower crushing alone. The largest is at Saratov, and is capable of turning out a large quantity of oil annually. The production of the public mills is computed at about 10,000 tons per annum; but there is no record of the very large aggregate production of the small farmers and peasants who practise oil-crushing at home in a primitive fashion. Two kinds of oil are produced. The best is sweet and clear; the inferior is slightly bitter and is darker in colour. The residual oil, or 'foots,' is not used for the table, but finds a ready sale for certain industries. The value of the oil-yielding seed of good quality is about seven shillings per hundredweight, or just about one-half of the customary price five or six years ago. Of course it varies with the market-price of the oil, which, again, is affected by the supply of other table oils.

The stalks of the sunflower plants are preferred as firewood to pine-wood. They produce a bright hot flame quickly, and form a pleasant and fragrant fire. An acre of sunflowers will yield about a ton of this useful firewood, a great consideration in a sparsely-wooded land. The seed-shells are also used for heating purposes, chiefly in cooking-stoves.

As the sunflower is rich in potassium, even the ashes have a commercial value for fertilising purposes. Thus, all the waste vegetable matter, after the harvesting and pressing, is burned, and the resultant ash is either used on the fields as a manure, or sold to the soap-works, if there are any in the neighbourhood.

The uses of the sunflower oil-cakes for cattle-food, and of the ground seed-cups as sheep-food, have already been mentioned.

This valuable, beautiful, and interesting plant is liable to a disease which has been traced to a parasite similar to that which attacks corn-plants. It causes a sudden withering of the leaves in the middle of the season, and a shrivelling up and drooping of the heads. When disease has once appeared on a field, experience has shown that it is best to burn everything on the land immediately after the seed has been harvested. Either that, or to sow grain, and sow the sunflower afresh in a new field at some distance.

As to the effects of sunflower culture on the soil, an extensive Russian farmer assured Consul-general Crawford that while all oil-producing plants seem to exhaust the land, the sunflower does not. He has repeatedly found that wheat and oats sown after sunflower (presumably after a short rest) have been better crops than when sown after other plants. This would imply that not only does the sunflower not exhaust the land, but that it actually enriches it. Other Russian farmers have confirmed this opinion, and especially maintain that wheat grows very much better after a sunflower crop. This is a point well worthy of examination and practical test by British and American agriculturists. Whether it would pay to grow sunflowers in this country in the absence of a market for the edible seeds, is problematic; but if the ground is to be enriched by the experiment, it is surely worth making in suitable localities.

JACK MOORE'S TEMPTATION.

CHAPTER III.—CONCLUSION.

JACK rose, still debating with himself as to whether he should or should not allow the temptation to overcome him; then he changed his coat, took his hat, and went out into the street. The misdirected letter was in his breast-pocket; he was making a sort of compromise with himself; he would not destroy the letter, nor would he send it on to its rightful destination. He would consider the matter further during the day. A City omnibus passed him, and as the morning was fine, there were more outside than inside passengers. Jack hailed it, jumped in, and then suddenly a sort of electric shock went through him, which caused him momentarily to forget all about his uncle, the misdirected letter, and his own alternate battlings against and parleys with temptation. For he found himself seated opposite the young lady with the gray eyes, the young lady whose fare he had paid some weeks ago.

Events were falling out strangely that morning. For weeks he had been watching for a chance of seeing Miss Mirah Lester, in the hope that she might acknowledge their informal acquaintance by at least a bow and a smile. Now, on the very day that had brought him face to face with temptation, they met. Would she remember him? He looked across at her inquiringly. She was reading; but she seemed to feel his earnest glance, for she suddenly looked up, blushed, smiled divinely, and then held out her hand. 'I have so wished to thank you again for your timely loan,' she said, 'and to—repay it.'

Jack was hardly conscious of the money she

gave him, for a sudden overpowering sense of shame and self-contempt seized him. He felt as if the steady, candid gaze of Mirah Lester's gray eyes penetrated through the cloth of his coat to the letter in his breast-pocket. The touch of her little gloved hand seemed to possess some magic power, to make him see things in their true light and rightly to estimate his own mental attitude.

He stammered out some entirely inane rejoinder. What would she think of him if she knew how near he had been to suppressing and destroying a letter that had come into his hands by chance? which, therefore, should have been doubly sacred to any honourable man. How terribly base he would seem in her eyes, if she guessed that he had coldly reckoned on the death of the man who had filled a father's place in his life!

The young lady, being quite at a loss as to the real cause of her fellow-traveller's manifest agitation, imagined him to be the victim of bashfulness. So she resumed her book, in happy ignorance of the violent revulsion of feeling she had roused in the breast of the man opposite to her, and of the momentous result brought about by their meeting.

As on a former occasion, the young lady got out at the corner of Wellington Street. By that time Jack had regained sufficient self-possession to be able to respond to her parting 'good-morning;' then he, too, alighted from the omnibus and bent his steps towards Lincoln's Inn Fields. He had quite made up his mind to act fairly and squarely in the matter of the mis-sent letter. But on arriving at Mr Pouncemore's office, he learnt that the lawyer was not expected there until twelve o'clock. So for an hour or more Jack paced round and round the dingy garden honoured by the appellation of 'Fields,' thinking of all that had happened, and all that he had been saved from, during the past two hours.

When all the church clocks in the neighbourhood had lifted up their variously-toned voices to announce the birth of another noon, Jack again entered the lawyer's office.

Mr Pouncemore was a tall, thin old man, nearer seventy than sixty, dressed in black clothes of old-fashioned cut. His manners were as much out of date as his garments, for he had an almost Grandisonian courtliness of address; his bows were bows, not the jerky nods, or careless touchings of hat-brims, or snatchy doffings, peculiar to this last quarter of the century.

Mr Pouncemore was not, perhaps, quite so keen of eye or so acute of brain as he had been twenty or even ten years ago. He found it necessary to rub his spectacles a good deal, grumbling as he did so at the quality of the lens supplied by the opticians of to-day. Ten years ago spectacles were spectacles. He was besides a trifle deaf, and, not liking to admit the fact, frequently made crooked answers to remarks addressed to him; and nothing vexed him more than that a client should manifest impatience at his slowness of speech, or notice the difficulty he had in seizing the various 'points' in a case. Mr Pouncemore was, in fact, getting past his work. He depended more and more on his head-clerk, a young man of considerable acuteness and resource.

Mr Pouncemore received the nephew of his old friend Tredinnick with his customary urbanity, listened courteously to his explanation as to how the letter intended for him had come into Mr Moore's possession, though he certainly failed to understand all the young man said.

'I received by this morning's post a letter written by my uncle to you,' said Moore, raising his voice and speaking in slow, stentorian tones.

'Your uncle wishes to see me? Certainly. At what hour shall I call on him?' replied the old lawyer suavely.

'This letter is yours—it came to my address by mistake—by *mistake*,' shouted Moore, beginning to lose his temper.

Mr Pouncemore stared.

'Mistake—no; I am not in the habit of making mistakes, sir.'

'Not *your* mistake—my uncle's. He put your letter into an envelope addressed to me, and mine into one addressed to you.'

'He couldn't do better than address himself to me,' commented the lawyer, drawing up his stiff backbone.

'Did a letter intended for me come to your address? If so, it was sent to you by mistake—by mistake,' roared Moore. ('Deaf old idiot!' This in a much lower tone.)

'Deaf! I'm not deaf. Who said I was deaf?' rapped out Mr Pouncemore, glaring at his visitor. —'Jackson! Jackson!' he called out.

The head-clerk answered his chief's summons with suspicious celerity. It was indeed his habit to listen at the door of Mr Pouncemore's sanctum, that he might be at hand to put matters straight when complications arose between client and adviser. Besides, Mr Jackson derived a good deal of malicious amusement from listening to the game of cross-questions and crooked answers which was so frequently played in Mr Pouncemore's private room.

'This gentleman has come to complain of some mistake about a letter he wrote to me,' said the lawyer with dignity.

'This morning I received a letter written by my uncle, Mr Tredinnick, to Mr Pouncemore—a letter which was unfortunately put into the wrong envelope,' explained Moore impatiently. (Here he held out the letter in his hand to the clerk.) 'I opened and read it, for, as you see, it was addressed to me.'

The clerk took the letter. 'I understand. I will explain the matter to Mr Pouncemore.'

Jackson, long accustomed to suit his voice to his employer's tympanum, managed to convey to him why Mr Tredinnick's nephew had called.

'Yes—yes; I understand,' Mr Pouncemore said, brightening. 'Mr Tredinnick has made a mistake—a mistake excusable at his age; but,' he added, staring at Jack through his gold-rimmed spectacles, 'you have also made a mistake in supposing that a letter intended for you reached me.—I think I am right—am I not, Jackson?'—in saying that no misdirected letter came to the office this morning?' he added, turning to the head-clerk.

Jackson bowed deferentially, glancing askance the while at the young man, who, in his opinion, was behaving in a most singular not to say suspicious manner.

'Then,' said Jack, rising, 'I must apologise for

my intrusion on your time. I—I thought it right to bring you the letter that came into my hands under such—peculiar circumstances with as little delay as possible. The letter is now in your possession, so I have only to wish you good-morning.

'Good-morning,' replied Mr Pouncemore, extending a formal hand for Jack to shake. He was determined to show this bad-tempered young man what he thought of his ungrateful conduct towards his uncle.

Jack left the office with slow heavy steps. He knew that he had elected to follow the steep and thorny path; that he had mastered and trampled under foot a great temptation. But as he set his face towards the great, purple, cross-crowned dome of St Paul's, the inevitable reaction resulting from strong emotion set in, and a dull feeling of depression and hopelessness took possession of him. He had done right; but the consciousness that he had acted as became an honest man did not at the moment bring its own reward, for when he reached his office, he received a severe reprimand for his lapse from punctuality; and as he took his seat at his desk, no inspiring hope of a happier future brightened the commonplace drudgery of the present.

The day passed, and he went home to his lodgings thoroughly tired out. But next morning he rose early and walked down to Russell Square. The sight of the well-remembered house, even though he knew it to be now tenanted by strangers, restored the balance of his mind, and brought back some measure of his former light-heartedness.

On reaching home that evening he found a letter awaiting him, addressed in a lady's handwriting. He tore it quickly open, and read as follows:

THE BAY TREES, WIMBLEDON, Nov. 20, 188—.

MY DEAR BOY—I have heard from Mr Pouncemore how you behaved with regard to a letter I wrote to him, and which reached you by an accident, for which I shall never cease to thank God. If you will come down here as early as you can to-morrow morning, I will explain how the mistake occurred.—Your affectionate uncle.

The letter was signed in rather shaky-looking characters—

EDWARD TREDINNICK.

Jack read the letter with quickened pulses and beaming eyes, wondered a little who had acted as his uncle's amanuensis; then folded it up and put it in the pocket where that other letter had lain, when truth and honour and right feeling were weighing in the balance against wealth and ease—and dishonour—and the glance of a girl's candid eyes had made the balance dip on the right side.

Jack went down to Wimbledon by the first train from Waterloo, and reached his uncle's door by nine o'clock. The Bay Trees was a pretty, snug-looking villa, standing well back from the road behind the two big trees which gave the house its name. As Jack lifted the latch of the white-painted entrance gate, his heart beat fast with mingled excitement and apprehension. The door was opened by the old butler Thrupp.

'Why, good gracious me! it's Master Jack—well! And I'm glad to see you back again, sir.'

'How is my uncle?' asked Jack, rather shamefacedly.

'Better, sir—much better. He cheered up wonderful after Mr Pouncemore's visit yesterday morning.—And now the sight of you will do him more good than all the champagne and physic the doctor orders.'

Jack was ushered straight into his uncle's presence. He paused for an instant on the threshold of the room, for he was startled at the change two years had wrought in the hale, hearty old man. 'Uncle!' he cried impulsively—'my dear, kind, old uncle!'—He stopped, fairly overcome, for the sight of his uncle's altered face and the unconscious pathos of the drooping figure seated by the lonely fireside, unmanned him.

'Jack!' The old man rose, tottered towards him, and fell on his neck with a sobbing cry of: 'Jack, my boy, forgive me. I was too hard. Oh, my dear, dear boy, thank God that He has brought you back to me at last!'

When Mr Tredinnick could command his voice, he told Jack how he had made the fortunate error which had led to their reconciliation. On the day when he wrote his letter of instructions to Mr Pouncemore, he addressed an envelope to Jack, meaning to enclose the quarterly cheque; but after doing so, he found that his cheque-book was empty, and the directed envelope had been left in his blotting-book. In the hurry of the moment he had thrust the letter to the lawyer into the cover addressed to Jack, leaving, as he afterwards discovered, that directed to Mr Pouncemore in the blotting-book.

'And now I must give old Jack Pouncemore a new set of instructions,' he finished with a smile that beautified his harsh features and shone like winter sunshine in his faded eyes. 'But the sight of you has put new life into me, my boy, and I don't think you'll have to pay your succession duty just yet.—Oh, there's a ring at the bell. My reader and amanuensis, Jack, the kindest and best of girls, who creams all the newspapers and writes my letters—most of them, at least. Not private instructions to my lawyer, of course.'

Just then the door opened, and Thrupp announced 'Miss Lester.' And to Jack's utter delight and astonishment, in walked the young lady with the gray eyes—Mirah Lester, his good angel.

CALLOW FLIGHTS OF FAMOUS WRITERS.

No page in the biography of an author who has 'witched the world with noble penmanship' is more eventful than the one which contains the records of his *debut*. Indeed, a goodly book might be written recounting the years of study and anxious thought that have intervened in the lives of most writers—the sleepless nights and days of vexations—before this goal could be reached: the fruitless search after a publisher for a first work—after an editor even who might chance to discover some merit in a poem, article, or story. And then, when he at last sees himself in print, with what zest he cuts the leaves and devours the pages! Not that he reads one word

for the sake of novelty. On the contrary, every sentence, most familiar to him, awakens a crowd of recollections in the past. The room—possibly a gloomy garret—in which the idea was conceived and carried out is brought vividly to mind. He reads between the lines; nay, more; he weaves a romance of future fame, destined, perhaps, never to stretch beyond the bounds of his own inner consciousness. No second success, any more than a second love, will awaken the same emotion; only those who have gone through the ordeal can fully appreciate the experience. Dickens, when dropping his manuscript stealthily 'one evening at twilight, with fear and trembling, into a dark letter-box in a dark office up a dark court in Fleet Street,' and his subsequent agitation 'when it appeared in all the glory of print,' is a striking instance of an author's ecstasy over his first literary flight. 'On which occasion,' Dickens has told us, 'I walked down to Westminster Hall, and turned into it for half an hour, because my eyes were so dimmed with joy and pride that they could not bear the street, and were not fit to be seen there.' It was a copy of the *New Monthly Magazine* for January 1834; and it contained the first sketch by Boz, called 'A Dinner at Poplar Walk.'

And then, by way of contrast, what desperate thoughts must sometimes enter an author's head when his first work is returned! What a pathetic picture is conjured up when one thinks of Thackeray wandering about with the rejected manuscript of *Vanity Fair*, for it was a serious question with the novelist whether he should try another publisher or cast his manuscript into the fire. Even a picture of Goldsmith in Wine Office Court toiling over his story of the *Vicar of Wakefield* could scarcely be more touching. It would be well, perhaps, if authors could be more philosophical, snap their fingers at the age, and exclaim with Charles Lamb, 'I will write for antiquity.'

In an article on 'Newspapers Thirty-five Years Ago' there is a realistic sketch by the author of *Essays of Elia* when he was making his first callow flight in authorship, writing *John Woodvil*, and 'hitting off a few lines almost extempore' in imitation of Burton, with a view to adding a trifle to an income barely sufficient for the support of himself and his sister in the Chancery Lane garret. In those days, he tells us, every morning paper kept an author, who was bound to furnish daily a quantum of witty paragraphs. 'Somebody has said,' he adds, 'that to swallow six cross-buns daily consecutively for a fortnight would surfeit the stoutest digestion. But to have to furnish as many jokes daily, and that not for a fortnight, but for a long twelvemonth, as we were constrained to do, was a little harder exaction.' Of all that galaxy of rising young authors that were to be picked up at Westminster Hall, in Lincoln's Inn, at Charles Lamb's supper parties in his smoky chambers in the Temple at a later date, and in the gilded saloons of Holland House, none, apparently, gave Jeffrey more gratification than Macaulay, known in those days as 'Sidney Smith's recruit.' It was indeed that brilliant article on Milton—Macaulay's first flight in the *Edinburgh Review*—that attracted public attention to this famous essayist.

It was Jeffrey—whose admiration for Macaulay

was unbounded—who lent Carlyle the fifty pounds which enabled him to take the manuscript of *Sartor Resartus* to London in order to arrange for its publication. It was offered to several publishers, but all in vain. The manuscript went back to Scotland unsold. But that visit to London led to Carlyle's getting work and making friends; and *Sartor* presently made its appearance in *Fraser*. It nearly ruined the magazine; for people did not understand the author, and took him to be little less than a lunatic.

In his *Recollections of Writers*, Charles Cowden Clarke tells how, when walking to London to see Leigh Hunt—who had just fulfilled his penalty of confinement in Horsemonger Lane Prison for the libel upon the Prince Regent—he met Keats, who accompanied him part of the way. At the last field-gate, when taking leave, Keats gave him the sonnet entitled, 'Written on the Day that Leigh Hunt left Prison.' It was the first proof he had received of Keats's having committed himself in verse. 'How clearly do I recall,' he writes, 'the conscious look and hesitation with which he offered it!—there are some momentary glances of beloved friends that fade only with life.' It has been stated, however, by Keats's biographer that 'The Lines in Imitation of Spenser' are the earliest known verses of his composition. The first that Keats ever published was the sonnet beginning, 'O Solitude! if I must with thee dwell,' which appeared in the *Examiner* in 1816. In the following year, amid the most fervent anticipations of his literary circle, the first volume of Keats's poems came out. But it never passed into a second edition. The first was but a small one, and that was never sold off.

Coleridge's first appearance as a poet was under peculiar circumstances. During a walking tour, he had made the acquaintance of Southey. Both young men were ardent republicans, and enthusiasts about the French revolution. This meeting inspired Coleridge with the idea of writing his dramatic sketch, 'The Fall of Robespierre.' Like Wordsworth, and in fact most youthful poets of the time, he was a violent republican, and hailed the revolution as a new and glorious era of liberty. An incident also happened to Wordsworth which doubtless shaped the course of his after-life. He was returning at daybreak from a party of dancing and gaiety, when a sunrise of 'extraordinary splendour and magnificence burst upon his enraptured vision and melted his very soul.' He had never seen a more glorious spectacle.

My heart was full; I made no vows, but vows
Were there made for me.

An *Evening Walk* was composed—almost his first poem. There was not an image in it, as Wordsworth has himself affirmed, that he had not drawn from his own observation of Nature; and what he has said of this volume is true of all his poetic work.

'The first of my poetic offspring that saw the light,' says Burns in his autobiography, 'was a burlesque lamentation on a quarrel between two reverend Calvinists, both of them dramatis personæ in my *Holy Fair*.' It brought him notice as a 'maker of rhymes.' It was not until the summer of that year, according to his brother

Gilbert, that the thought entered Burns's head of becoming an author.

With Byron, poetry was still more distinctly an after-thought. The first volume of poems which he sent to the press was published in a spirit of caprice; for he intimated beforehand to his friends that in writing it he had 'never looked beyond the moment of composition,' and that 'poetic fame was by no means the acmé of his wishes.' And it is not improbable that, but for the *Edinburgh Review*, the *Hours of Idleness* would never have been heard of beyond two or three London drawing-rooms. But even the most malevolent critic is, after all, of some service to a gifted writer: he awakens latent energy; he lays bare faults which the flattery of 'friends' hides from him. But few articles ever produced such an effect as this far-famed one produced on Byron. Had this review never appeared, he might have trifled as a poetaster for half-a-dozen years, and then turned his attention, in all probability, to politics.

A thin quarto volume of translations from the ballads of Bürger was the book with which Walter Scott made his first appearance in the field of literature, in which he was destined to gain so great a name. This flight was not a very brilliant one; and it would be no easy matter now to find a copy of the work. Hardly any notice was taken of it by the press. No critic of the day discovered any trace of talent, though it was distinguished by many terse and vigorous lines and many striking metaphors. It was a failure, and in marked contrast with the triumph of Tom Moore, who at this time was preparing to risk his flight with the *Odes of Anacreon*. The manuscript lay in the bottom of Moore's travelling trunk when he turned his back on the cloisters of Trinity College, Dublin, and started for London. He had set his heart upon publishing the work by hook or by crook, if he could only find a bookseller to take it upon any terms. 'I can scarcely expect more than a free publication,' he writes, 'as poems are really, in the present state of the age, a heavy article on the publishers' hands.' He settled down in a front room up two pairs of stairs in George Street, Portman Square; and here he worked day and night, poring over the relics of the Teian bard, with Boyle on one side and Spaletti's *fac simile* of the Vatican manuscript on the other. He tested his translation, in fact, line by line. It was a long and tiring task. But with a man of Moore's nature and taste it was a labour of love. He put his whole heart into it; and many years after, when he was at the height of his popularity, the author of *Lalla Rookh* frequently took his friends to see the room where 'the first proof sheet that ever I received was put into my hands.' It was the proof that formed the groundwork of Moore's fame. His *Odes* ran through half-a-dozen editions in six weeks; and, like Byron, he woke up, in that garret in George Street, to find himself famous.

Before he had ceased to be a schoolboy, Shelley was author of a romance called *Zastrozzi*. The book bears upon its title-page the initials P. B. S. It was published when the poet was eighteen. It is a boy's attempt to surpass the pieces of contemporary fiction—romances of pseudo-passion written in staccato sentences, of melodramatic

prose. A publisher in Paternoster Row, it has been related, was venturesome enough to give forty pounds for it, with which the unfledged writer feasted eight of his schoolfellows. What a contrast to Chatterton—far more precocious even than Shelley—who made his callow flight in the poem called *Apostate Will* before he was twelve years of age! His pocket-book, found in the Holborn garret, discloses all the money he received during four months of his literary labour. It amounted to four pounds fifteen shillings and ninepence, including half a guinea for sixteen songs. But a greater portion of his work during these last days—as the same pocket-book reveals—was never paid for at all.

Lord Lytton, too, had scarcely attained his sixteenth year when *Ismael, an Oriental Tale, and other Poems*, was published. While at Cambridge, where he wrote his prize poem on 'Sculpture,' he occupied the long vacation by wandering over a large portion of England and Scotland on foot; and it is not improbable that the experiences gained during such a ramble, and his subsequent journey through France on horseback, first gave rise to his idea of appearing as a novelist. *Falkland* was published anonymously. It was a story which is said to have cost the author more trouble than any of his subsequent novels; and it certainly contains the germ of many after-creations.

At the time that Disraeli threw up his clerkship with the firm of attorneys he was serving, it is recorded on good authority that he sought to be engaged as a political writer on the newspaper press. But though he never actually became a journalist, his literary powers did not long lie dormant. At the age of twenty-two he burst upon the world with his first novel, *Vivian Grey*, more remarkable, perhaps, for a youth of twenty than Congreve's *Old Bachelor*. Most of the story was written, it is alleged, even before Disraeli had reached his twentieth year, even before he had made a rather extended tour on the Continent. It was on his return from this journey that he found himself famous. The cleverness of *Vivian Grey*, its arrogance, its personalities, its thinly disguised portraits of living celebrities, hit the taste of the period, and the writer became the 'lion' of the London season. In after years, when created Earl of Beaconsfield, he endeavoured to persuade the publishers to exclude this callow flight in an edition of his works, but without success. *Vivian Grey* and its author were too well known for that.

It was when little more than twenty that Fielding began to write plays. In his time it was the most profitable kind of literature. His first attempt was *Love in Several Masques*, a comedy of the Congreve school. It was brought out at Drury Lane. The play was well received; and the author, who did not publish his great novel of *Tom Jones* until twenty years after, became a regular playwright. Before the age of thirty he had produced a great number of comedies, farces, and burlesques. None of these are now known, excepting perhaps the mock-tragedy of *Tom Thumb*, the translated plays of the *Miser* and the *Mock Doctor*. His famous work, *Tom Jones*, was composed under all the disadvantages incident to an author; and in the dedication

Fielding has intimated that without the assistance of Lord Lyttelton and the Duke of Bedford the novel had never been written.

There are great writers, on the other hand, who never even attempted a callow flight above the literary horizon—writers who have kept in their desks many pages of material upon all subjects—writers who have never thought fit to 'lay out their learning with the same diligence as they laid it in.' They preferred, in the words of Dr Johnson, to 'wait for clearer light and fuller discovery.' It may be that some authors, looking back upon their callow flights, as Disraeli looked back at his *Vivian Grey*, have wished they, too, had waited.

WITH IRON WILL.

BY THOMAS ST E. HAKE.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

My boat is lying motionless in a shady nook, and I am looking down dreamily into the stream. Scarcely a cloud crosses the blue depth of sky, and the reflected sunlight finds its way between the shadows of branches and clusters of leaves. It is an ideal landscape—a landscape trembling in liquid light and shade. I am still looking downwards into this sunlit, leafy scene, and living more within it than in the material world around me, when I become conscious of maiden eyes gazing up laughingly into mine. Never was lovelier face mirrored in Nature's looking-glass. The eyes are large and dark, with a liquid light of their own beaming between the black quivering lashes; the full lips are half parted with inquisitive surprise; and round the oval face there is a halo of reddish-brown hair resembling the autumn foliage in its russet tint.

The face is gone. A slight movement of my boat has blurred my watery mirror, and there is nothing more to be seen down there. So I return to earth. I glance up at the high bank under which my boat is moored, where the pendent branches almost meet overhead. I look round me with a vague hope that the face is not a disembodied shadow—a mere 'creation of a poetic fancy.' The landscape, which I had seen repeated in the river, is visible in all its actual beauty, with the sunlight breaking in between the leaves. But no laughing eyes now meet mine.

I sink down into my boat, but not with any sense of despair. I am hopeful of meeting my water-nymph again. I loose my boat, and let it glide of its own free will down stream; I have no thought of hurrying away. I am still in the deep heart of the wood, and this shady stream is its life, flowing gently through it.

I came out of this deep solitude at last. The river broadened; and I pulled vigorously up stream in the hot dazzling sunlight. Presently a pretty river-side inn was reached, and I was greeted by the landlady with a long pitiful face. Not that she suspected me of possessing a spark of romance. It was my dinner that troubled her. It had been 'put back,' as she expressed it, a dozen times, and was nearly spoilt. Nor did matters improve when she discovered that I had lost my appetite, and was even less inclined than usual to be talkative, or, more strictly speaking, to tolerate *her* talk. She naturally concluded

that her cooking was at fault. I hastened to assure her that it was 'the weather:' her cooking had nothing to do with it. She appeared pacified; and I now took the opportunity of putting a question which had been on the tip of my tongue all dinner-time.

'Who lives'—and I tried to speak with as much indifference as possible—'who lives in that fine park with a white house on the slope? That little river down stream, whatever it's called, runs through the property. Any one of importance?'

'Why, that's Waking Hall! Colonel Hethersett lives there.'

I allowed an exclamation of surprise to escape me, of which I soon repented. Not that I wished to hide from the landlady, for any deep reason, that the name of Hethersett was familiar to me. But I quickly realised that I had loosened her tongue. I knew all, more at least than she did, about the owner of Waking Hall; I was quite convinced of that. The question was: how to put an end to her loquacity? I dispensed with ceremony, if any was expected of me; so hastily left my seat at the table, and broke up the 'conference' by politely asking for a match. Scarcely pausing to light my cigarette, I made an escape into the open air, and turned my steps in the direction of Waking Hall.

Some ten years ago, while I was still a student at St Bartholomew's, in London, a serious affair had come under my notice. A man was brought into the hospital, late one night, seriously injured. He had been found in one of the by-streets in the neighbourhood of Smithfield in an unconscious state. It was apparently a case of attempted murder; though what the would-be assassin's actual motive had been for the attack—whether revenge or robbery—was never clearly ascertained. No robbery had been committed; and when my patient recovered, after some weeks of suffering, he threw no light upon the matter. I was in constant attendance upon him, and it was my unexpressed belief that he could have partially solved the mystery if so disposed. But he volunteered no explanation. The business was, so he declared, in his lawyer's hands; and it did not appear to be any one else's right to interfere. And yet I was deeply interested, not only in the case, but in the striking appearance of my patient, and many remarkable traits in his character. A word, often a mere look from him, would instantly obtain obedience. He never showed a sign of ill-temper; and yet he made one feel that he was naturally passionate, and that to attempt to provoke him would be a dangerous experiment. His very voice expressed his indomitable will. His name was Hethersett, as I now distinctly remembered: Colonel Hethersett, of Waking Hall; and on taking leave of me, he had extracted a promise that should I ever happen to be in the neighbourhood of Waking, I would pay him a visit. His name, even the name of the village, had almost entirely escaped my memory. Ten years in the midst of a busy professional life in London will force a man to forget everything except his immediate surroundings.

The twilight is nearly gone; the last rays die out as the clouds rise and cover the sky. The day is over; and when I gain the high-road, dark

and lonely with its steep hills on either side, it is night. At a turn in the road, and only a few yards ahead of me, I observe a broad streak of light stretching across the highway. On the hill-side, at the point from which the light appears to issue, bluish transparent flames rise like lambent tongues of fire towards the dark sky. As I approach nearer and come within the space of light, I find that it proceeds from a large limekiln standing back some paces from the road, and built against the hill. A man springs up suddenly from the ground. I accost him with a cheery 'Good-evening.' The watchman, as I conclude him to be, gruffly echoes my greeting. 'Why, my friend,' I venture to remark, 'you're warm enough here to roast an ox!'

'It is warm,' replies the watchman. 'But it is worse, much worse, on a blazing hot day, I can tell you. And that,' he adds, 'is one reason why I choose the night.'

I begin to feel that this great furnace by the roadside has a certain fascination for me. Its huge iron doorway is red-hot, and the fire within roars lustily.

'Does it need much stoking?' I inquire. 'It looks furious.'

'Ay; more stoking,' says the man, 'than you might suppose. I seem always at it. I never think o' taking a wink of sleep all night long. I lie down and smoke and watch. That's what I do: smoke and watch that fire. He needs feeding five or, may be, six times in the hour.—Looks hungry now, don't he?'

The man approaches the kiln as he speaks with a long pole in his hand. It looks to me like a barge pole with iron hook and pike.

'Do you live here?' I ask him; for I am growing interested in the man as well as the fire.

'Why, yes; that's my home,' and he jerks his thumb over his shoulder towards a small wooden hut beside the kiln. 'At daybreak my mate relieves me, and I turn in. You'll not often catch me coming out of my kennel, as he calls it, till after dark.'

'The life seems to agree with you,' and I glance, while saying this, at his muscular figure.

'Agree with me?' he repeats with an odd laugh. 'Ay; it suits my purpose, guv'nor. I don't complain.'

And now he pulls open the iron door, and through the chinks between the bars the fierce fire lights up his face. I have followed him while talking; but the intense heat forces me to step some paces back. He is in his shirt sleeves, which are rolled up almost to his shoulders. He is certainly a remarkably powerful-looking fellow, with the arms of a stalwart blacksmith. His beard is thick, and intensely red; and his small eyes have a fierce expression—which he may have caught from the fire—glittering under red bushy eyebrows; and as he presently lifts his cap aside, to wipe the perspiration from his brow with the back of his hand, I notice an ugly scar across his forehead.

He appears disinclined for further talk; so I bid him 'Good-night' and go on my way.

When I reach Waking Hall, a few minutes later, I am shown into a luxurious smoking divan. The room is lit with lamps, the green shades being of some semi-transparent texture

which gives to every object a subdued appearance. The walls are thickly ornamented with spears and guns and a dozen other warlike implements. I have scarcely time to glance about me, and get confused ideas of hunting scenes and jungles, when a step on the terrace attracts my attention. A gentleman comes in at the open casement. He looks at my card, which he holds in his fingers—looks at me—and then steps quickly forward. 'Sherwin?' he exclaims, seizing my hand. 'Why, you're the surgeon who saved my life! This is a pleasure.'

He is a man of about sixty, not strikingly tall, but with an appearance of unusual breadth and strength. Ten years appear to have wrought little change in him, certainly no change for the worse. It is the same handsome face, the same firm and fearless expression, that I now recall to mind as if it were only yesterday. He waves me towards an armchair near the window, brings me cigarettes, remembers my favourite iced drink, and in a word, makes me as welcome as if I were his own son.

He has been walking about the room, principally occupied in looking after my comforts, talking the while about matters of little, or at least no special importance. At last he lights a cigar and sinks down upon a tiger-skin on an ottoman facing me. He now, for the first time, speaks of himself.

'Did I ever tell you, Sherwin, how I came to receive that knock-down blow?'

'Why, no. I thought the whole affair inscrutable.'

'So I suspect it is,' he answers, 'as far as the world in general is concerned. But I can make it clear to you in a few words. Will you listen?'

I express myself most willing; and Colonel Hethersett begins. 'While stationed at Cawnpore, some thirteen years ago, I had a very unruly man-servant. The fellow was quite incorrigible. Most men would have sent him about his business within a week. In fact, every one had done so who had been unlucky enough to have him in their service. But I had a fancy to tame him. I could see that he thought himself my master. I resolved to prove to him the contrary, cost what it might.'

He speaks in a low, distinct voice that is very impressive. But his look is more impressive still. The intense gray eyes, the stern mouth, and contracted brow indicate the wilful, dauntless nature of the man.

'Most of us,' he resumes, 'choose the wrong vocation in life. I was a born lion-tamer. The fact is, Sherwin,' he adds, as though it were hardly worth mentioning, 'I don't know what fear means.'

He pauses for a while. I am on the point of making some inconsequent remark, when my ear is touched by the sound of music. It floats out airily upon the night, and seems to mingle harmoniously with the reflection of light that falls across the terrace from the windows adjoining the divan.

'One day,' Colonel Hethersett continues, 'one day, Kenrick, as this man was called, refused to obey me. It was the first time in my life that I had ever met with serious opposition. The look on the man's face told me that he felt he had gone

too far. But repentance had come too late. Had he instantly gone down on his knees and begged my pardon, it would still have been too late. My passion had got the better of me. I seized the first thing that came to hand. It was the most terrible weapon, I am sorry to say, that could possibly fall within an angry man's reach. It was a thong of buffalo hide. I struck him across the forehead—and he indicates the spot by quickly touching his own forehead while he speaks. 'He dropped at my feet as though he had been shot.'

I cannot utter a word. I hear no music now; no sound but loud throbbings in my ears. The Colonel rises hastily, and paces to and fro with a quick firm step.

I have risen too. I am standing at the window, and now glance eagerly out. The light thrown upon the terrace from this window and the windows of the adjacent room finds a limit against the terrace balustrade. Beyond, the darkness is intense; but in the midst of this darkness, on the distant high-road, pale-blue flames are lapping at a space in the night. It appears quite near—though it must be at least half a mile away—so near, that the soft wind, this sultry autumn evening, seems to contain its warmth as it touches my cheek.

The Colonel taps me gently on the shoulder and steps lightly out upon the terrace. I look quickly into his face. Every trace of severity is gone. 'Come,' says he, in a lively tone; 'let us go to the drawing-room. Sybil will be wondering who?'

'Stay!' I interrupt the Colonel—'one moment. This must be the man who struck you down—the man who made the attempt on your life in Smithfield—ten years ago.'

'Of course! How can you ask me?' He speaks with a slight impatience. But that does not check my questions.

'Have you seen him since?'

'No.'

'Nor suspect his whereabouts?'

'No.'

'Colonel Hethersett,' I resumed, 'I can tell you where he is. I have seen him, spoken to him, only this evening.'

'Where?'

I point across the terrace into the night. 'There! He is watchman at the limekiln fire.'

Not even now does Colonel Hethersett evince the least shade of surprise; nor does the weird light, that seems to me like a threatening torch lifted up in the black night by some invisible trembling arm, entice him to take his eyes off me.

'You knew him by the scar,' he quietly assumes.

'Yes; I knew him when you touched your forehead a moment ago,' I reply. 'It's a hideous mark.'

The Colonel looks troubled. 'Poor fellow! But I must tame him now,' he says with a sudden change in his face, 'or he'll spring at me again behind my back.'

'Do you really mean,' I say, in a tone of reproach, 'to take the law into your own hands?'

'I mean to tame him,' he replies in a firm voice.

His manner is polite, but so decisive that I make no attempt to utter another word. I stand there, and his eye is still upon me. I feel powerless in the presence of this strong-willed man. He flings away the end of his cigar and beckons me with a playful wave of the hand. I follow.

'Sybil, my dear,' I hear the Colonel saying, 'this is Philip Sherwin, the gentleman who saved my life.'

I am standing in a brilliantly-lighted drawing-room. A young girl in pale green attire is rising from the piano and is coming towards me. I cannot be mistaken. It is the lovely face that I had seen, only a few hours ago, mirrored in the midst of sunlight and foliage by the river-side.

PROGRESS IN CIVILISING THE INDIAN.

OLD Father Time rings many changes all over the civilised world, but in no portion are the changes as radical as in the Far West. Lately the writer made a visit among the same Indians—the Sioux—he used to visit thirteen or fourteen years since. But what a change he found! At that time the process of civilising these children of the plains was in its infancy; to-day, it may be said to have attained its youth. Then the Sun Dance, with its trying ordeals, was religiously observed every summer, and the youths who could successfully pass through the tortures without evincing fear or pain were admitted to full recognition by the entire tribe as warriors. But to-day, the Sun Dance, like the buffalo, has passed into tradition. The chiefs and warriors who at that time required an iron hand and the continual presence of troops to keep them in control, to-day are ranked as 'coffee-coolers,' who are cowed by a threat to reduce the rations Government furnishes them with. At that time the houses the Government had built for them were used to stable their favourite ponies in; and for the wagons, except in a few isolated instances, they had no earthly use; now, we find them occupying the houses themselves, except in extremely hot weather, and rarely do you see them on horseback.

The causes for these changes are many, but principally because the large game—buffalo, elk, and antelope—became so scarce that the Indians could not kill enough to sustain life. This made them dependent on the Government, for to work they were ashamed. Then the Government, to encourage them, discriminated in their favour in freighting—that is, in hauling the Government supplies from the nearest steamboat landing or railroad station to the Agency. At first you would see these Indian trains, as we called them, come over the hills and prairies lightly loaded, so as to enable the ponies, usually six in each team, to trot and run the entire distance. But as time passed on, and they observed that the white men employed in the same work earned more money, although they did not travel so fast, a change came. Naturally the Indian is shrewd, as we say out here 'smart,' and he was not long in detecting the reason for this difference in his earnings and the white man's. Then the red men who were willing to do this work—took the number was increasing all the time—took to horse-trading, and gradually displaced their

ponies for larger though slower horses ; with these they hauled heavier loads, even though they made slower time.

Do not for a moment imagine that these warriors, as they called themselves, took kindly to this work. In fact, all they did was to sit upon the wagon in dignified silence and drive the team. They carried their squaws with them to load and unload the supplies they hauled, as well as to harness and unharness the ponies, cook, procure fuel for camp-fire, and water. This was the first-step the Indian took towards civilisation. His next was to sit by and see his squaw farm, or maybe hold the reins while she held the plough handles. To-day the full-blooded bucks of middle age do little else. Only a few months since the writer saw an old fellow sitting in his wagon in grim silence beside his squaw, who had accompanied him about two hundred yards from their home for the purpose of filling the water-barrel at the spring. He was willing to drive the pony team, but drew the line at filling the water-barrel. According to his early training, that was work, and work was beneath the dignity of a great warrior ; in other words, he seemed to ask himself the question, what was the squaw intended for if not to work ? He had apparently, too, answered it to his own satisfaction, if not to the woman's.

You will say : ' We thought you were going to write of progress ; we don't see much progress in all this.'

Well, among the older Indians this is about as much progress as has been made, except in the matter of dress. For now you see every one dressed in civilised costume ; then, it was rarely you saw one except in savage attire—a breech-clout, leggings, and blanket. The progress has been made by the younger generation. The church missionaries took the youths and maidens in charge, and taught them the manners, customs, and morals of the whites. Nature had been kind to these dusky children in giving them such minds as might be moulded without great difficulty ; their perceptive faculties were keen, and their intelligence of a superior order to what it had been considered. Some of the youth of both sexes were sent to schools in the east ; but this was discovered to be injurious to their health, and many came back to the tribe with that dread disease, consumption, irretrievably fastened in their systems. Another result, too, was noticeable : that while the youth had been away at school learning civilised manners, the parents remained as they were ; and on the return of the youth, instead of influencing his or her parents for good, the Indian blood asserted itself, and the youthful ones soon returned to the old ways.

The greatest progress, and that most beneficial to the greatest number, was attained by the missionaries' efforts to teach the youth on their own reservations. This has at last become so apparent to the Government, that Industrial Schools are now being established near towns which have been built on the boundaries of the reservations, where the young Indians of both sexes will in future be taught industrial pursuits as well as the learning obtained from books. Nearly all the missionaries of the Episcopal Church to-day are native Indians, in some instances full-bloods, but for the most part half-breeds. These men are

earnest, conscientious, and industrious, exerting a powerful influence for good in the tribes.

To my knowledge, but one instance is on record where a young Indian has chosen and fitted himself for the practice of law. This happened in Dakota a few months since in the District Court of Brule County. His examiners reported him thoroughly competent for admission to the bar ; on which recommendation he was admitted, and is enjoying already a lucrative practice.

The latest move by the Government towards civilising these red men is an attempt to break up the tribal relations, and encourage them to take land in severalty, one hundred and sixty acres for each adult Indian, who, when he has chosen his land, is furnished with teams, agricultural implements, and is besides entitled to vote the same as any other citizen of the United States. Of these advantages, though, they are slow to avail themselves, because when they take this step all their rations are cut off, and they are expected to support themselves the same as any white man.

In one instance in particular the Indian sets an example to his white brother. In front of all their houses they erect a bowery, which affords a pleasant shade from the hot summer sun, and here they eat, instead of in the hothouse where the cooking has been done. Then, again, as soon as the fleas and other insects commence to bother in the summer, they take their blankets either into a lodge or tent, or else sleep in the open air. They say it is easier to move away from the insects than to move the insects.

The old full-bloods I don't believe can ever be civilised ; but the growing generation will become ere long comparatively so. Every generation will improve until, before many years, the Indian of to-day will be known only as a tradition.

IN GREEK WATERS.

I SAW a beacon lighted on a hill,
Rising from out the smooth Ionian Sea ;
Soon it took shape and spread itself, until
Another light it showed itself to be—
The rising moon. It was no light of earth :
This island-beacon owned a heavenly birth.

I saw the sun rise straight out of the sea,
Gilding green Scio's isle with newborn light,
Till all before me, mountain, tower, and tree,
Was crowned with glory. 'Twas a goodly sight.
Its fair remembrance shall abide with me,
When on this drooping soul falls the dull night.

We passed Colonna's Cape, where Sunium stands,
With its white temple warning us away ;
Bidding us back with deprecating hands,
Lest on th' enchanted ground we rashly stay.
Like ghosts they hover o'er the perilous steep,
As those who have received a charge to keep,
To keep the mariner lest he go astray ;
Not as those Sirens luring to the shore,
Thy columns, Sunium, haunt us evermore.

G. J. COWLEY-BROWN.

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THE SCILLY ISLES.

It is not a particularly far cry from Fleet Street to the Scilly Isles, and yet I suppose more Englishmen know the shores of the Mediterranean and the ways of life in the American West than aught by experience of this little archipelago, some twenty-five miles west-by-south of Land's End. In a measure, this is not wonderful. For the Scillies are so small a group that one may almost be in doubt if they contain adequate moving-room. And further, they are neither extremely grand in their rock scenery, nor do they offer those chances of sport in different branches which are generally the chief attraction in outlying lands.

All the same, they are worth visiting, if only for the fine lesson they give in the brutality of the sea and the storms. A stroll round their various coast-lines is quite alarming. There is so much ponderous wreckage lying about the granite boulders and edges, that it seems as if every night in the year brings local disaster upon some poor vessel. This is not really so, of course. But before the existence of the three or four lighthouses which now guard the isles, the Scillies were about the worst group of rocks in our seas for their fatality. Sir Cloudesley Shovel and the greater part of his fleet came to grief upon them; and many a hundred other vessels. In those days, too, the islanders were a disreputable set of fellows. It was only natural. They caught fish in their waters, to be sure; but they also relied upon smuggling and the more solid fruits of the sea. Tradition tells us that on St Agnes, the fourth island in size, it was customary for the men to meet once a year at a certain well in a rocky cove, and ardently invoke their patron saint to send them plenty of wrecks in the coming twelve months.

Nowadays, however, the islands are somewhat paternally administered. They are part of the Duchy of Cornwall; but some sixty years ago were leased to a gentleman named Augustus Smith; and his nephew, the present proprietor,

still holds them in continuance of this lease. The Smith rule is, upon the whole, very good for the islanders. The Governor, as he is called, is especially opposed to the old error of overpopulation, which made life for the Scillonians wretched and precarious. On the other hand, to better the lot of those remaining, industrial works of a small kind were instituted. The pier of St Mary's is one of these works. The early-potato traffic and the cultivation of flowers have also of late years enabled the islanders to put much money in their pockets.

Under these various civilising influences, the Scillonians have become a reputable little community. Instead of rejoicing over a shipwreck now, they are at all times eager to risk their own lives for the lives of others, and full of pity for the poor fellows the storms leave upon their rocks naked and destitute. They have three admirable lighthouses in their waters—on Round Island, St Agnes, and the Bishop Rock; and also a lightship stationed several miles to the east of the archipelago. And annually they are called upon to put themselves to no slight inconvenience and expense in burying the bodies of the unfortunates whom the sea washes upon their shores. They do not like this sort of thing, to be sure. It seems hard that there should be no State fund for such a purpose. Nevertheless, they bear their burden without an excessive amount of grumbling.

The islands are so low in the Atlantic that they are more numerous when the tide is out than when it is at the flood. It were a long business to record their names. It is enough to mention the principal isles: St Mary's, Tresco, St Martin's, St Agnes, and Bryher. These are the only islands now inhabited: and, all told, their population is under two thousand. Until about 1855, a sixth island, Samson, held a few families—numbering thirty-seven souls in 1831—but the census of 1861 found nothing but dismantled buildings among the gorse and heath of this picturesque little plot of land. These shells of houses still exist, and serve as stalls for the eight

or ten cows that are now the successors of their residents.

St Mary's, the chief island, is about nine miles in circumference, and in no part of it does it rise as high as a couple of hundred feet. Considering its smallness and remoteness, it is by no means a dull little land. This is markedly shown in the spring, when the mackerel season has begun and the flower season is not yet over. Daily then, during the workaday week, a steamer leaves the capital for Penzance, and often it takes a sufficiently valuable freight to Billingsgate and Covent Garden.

From my bedroom window in the hotel of St Mary's I used to watch the long procession of luggers running into harbour soon after day-break, to get their catches sold and stored for the morning market. Sometimes three or four would speed abreast up the sound; and now and again, when the wind was strong from the north, with a low barometer, their pitching and tossing was enough to make me think the hotel itself had lost its equilibrium: a delusion fostered by the wailing of the wind through the crevices of the house, and the agitated fronds of the Himalaya palms in the garden outside. The scene on board the steamer of a morning was also odd enough to be worth witnessing. As each lugger came alongside and exposed its catch in its hold, the fish auctioneer put them up for sale without loss of a moment. If they were mackerel, they were sold by the hundred; if hake, by the dozen or score; or singly if they were fine fish and few were in the market. It was soon settled. The Billingsgate men on board paid cash down, and immediately had their spoil packed and stowed. In less than twenty-four hours it would be in the savoury market by Thames' side: not literally 'all alive oh!' but fresh enough to suit even a fastidious palate.

The flowers are a much sweeter subject. Scilly land-cultivators are vastly indebted to the Governor, Colonel Smith Dorrien-Smith, for this island industry. He himself sends tons of narcissus to Covent Garden from his residential island of Tresco, a mile across the strait from St Mary's. But the expenses of his gardens and estate are so large that the flowers are hardly a source of revenue to him. Not so with other Scillonians. You may see acres of the flowers in the more sheltered parts of St Mary's protected from the gales by high fencing and hedges of the shrub *Escallonia macrantha*; and acres mean a good deal when the wholesale price of an undamaged single narcissus is a farthing. It is not an uncommon thing for a farmer to send off fifty pounds' worth of the flowers in a week; this, too, without reliance upon any hired labour. Nor is the flower-season so short and uncertain as one might suppose. It runs through April and May with little or no variation. And afterwards the potatoes have to be dugged and packed in like manner, with the like agreeable result to the cash-box of the farmer. If the Scillies were not overmatched by the competition of the counties in the south-west of the mainland, they would also send us clotted cream as good as Devon's; but they do well without this. There are three or four banks in the little capital of the archipelago, which tells a tale of its own. But in spite of this, not every cultivator will

trust his 'pile' out of Penzance. Some think there is likelihood of the south of France ousting Scilly in the flower-trade even as it has to some extent in the new-potato trade. But it seems improbable; for French express trains cannot compete quite satisfactorily with the trains from Penzance; and with such delicate merchandise every hour is of consequence.

The climate of the Scillies is so mild that, in common with a score or two of other island groups, the archipelago figures as a health-resort. If only St Mary's was a little larger and could afford to print a newspaper of its own, we should hear more on this subject than we do. As it is, the Penzance press does its best, and in the Cornish bookshops one espies pamphlets which, upon perusal, prove plainly that with such salubrious islets within three or four hours' steam of the mainland, people who go to Madeira and Tenerife are sometimes more than foolish.

But, in fact, though the Scilly air is sufficiently pure, the Scilly climate is really neither dry nor steadily warm enough to compare favourably with the better-known invalid resorts. The islands get snow in seasons like the winter of 1890-91; and they are always subject to the same variability that gives such a charm to our British climate. During one week in May, we had, for example, a tearing breeze from the south-east, rain-squalls from the south-west, a nipping north-wester with clear skies and a bright-blue sea studded with dancing white-horses, and a sober calm which made the myriad of Scilly's black rocks look like bits of coal spread about an immense polished silver dish. It was a wonder we had not a fog as well. These are, in truth, the most characteristic visitations. It is during the fogs that most of the wrecks take place; and they come so thick in the spring that the doomed ship may get within gunshot of the lighthouses without seeing the lanterns. As it was, one or two of the nights were misty enough to set the doleful fog-guns of the Bishop lighthouse firing in the dark hours.

Though harmless to the robust, if bestowed in moderation, these Scilly fogs can in no way be recommended to the invalid. Moreover, they are such gloomy blankets for the person whose mind or body is not at ease. Nor are there in this little coterie of houses those welcome diversions which in the sunnier south help forward the well-being of the body by the entertainment of the mind. To hear tell of a fishing lugger ashore on the Retarrier Reef or Annet, with the probability of all hands being lost, is the strongest excitement one may then look for. And on the morrow you may go and gaze at the crushed frame of the vessel through your telescope if you think the sight will do you good. With most of us, however, these tales of calamity are bound to have a depressing effect.

Next to St Mary's the island of Tresco is the most important. It is scarcely half the size of St Mary's, yet at the beginning of the century its population equalled that of the chief island. However, in 1881 it had but 328 inhabitants as compared with the 1290 of St Mary's; and the current census will not much disturb this proportion.

As the abode of the lord proprietor of the isles, Tresco is in some respects more interesting

than St Mary's. Smith the First—if we may be allowed the phrase—designed and built the Abbey residence here close to the ruins of an old monastic establishment which is believed to date from the time of the Norman Conquest. The visitor who fails to cross the couple of miles of waterway between St Mary's and Tresco to visit the Smith gardens is held to have missed the most alluring spot in the isles. It may be so. Often, however, the passage involves a hearty attack of sea-sickness, which some think not worth risking even for the sake of the most illustrious spectacle in the world. Yet, seriously, the Tresco gardens are in their way very charming. The congregation of sub-tropical plants in this sheltered recess is particularly remarkable; and it is certainly odd to walk in an avenue of palms, hale and hearty as can be, and be able to assure one's self that England is only five-and-twenty miles away. This, I suppose, is one of the surest proofs of the mildness of the Scilly climate.

But the Abbey is not all Tresco by any means. At the northern end of the island the rocks are as bold and impressive as their altitude will allow them to be; and here, too, on the edge of the strait which parts Tresco from Bryher, is a solid old castle keep which has been christened after Oliver Cromwell. There is, further, a cliff in the channel a stone's-throw distant which goes by the name of Hangman's Rock, and tradition has it that during the Great Rebellion the rock was used as a place of execution. After the general flavour of tragic death by drowning, which heretofore has seemed the main feature of the Scilly Isles, it is almost exhilarating to meet with such fresh suggestiveness as this.

Of the other inhabited isles little need be said. Bryher is sometimes left by the spring-tides accessible on foot from Tresco. It has a winding coast-line, with bright little bays verdant to the edges. St Agnes is set about with ghastly rocks like teeth, that even in calm weather look as if they were hungering to transfix the bottom of an ironclad. Here more bodies are washed ashore than upon any of the islands, much to the annoyance of the people; and in its frightful bays you may see the shattered framework of more wrecks than elsewhere. The modern dwellers in St Agnes are not reprobates like their forefathers; the lighthouse set in their midst is rather a type of their regenerated natures. In 1881 they numbered but one hundred and forty-eight—every one, I imagine, cousin, if nothing nearer, to his neighbour. It is said you may still reckon off their distinctive surnames on one hand.

Last of all, St Martin's must be noticed. This is the third in size, and the one of which I have the most pleasant recollections. I was first attracted to it by the glowing gold of its gorse as seen from Tresco, a mile or two distant. Later, I stayed in it for a while, being welcomed into the family of an honest farmer whose ancestors had dwelt here I know not how long. As its extent is only about five hundred acres, I was soon much at home with its yellow downs and snowy sands; and when the time came to commission six of the islanders to row me back again to the capital, I was as sorry as if I had had to snap a chord in my heart. It has not very much individuality. Yet on the map you may see

that its various centres of population are called Higher Town, Lower Town, and Middle Town. Is not this delightfully ambitious in an island of five hundred acres, with, all told, a hundred and seventy souls, and not a single house for the sale of tobacco or strong drink? Yet there is nothing of braggartness about the people themselves. Those of them who do not subsist by the cultivation of their little garden-plots possess liver-coloured cows, and rely upon the Atlantic to enable them to keep soul and body comfortably conjoined.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XXIV.—THE HALL OF THE NEW FAITH.

THE Place, as Mr Edmund Gray modestly called it, was a meek and unpretending Structure. The word is used advisedly, because no one could call it anything else. Not an Edifice: not a Building—a Structure. It turned its gabled front to the street, with a door below and a window above. It was of gray brick with a slate roof—a very plain and simple Structure. It might have been a Primitive Methodist Chapel—this Connection are fond of such neat and unpretending places: or a room belonging to the Salvation Army: or one of those queer lecture halls affected by Secularists and generally called the Hall of Science. On the door-post was affixed a small handbill, announcing that every Sunday evening at seven o'clock an address would be pronounced by Edmund Gray, on the subject of 'Property.' On the same bill, below the line of the principal title, were suggestive subtitles. Thus:

- 'Property and its Origin.'
- 'Property and its Evils.'
- 'Property and its Dangers.'
- 'Property and Liberty.'
- 'Property and Progress.'
- 'Property and its Decay.'

The Master pointed to the Bill. 'Read it,' he said. 'There you have my mission clearly announced. No mistake about it. A bold pronouncement, which cannot be mistaken. I make war against Property—I am the enemy irreconcilable—the enemy to the death—of Property. I am almost alone against the world, for my followers are a feeble folk and without power. All the interests, all the prejudices, all the powers, all the intellect, of the whole world are against me. I stand alone. But I fear nothing, because the future is given over to me and to mine—yea—though I do not live to see the day of Victory.'

He opened the door, and Elsie entered. She found herself in a room about sixty feet long by twenty broad, and lofty—a fine and goodly room. It was furnished with a long and narrow table running down the middle, and a few benches. Nothing else. The table was laid with a white cloth, and provided with plates of ham and beef, cold sausages, hard-boiled eggs, cakes, toast, muffins, bread and butter, marmalade, jam, shrimps, water-cresses, and teacups. In fact,

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there was spread out a Tea of generous proportions.

The room was half filled with thirty or forty people, mostly young, though there were some elderly men. Among them Elsie remarked, without surprise, the decayed Barrister of Gray's Inn. Perhaps he was attracted as much by the loaves as by the sermon. Three-quarters of them were young men. Elsie noticed that they were young men of a curious type—their faces keen, their eyes hard, their manner aggressive. They belonged to a Church Militant. They longed to be fighting. On the appearance of their preacher they flocked about him, shaking hands and inquiring after his health. At least, therefore, he had the affection of his followers.

'My friends,' said the Prophet, 'I bring you a new Disciple. She comes to us from the very stronghold of Property. Her friends'—yet he had shown no sign of recognition—'are either those who pillage the producer, or those who rob the possessor on pretence of defending him. She is at present only a recruit. She comes to listen and to learn. She will go home to remember and to meditate. She is a recruit now who will be hereafter a Leader.'

The people received her with curiosity. They were not of the higher classes, to put it mildly, and they had never had a young lady among them before. Two or three girls who were present—girls from the dressmakers' workrooms—looked at her frock with envy, and at her bonnet and her gloves with a yearning, helpless, heart-sinking admiration. To the young men she seemed a goddess, unapproachable. They stood at a distance: men of the rank above them would have worshipped. These young men only gaped. Such a girl had nothing to do with their lives.

Apparently they had been waiting for the Master, for at the moment a stout woman and a girl appeared bearing trays with teapots and jugs of hot water, which they placed upon the board. Mr Edmund Gray took the chair. Elsie began to feel like Alice in Wonderland. She came to see a 'Place': she expected to hear a sermon or a lecture: and behold a Tea!

'Sit beside me,' said the Master. 'We begin our evening on Sunday with a simple feast, which I provide. It is a sign of brotherhood. Every Sunday we begin with this renewal of fraternity. Those who break bread together are brothers and sisters. In the good time to come every meal shall be in common, and every evening meal shall be a Feast. Eat and drink with us, my daughter. So you will understand that you belong to a Brotherhood.'

'Try some srimps, Miss,' said her neighbour on the right, an elderly man, who was a builder's foreman.

History does not concern itself with what Elsie took. She found the meal very much to the purpose after a long afternoon of talk, argument, and emotion. She was young and she was hungry. The tea was good: the things to eat were good: the cake and toast were admirable. Elsie ate and drank and wondered what was coming next.

After a little, she began to look round her and to watch the company. There were now, she counted, forty-five of them—forty-five disciples of

Mr Edmund Gray. What had he to teach them? The destruction of Property. Out of the four millions of London, forty-five were found who wanted to destroy Property—only forty-five. But perhaps all who advocated that step were not present. Her ancient prejudices whispered that this was a reassuring fact, considering that the Preacher had preached his doctrines for nine long years. Only forty-five. Next to her the foreman began to talk to her of Fourier and Owen and a dozen half-forgotten leaders in the old experiments. He had been a Chartist in the Forties: he was a Socialist in these, the Nineties: but he confessed that before any real reform was attempted, Property must first be destroyed.

'It's the selfishness,' he whispered earnestly, 'that's got to be torn out by the roots. Take that away, and there's a chance for the world. It never can be taken away till a man finds that he can't work no longer for himself, and that he must work for all, whether he likes it or lumps it. Don't give him the choice nor the chance, I say. Take away Property, and there's neither choice nor chance left. You hear Mr Gray upon that. Oh, he's powerful! What do they say? Naked we came into the world. Naked we enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. There's a wonderful lot of fine things hangin' to that. You must wait till you hear Mr Gray upon that theme.—Kingdom of Heaven! To hear the parsons talk, it's away above the clouds. Not so. It's here—close beside us—on this earth. All we've got to do is to put out our hands and reach it.'

'You may put out your hands as much as you like,' said one of the younger men; 'but you won't reach it, all the same. Property stands between.'

'At our place,' said a girl sitting opposite—a girl of intelligent face, pale and thin—'we work from eight till eight, and sometimes longer, for twelve shillings a week. I know what things cost and what they sell for. I could produce enough to keep me—ah! a good deal better than I live now—if I could sell what I made myself—for four hours' work a day. So I work eight hours a day, not counting the dinner-hour, just to keep the boss and to make Property for him. My Property it is—well—I know—in here, we say, *our* Property: outside we say, *my* Property. Where's your Kingdom of Heaven, then, if you reach out your hand ever so far, so long as I've got to work to make somebody else rich? Let's destroy Property, and then we shall see.'

A desire—a foolish concealed desire, born of prejudice, seized Elsie to argue. For she perceived in the girl's reasoning certain confusions and intricacies. But she had the courage to suppress the inclination: she refrained. She was a disciple. She must listen.

'I am a slave, like all the rest of us,' another young man remarked, cheerfully. 'My Master owns me. He can sell me if he likes, only he calls it by another name: he can't take a whip and lash me, though he'd like to; because, if he did, I'd break every bone in his body for him, but he can cut down the work and the money. I do editing and reporting for a local paper. Thirty shillings a week. The proprietor makes ten pounds a week out of it. And I'm not allowed to tell the truth for fear of advertisers.' He added a few words not commonly

heard in a place that looked like a chapel on a Sunday evening.

Elsie observed that their faces showed two variations of expression—only two. The majority of the company had the eyes of the dreamer, the theorist, the enthusiast. They are soft eyes, and in repose are heavy, and they look through stone walls into space, far away—space where their dreams are realised and men and women live according to their theories. In moments of enthusiasm and passion they become flaming fires. These eyes belonged to most of those present. The rest—the minority—were those who are angry and restless and eager for the practical application of the doctrine. These want revolution: they are impatient: they feel for themselves the injustices and oppressions which enthusiasts feel for others: these are always resentful: the others are always hopeful: these want to convert the world at once with bludgeon and with gun: the others are certain that before long the world will be converted by reason. The one despairs of anything but force: the other will have no force: the one hates his enemy: he would kill him if he could: he has no words too bad for him: the enthusiast, on the other hand, regards his enemy with pity, and would at any moment welcome him, forgive him, and—well—invite him to a Fraternal Tea if he would only desert his ranks and come over. And these are the two divisions in every party, and such is the nature of man that there must always be these two divisions.

The Fraternal Tea finished, the company cleared the tables, everybody lending a hand, perhaps as another sign or pledge of fraternity. It was then nearly seven o'clock, the hour appointed for the address. The door was thrown wide open for the admission of the world; but there was no sign that the world took the least interest in the subject of Property. No one came at all. Elsie learned afterwards that the world outside the Hall had long since grown tired of the subject on which Mr Gray had been preaching for nine years. Those who came to the Tea were the inner circle of believers or disciples, a small but faithful company, to whose members there was rarely any addition.

At seven Mr Edmund Gray rose to commence his address, standing at the head of the table, so that it was like an after-dinner speech. Outside, the sun was hot and bright and the air clear. Within the Hall, there were the mingled odours and steams of long-protracted and hearty Fraternal Tea: the air was heavy and the room dark. When the Master began to speak, a young man—one of the ardent and wrathful kind—drew out a note-book and took everything down: all listened with respect, some with rapt interest. Some nodded—some groaned—some said 'Hear' softly—to encourage the preacher and to show their adhesion to principle.

Elsie sat at the right hand of the speaker. His discourses moved her much less in this public place than in his chambers. The persuasive voice was there, but it did not persuade her—moreover, she could not meet his eyes. Their magnetism failed to touch her. So much the better, because she could listen with cold judgment and watch the people.

'My friends,' he began, 'my brothers and my

sisters—we are all long since agreed that the root of all evil, the first form of disease, the first fatal step that was leading to so many other mischiefs, was the beginning of Property. We have proved that so often—we are all so entirely agreed upon this vital principle, that we seldom, and only on rare occasions, find it necessary to do more than assume its truth. That occasion, however, is the present, when we have among us one who comes as a stranger, yet a disciple: one who has a mind open to the influence of reason: one who is anxious to clear herself of the prejudices and absurdities in which she has been from infancy brought up. Let us, therefore, briefly, for her instruction and for the strengthening of our own faith, point out some of the arguments which support this position. It is to us an axiom. To the world it still requires proof. And the world refuses to accept the proof, because it is given over to the Chase of the Abominable Thing.'

He proceeded to parade the reasons which made his School regard Property as the root of all evil. The line which he pursued was not new: many men have pointed out before Mr Edmund Gray the selfishness of mankind as illustrated by the universal game of Grab: others, with equal force, have shown that the protection of Things causes an immense expenditure and a great shrinkage in Things: others have shown that it is the continual efforts of men to get without working the Things for which others have worked, that fill our jails and keep up an army of police.

'We start with a false principle,' the Master went on, 'which has ruined the world and still keeps it down. If there are to be rich men, they must become rich at the expense of the rest: they must be few, and the poor must be many. Therefore, the protection of Property is the robbery of the poor by law. We all know that: in this place we have agreed, so far, a thousand times: the rich can only become rich by robbing the poor: they rob their land: they rob their work: they rob their whole lives—and they are permitted and encouraged by the Law. Shall we, then, change the Law? No: it would be a work too vast. Shall we change the minds of men? Not by reason: it is impossible by any argument so long as by law and custom they can still rob the producer of his work. The only way is to destroy all Property. When men can no longer by any kind of thought get richer than their neighbours, then they will cease to think for themselves, and think for the whole community. You will say—some one may object—that some are not the same in strength of mind or of body: there will be many, then, who will refuse to work at all, and become burdens on the community. We have thought of that objection. At first, there would be many such; but not for long. Because we should kill them. Yes, my friends,' he added with a smile of the sweetest benevolence. 'For the good of the community it will be necessary, without any sentimental considerations, to kill all those who refuse to work, all those who shirk their work, all those who persistently do scamped and bad work. They must die. So the commonwealth shall contain none but those who are vigorous, loyal, and true. For the rest—Death—if it means the death of a million who were once

rich—Death is the only escape from the difficulty which is so often objected.

'It has been asked again how we differ from the Socialists. In this. We would begin with no theories, no constitution, no code. Only let every man give all his strength, all his heart, all his mind, to the good of the commonwealth, without the least power of enriching himself, saving money—of course there would be no money—without the chance of getting better food and better clothes than the rest—and we may safely leave the world to take care of itself. Why—my brothers—why—my sisters—should we poor purblind creatures, unable to comprehend more than a glimpse of that glorious future which awaits the world when Property shall be destroyed—why—I say—should we dare to lay down schemes and invent systems for that glorified humanity? Let us leave them to themselves. They will be as far above us, my brothers, as we are already above the holders and the defenders of Property.'

Elsie looked at the little gathering—five-and-forty—with a little smile. They were then already far above the holders and the defenders of Property, and again she thought, 'What if these words were heard in Lincoln's Inn?'

'How, then, can Property be destroyed?'

At this practical question every one sat upright, coughed, and looked interested. Their Preacher had often enough declaimed upon the evils of Property. He seldom spoke of a practical way. Perhaps the time had come.

'There are, my friends, several ways. They are already beginning to be understood and to be worked. The Irish and the politicians who wanted the Irish vote have shown the world how to destroy property in land. Believe me, that example will be followed. It was an evil day for the holders of Property when the Government interfered between the landlord and his tenant. That example will bear fruit elsewhere. We shall see everywhere the owners of the land turned out and their places taken by those who work the land. The next step is from land to houses. Why not with houses as with land? Since a beginning has been made, it must be carried on. But there is other property besides lands and houses. There are companies with shares, railways, and so forth. We have only begun to see what united labour can effect—since union of labour is, in fact, not yet begun. When it is fairly started, it will pay small respect to shareholders and to dividends. When wages are paid, there will be perhaps no dividend left at all. In a single year—nay, a single week—the whole capital invested in all the companies will lose its value: it will be so much waste-paper. My friends, we need not stir hand or foot to bring about this end: it will be done for us by the working-man, and by those who follow the example of Ireland. They will do it for their own selfish ends first—but—Property once destroyed, we shall never again allow it to be created.

'Oh!'—he warmed with his subject, his voice grew more musical, his face glowed—'I see a splendid—a noble sight. I see the great houses in the country fallen to ruin and decay: their contents are stored in museums: the great palaces of the towns are pulled down: the towns themselves are decayed and shrunk: there

is no Property: there is no one working for himself: the man of science works his laboratory for the community—but he has the honour of his discoveries: the medical man pursues his work with no thought of getting rich: there is plenty to go the round of everything—oh! plenty of the best. We can have what we like, do what we like, dress as we like, teach what we please—provided we work for the State. If we refuse—Death! If we give bad work—Death! It is the only Law. We shall have no lawyers—no power—no magistrates. Oh! great and glorious time—you shall see it, you who are young—yes, you shall see it—while I—I—I—who have dreamed of the time so long—I shall lie low in the grave. What matter—so the time come and so the world rises free at last to follow out the destiny of a new and glorified humanity!'

He sat down and laid his head upon his hand, as one in prayer. They remained in silence till he raised his head. Then the young man who had called attention to his slavery spoke.

'There is perhaps another way,' he said, 'which might do the job for us. Suppose the chemists were to find out how to produce food—food of any kind—artificially—just as good and as nourishing as if it was butcher-meat or bread. Suppose it could be produced dirt cheap—most chemists' things cost nothing. Then no one would need to work: because he'd have his food found for him. If no one would need to work, no one could get rich any more. And if no one wanted to buy anything, nobody could sell. Then riches wouldn't count, and there you are. Let's get a chemist to take the thing up.'

The conversation that followed struck out new ideas. Presently it flagged, and one by one the people stole away.

The Master and the Disciple returned in the tram as far as Gray's Inn.

The Master fell into profound silence a quarter of an hour before the end of the journey. When they got down, Elsie observed, first, that he buttoned his coat; next, that he put on gloves; thirdly, that he pulled his hat forwards; and lastly, that he ignored her presence. He drew himself erect, and walked away with firm and precise step in the direction of Bedford Row, which is on the other side of Gray's Inn. He was once more Mr Edward Dering.

'I wonder,' said Elsie, 'how much, to-morrow, he will recollect?'

(To be continued.)

THE VOLE PLAGUE IN SOUTHERN SCOTLAND.

THE widely-circulated statements in the daily newspapers, together with reports therein of meetings of the panic-stricken owners of flocks, special Reports from Commissioners sent out from the new Ministry of Agriculture, as well as discussions that have taken place in the House of Commons, seem to have at last awakened the general public to the seriousness of the veritable calamity that has overtaken the sheep-farmers along a wide district not very far from the Scottish Borders. Although a plague of mice is no new experience in that land of old romance, where dales and glens alternate with the great rounded green hills which form the Southern

Uplands of Scotland, yet the little animals whose voracity has caused so much destruction to the food of the 'woolly people,' and consternation in the breasts of their owners, are probably on this occasion spread over a wider stretch of the southern Scottish counties, and more numerous everywhere on the affected lands than on any previous occasion. The little rodent whose ravages in the aggregate are so calamitous is one whose history is full of similar destructive outbreaks both in Britain and in various other northern countries. In some parts of the Continent these great recurring phenomena of 'over-population' in the mice communities are regular landmarks in local chronology, and the peasantry long refer to them as the 'Mice years'; just as in other parts similar outbursts of other members of the same destructive family of small quadrupeds are remembered as 'Hamster years' or as 'Lemming years.'

It is a pity that the term 'mice' has ever been applied to these little vermin, for in the matter of natural history definiteness and correctness of nomenclature are of first importance. In reality, foxes, jackals, and wolves might with greater nearness to truth be termed 'dogs,' than the Voles that have increased in their myriads to cause the present plague can be named 'mice.' There are three British species of voles—the Water Vole, more generally known by a similar misapplication of terms as the 'water rat'; the Red Bank Vole, which in some slight degree in at least a few localities shares the reputation for destructive powers so universally assigned to our third species, the Short-tailed Field Vole. The last named is very generally distributed throughout the mainland of Great Britain, and in the Islands extends to the most of the Inner and Outer Hebrides and to the Orkneys, but has not, we believe, been detected in Shetland. Very curiously, neither this vole nor either of the other two voles is found in Ireland.

The short-tailed field vole is a very pretty little animal notwithstanding its short aspect and somewhat chubby cheeks, and although no great climber and a very poor jumper is wonderfully 'smart on its feet.' It gets along its 'runs,' and across the pathways and sheep-tracks in the course of its foraging expeditions like the figurative flash of lightning; and the surprise of people who make its acquaintance for the first time and note its celerity of movement is very amusing. The present writer remembers with delight a pleasing 'interview' he had with a party of these voles some years ago on the brow of one of the hills in Upper Nithsdale. He had been along the hill-tops after white hares, and it was getting pretty far on in the afternoon of a sunny winter day when he sat down in a nook fully exposed to the sunshine to await his companions. Presently a vole appeared two or three yards away sitting up on its hindlegs, trimming its whiskers and the fur of its face with its forepaws. Then another and another appeared, till nine individuals were playing about the grass and heather, apparently in full enjoyment of the heat of the evening sun-rays. Sometimes a blade of grass would be taken up and nibbled for a few seconds, the little jaws vibrating with great rapidity in the act of chewing; now and then one would chase another for a short distance, evi-

dently more in play than anger, and pursuer and pursued would emit a slight sound more like a chirp than a squeak. The pretty scene had lasted for nearly half an hour, no other vole than this family party of nine appearing, when an unlucky movement on the part of the watching biped scared the merry little quadrupeds, who instantly disappeared with a scamper into their runs, holding their little short stumps of tails straight out behind in a decidedly comical manner.

Not alone in the sheep-farm country are the voles to be found. In the rough grass in young plantations, in the thick tussocks of grass in meadow and bog land, and wherever grass has not been grazed too closely, or where it has lain free of tillage for a year or two, will these little beasts be found in plenty. Their runs are on the ground just above the grass roots, and cross and recross each other, interlacing in the most intricate fashion. Some time in March, earlier or later according as the weather favours the operation or otherwise, their household cares begin. A hollow on the surface of the ground is chosen, and if shelter can be obtained between two or more tufts of grass, so much the better. A long oval habitation is constructed, the walls being built of small pieces of dry grass or other fine vegetable fibres closely woven and felted together. If the moisture does not soak into this nest from beneath, it certainly cannot enter it from above, for the way in which it is thatched will throw off the most violent rain-storms. An entrance is made underneath one end, and inside this snug and cosy cradle the young are deposited to the average number of five or six; but we have on occasions found as many as ten. These nests are eagerly sought for by rooks, and when found, torn to pieces at once; the young mice being greedily gulped down by the black bogies, whose appearance must be the prevailing terror of voledom.

These voles are possibly seldom thought of as domestic pets, but we can assure our readers, from an experience gained in other and more youthful years, that they make most interesting little pets. They have none of the objectionable odour which the keepers of fancy mice so vainly endeavour to get rid of, and for wild animals they soon acquire an amount of confidence and tameness that is most surprising. They will eat in captivity almost any kind of vegetation; or, as the phrase goes in Dumfriesshire, they will devour 'any green hait (atom)'; but little blades of tender green grass are their favourite nibble, and they will soon learn to take it from one's fingers. Scampering up and down their cage, sitting up on their haunches, while they make use of their forefeet as hands to hold up blades of grass or other food while eating; grunting and squeaking in a low subdued key, just like miniature Guinea-pigs—to the Abyssinian variety of which, so much prized by fanciers, they indeed bear a remarkable resemblance—they are amongst the most entertaining of small pets.

These details of the family life of the short-tailed vole are not likely to be very acceptable to the sufferers from their ravages in Southern Scotland, who have every reason to foster a bitter hatred of the whole race. The evil the voles have done, are doing, and will yet do, is so

enormous that no one can blame the farmer who cherishes an utter detestation of the evil multitudes that have wrought so much havoc in his pastures, and caused so much loss to his pocket. The complete destruction that has come upon the sheep-farmers must be seen to be believed; no description can convey any adequate idea of the damage done. From the west of Roxburgh right along the great range of hill-farms between Dumfriesshire on the one side, and Selkirk, Peebles, and Lanark on the other, away on to the head of Nithsdale and the northern portions of the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, there is an all-pervading plague of voles. On every farm in this long range the damage has been of the most serious character; on some every blade of grass, and even the weeds, have disappeared, leaving the land literally bare and red. The total area affected to a destructive extent cannot be much short of 160,000 acres.

For some years past the voles have been noticed to be steadily on the increase; but it was not till the favourable breeding seasons of 1889, '90, '91 that it was seen that this increase had rapidly developed into a plague. In ordinary course, when the voles have to contend against the vicissitudes of the weather, and their usual natural enemies, such as disease, hunger, rooks, and birds and animals of prey, they are easily kept in check, and they do not breed—according to accurate observers—more than three or four times in the year, and the usual litter does not number more than six. But when an extra dry warm time occurs on the hills in spring and early summer, the grass on the moist sheep-farms springs up in great luxuriance, and the voles have dry shelter, abundance of food at the critical period of breeding operations, and the consequent robust health and freedom from molestation by their furred and feathered enemies, induce them to propagate so fast that litters increase sometimes to as many as ten, and at intervals of about four weeks, for seven or eight months in succession, the young ones themselves meanwhile beginning to breed at the age of nine or ten weeks. The case now becomes one of rapid geometric progression in figures, so that the sudden appearance of vast hordes of mice on lands where shortly before few were to be seen is easily accounted for. That they migrate for short distances is undoubted, for numerous instances of this are continually turning up on the infected farms at present; but that there will be any general migration to the arable lands, as is so greatly and generally feared just now, is most unlikely. Even if the voles did so, they would be much more easily coped with amongst the clods and furrows than in their native fastnesses.

So far as the plague has gone no simple and effective mode of coping with the vermin has yet been found, or at least adopted. Raids by men with sticks and spades and accompanied by dogs were organised on a large scale before the lambing season began, and the voles were killed in an exceedingly wholesale manner; but so numerous are their myriads that notwithstanding the large numbers killed, no appreciable diminution is noted. In some of the outbreaks in Germany, poisoned grain shot into the underground runs by means of a description of spring-gun was found to be very effective, multitudes being easily

poisoned. The objections to the use of poisoned grains in this country are many and weighty, even if the use of it was to be sanctioned by the legislature. Some hundredweights of poisoned pills of meal were however prepared by a well-known firm of Edinburgh chemists, and these were distributed over a sheep-farm in the neighbourhood of Moffat. But the voles turned up their noses at the pellets, and would have nothing at all to do with the deceitful food. In the Crown Forest districts of England, where these little rodents are often troublesome, rows of small pits with bottoms wider than the tops are dug, and into these the mice topple when on their rambles, and their athletic powers not being much developed, they cannot get out again, and are thus easily got at and destroyed. These pits are by far the most effective and cheapest traps, yet it is rather singular the Scottish farmers have refused to try them on anything like a systematic and extensive scale. To be sure, this mode has been tried somewhat partially and rather experimentally in some parts; but the farmers declare that most of their land slopes so steeply, or is so hard or so wet on the flat portions, that the pit plan is impracticable. Sinking zinc buckets till their upper rims are level with the surface of the soil has been found to entrap large numbers, but the great expense involved precludes this plan from being generally adopted. Wide-mouthed bottles have also been sunk in a similar way, and proved efficient traps, sometimes as many as seven voles being got in a bottle. Very extensive burnings of the 'spret' grass on the hills were resorted to this spring in the hope that the mice might be burned up; but, as was to be anticipated from the known habits of the voles, the little creatures merely retreated into their underground runs till the flames passed over them. Other remedies in great variety, ranging from paraffin and tar to dynamite, have been offered by outside advisers, and many of these real or supposed cures have been tried by the despairing farmers.

Yet the fact remains that although some at least of the proposed remedies would answer the purpose, the hordes of voles remain in a great measure unchecked. The chief difficulty is in getting some sort of concerted action at a given time, for although one farmer may manage to exterminate the mice on his lands, yet, if his neighbours fold their hands and look on, the mischief will in a day or two be renewed to a worse extent than before; for the surrounding lands will simply be relieved of their surplus mice population, and his lands will have got a fresh stock, rendered all the more vigorous and destructive by their change of air.

It is now beginning to be believed by those accustomed to the study of natural-history phenomena that the great mice plague has already passed its maximum. Diseases which follow inevitably on 'over-population' (or over-multiplication) of any animal—from Man himself downwards in the scale—are now beginning to work their usual havoc; the various means of destruction devised by the farmers are now coming into effective operation; hawks, and especially owls, are flocking from all parts of the compass, as is their wont, to the feast provided for them; and although climatic influences—until the heavy rains of the past ten days set in—have been again

in the present spring of the most favourable character for the voles, yet the latter are now so numerous, and have eaten up so much of the herbage, that wholesale hunger—the most powerful of all their enemies—may help to stop their further increase. After all, although the outlook in the meantime is simply ruinous to the sheep-farmers over this great district, which produces such a large proportion of the home mutton and wool supply, there is every reason to believe that the new crop of grass that is to spring up when the vole plague ceases will be a great improvement on the old and effete pastures that have lasted for generations. The seeds that are lying dormant in the soil, the bare stumps of the old tussocks, will spring again with renewed vigour after their severe pruning, and the great mice plague of 1891–2 may ultimately prove a blessing in disguise; but there can be no question it has been purchased at an exceedingly costly present outlay.

WITH IRON WILL.

CHAPTER II.—CONCLUSION.

WEEKS passed away. It was a bleak, gusty night. I had settled at Woking—had, in fact, become the village doctor, if a practitioner without patients may claim the title. I was seated in my armchair, smoking an after-dinner pipe, but in no very cheerful frame of mind. I had caught a chill, having been constantly on the river, in spite of adverse weather, the last few weeks; and as I sat in my study, in a feverish and depressed condition, all sorts of dark thoughts filtered through my brain. In the midst of my sombre broodings the sound of wheels on the high-road caught my ear. Presently there was a pause at the gate. I rose quickly and looked out. It was Colonel Hethersett's carriage. A strong inclination seized me to go out and answer the gate-bell. But I had the prudence, though conscious of a quickened pulse, to restrain my ardour. I threw myself back in my chair, took up a book, and merely glanced round abstractedly when my man came in and handed me a note. I broke the seal without haste—for my servant's eye was still upon me—and read as follows: 'Come at once.—SYBIL HETHERSETT.'

I found her standing on the hearthrug before the fire. She was alone. She came forward, when the door closed behind me, with evident agitation. Her hand trembled as I took it in mine. She looked searchingly into my face. 'You are ill. He told me you were. How thoughtless of me to have sent for you! You ought never to have ventured out on a night like this. I might have come to you.'

I was ill. I felt that the fever had increased, as well it might, since I had quitted my fireside. But I did my best to hide it. She took my hot hand in hers and led me to the sofa beside the hearth. I think I should have fallen but for her aid. I sank down, and again asked her, 'What has happened?'

But although, as I could see, there was great anxiety to speak with me expressed in her face, she took no heed of my question until she had

placed some tea on a little table beside me and had handed me the cup.

'And now,' said Sybil, 'I will answer your question. My father assured me that he should return in good time this evening. It is past eight o'clock; the last train went by an hour ago. If he had come by it, he must have reached home before now. It is scarcely twenty minutes' walk from Woking Station.'

'Would he walk?' I could not help thinking of the lonely road that led by the fields to Woking Hall. 'Did not the carriage go to meet him?'

'No. He was not sure by which train he should come. And he gave strict orders—and you know what that means—that the carriage should not be sent. He has an odd preference for walking home at night.'

I was seriously alarmed, but made a strenuous effort to hide my growing suspicion from her. 'Have you,' said I, 'without any show of eagerness, any special reason for being anxious?'

'You know,' she answered, with her eyes now raised earnestly to mine, 'you know that a danger threatens him; you know that what happened ten years ago—when your skill and devotion saved his life—may happen again. He never speaks to me of this. I dare not speak to him. But I am convinced—as convinced as if my father had spoken—that Kenrick still overshadows his life.'

'Kenrick?' said I, unable to suppress my surprise. 'That man's name, then, Miss Hethersett, is known to you?'

She answered in a quiet tone: 'I was at Cawnpore, and in the house, when my father gave way to his passion. I recollect every detail of the affair. I was nine years old at the time. And when, three years later,' she added, 'that dreadful attempt was made on his life, everything was plain to me. I was then at school, in France; and when I was told about it—and told what a mysterious affair it was—I said nothing. It was no mystery to me. I knew who had struck the blow; I knew it as certainly as if I had witnessed the scene.'

Sybil's manner was still self-possessed; and as I looked into her face I thought I recognised something of her father's undaunted nature reflected there.

I now rose, though still showing no sign of haste; for I would not needlessly alarm her; though the feeling was growing strong within me that I might be losing precious moments. She now left her chair, and coming quickly to my side, placed her hand upon my arm. 'Stay a moment longer,' said she; 'I have something to tell you—something about this man.' Again she paused, expecting no reply. But it was only momentary. She went on in a quicker tone. 'My father's face tells me everything; nothing escapes me, I believe, that passes through his mind. And his face now tells me that no power can prevent a meeting; it tells me that the day is not far distant.' Her look and voice expressed the confidence she felt in every word she now spoke. 'It is inevitable,' she resumed. 'I read in his face that no one—neither you nor I—can turn my father from his purpose. Not that he has moved a finger, during these ten years, to find the man. He would never do that. But Kenrick

is creeping near, with the hope of taking my father unawares. My father knows this, and is on his guard; and in his strange, fearless style, feels a certain pleasure in the situation. I am sure, at least, that he would never step out of his way to avoid a meeting.

Her words confirmed my worst suspicions. The encounter between these two men must sooner or later come. I could no longer hide my impatience to take my leave and go in search of Sybil's father.

Sybil moved towards the window, raised the curtain, and looked out. 'A few nights ago,' said she, almost in a whisper, as though there were fear of being overheard, 'I passed this limekiln in the carriage with my father. I saw a man standing there with the light upon him. I could not see his face, but I read in my father's face who that man was.'

I did not stay a minute longer now. I told her that I would return within the hour, if all that I proposed to do could be done in an hour's time. I went out into the night.

It was not until I was well on the road leading to the limekiln that I thoroughly realised how ill I was. While seated in the drawing-room at Waking Hall sympathising with Sybil in her distress, I was less mindful of myself. But when the cold wind swept gustily about me and beat against my hot cheeks, I began to shiver from head to feet, though sensible all the time of a burning fever within me.

I was approaching the limekiln fire. The light was thrown across the road with a stronger glare, as it appeared to me, than on the night upon which I first passed this way. I stopped for a moment; I tried to collect my thoughts; I tried to put away the swarm of odd fancies that crowded upon me and threatened to conquer my better judgment. If anything in my manner or speech should rouse Kenrick's suspicion—for I had thoughts of confronting this man—if a look of dread escaped me, as I feared it might, the object I had in view might be defeated.

I crept towards the limekiln fire, keeping out of the path of light, until the heat scorched my face. I then knelt down, and leaning cautiously forward, looked about me, while shading my eyes with my hand from the intense glare. The great furnace door stood wide open. The kiln being built up in the low hill-side, the higher hills in the dark background above looked all the darker, with the blue transparent flames appearing and disappearing at the aperture, or chimney, with the grim unearthliness of a witches' bonfire. Down below, in the quarried space in front of the furnace, sat Kenrick. I was bending down quite near him, so near, that by stretching out my hand I could have touched his arm. He was smoking a short clay-pipe, resting his elbow on his knees, and looking intently into the dull quivering glow. What could he see to gaze at so fixedly in that red-hot, gigantic pile of wood and coals? There was a weird, haunted look in his face—a look that brought a new terror to my thoughts.

There was only one thing to be done. Waking Station could be reached in a few minutes; there was a short cut across the fields. I at once determined to go there and telegraph to a friend in London and await his reply—a friend who

knew Colonel Hethersett, and the most likely man to furnish news of him if still in town.

I found the telegraph clerk busy at the wires. When I had written out my message and handed it to him, I expressed my intention to wait for an answer. He looked at me through his little square window with a half-glance of recognition: 'Won't you step inside, sir?' said he. 'There ain't much of a fire,' he added apologetically. 'But the waiting-room is locked up; and it's cold and windy enough out there to cut one to pieces. You'll find the door on your right.'

Tick—tick—tick. He was busy again working at the wires.

I sat down by the fire in the telegraph office and tried to take a more hopeful view of the situation. I began to imagine that the answer was on its way; and that the lengthy pauses, which now took place, expressed a suspended power of volition—that the telegraph clerk was too terror-stricken to complete the message on account of its tragic signification. I became intensely excited. I watched the clerk with a feverish sense of certitude that by studying his face I could interpret these electric sounds. I was on the point of asking him to confirm or dissipate my impressions, when he began to write, with a deliberation that almost drove me mad, upon a telegraph form. This paper he at last handed to me. The words ran as follows: 'Hethersett left London in dogcart at nine.'

I glanced at the clock: it was on the stroke of ten. It would take little more than an hour for an expert driver like Colonel Hethersett to reach Waking Hall.

Once more I started across the fields. The way was dark, so dark, that to attempt running was out of the question, for there was a deep ditch on either side of the narrow path. And as I walked along, tapping my stick in front of me, like a blind man, I kept my eyes wide open; my ears too for the possible sound of Colonel Hethersett's dogcart along the high-road. More than once I stopped to listen and to look out ahead for the slightest glimpse of gig-lamps in the distance.

Stay! What light is that? And surely I can distinguish the sound of wheels upon the road. It must be the dogcart; no one but Colonel Hethersett would drive at that reckless pace along a country high-road on so dark a night, with no lights for miles, except the ghost of one at the cross-roads on Waking Green. Yes; I can see the gig-lamps plainly now, and they look like great blinking orbs flashing out and in, as the trap spins along, passing by trees and hedges and other objects that are frequently black screens between us. And there is still a broad field to cross before I can reach the highway; and before I can even run over the ground the dogcart will have passed the stile that leads out upon the road.

I shout in a loud, distracted voice: 'Stop!' I have attracted his attention: he brings the trap to a stand-still. But I now begin bitterly to repent having raised my voice. For I see the reflected light of the limekiln fire right ahead in the night; and I know that my shouting will have reached Kenrick's sharp ear. He will see the dogcart; for Colonel Hethersett is stopping at the limekiln. They will meet face to face.

I have no distinct recollection of how, either running, walking, or stumbling, I gained the highway. But I did gain it, and in an amazingly short space of time; for as I sank down exhausted at the stile, which nearly faced the limekiln, I saw Colonel Hethersett pulling in rein just within the path of light that always streamed across the road; at the same moment I saw Kenrick start up from the ground within reach of the dogcart, raise his arms, and straighten his back, as if nerving himself for a spring.

'Hold my horse,' said the Colonel in a firm voice, as he flung the reins across the animal's back. 'Don't stand staring there. My name is Hethersett'—

'Is it?' interrupted the man. 'Do you think I don't know you?'

'I'll not dispute it. Hold my horse.'

'Do what?' said Kenrick; and glancing savagely about him, he selected a stone the size of his great fist, and hurled it at Colonel Hethersett. The stone, flying within an inch of the Colonel's head, dropped into the hedge beyond.

From the point where I had sunk down against the stile, the whole scene was visible to me in the light of the limekiln fire. The iron door was wide open, as I had seen it an hour ago, and the heat and glare struck upon Kenrick's threatening figure as though stimulating his awakened passion. Colonel Hethersett had risen from his seat in the trap and was stepping down. From first to last his eyes were fixed upon the man's face. No movement escaped him.

'Why did you cry out?' said the Colonel sternly.

'When?'

'A moment ago. You cried out "Stop."'

'Never!' Kenrick answered sullenly.

'No? And yet the voice came from this quarter,' said the Colonel. 'You heard it; didn't you?'

'What if I did?'

I could see both their faces distinctly now. I could see that Kenrick was quivering with suppressed rage and fear. But Colonel Hethersett's look was cool and determined.

'Kenrick,' said the Colonel in a quick tone, 'the time has come for a settlement between us. It is now thirteen years— Ah! you have not forgotten: I know that. For twice since then you have made an attempt on my life: in Smithfield ten years ago, and again to-night.'

Kenrick made no reply; but I could see that the Colonel's dauntless manner, his stern voice, and penetrating look, were beginning to assert their influence over the man.

'Now listen to me. You brought upon yourself the punishment I gave you,' said the Colonel, 'by disobeying my orders. If you did not learn a lesson then, it is time you learnt it now! When I drew up here a minute ago and asked you to hold my horse, you refused. I am going to give you one chance more,' he added. 'You say you didn't call out to me to stop. Some one did; and I am going to satisfy myself instantly on this point. I am going to make a search along the road. You've a lantern, I suppose? Lend it to me.'

Still no reply: no movement on Kenrick's part.

'Have you a lantern or not?'

'Yes; one or two, I reckon.'

'Lend me one,' repeated Colonel Hethersett.

Kenrick hesitated still; but it was only for a moment. There was something in Colonel Hethersett's whole attitude that appeared to bring the man suddenly to a better sense of the situation. He crossed over to the hut, went in, and slammed the door angrily behind him. The Colonel paced slowly up and down always within the light of the fire, and always with his look directed towards the hut. Presently the little round window brightened, as if returning his glance; and a moment afterwards Kenrick came out lantern in hand.

'Thank you,' said the Colonel. 'And now, Kenrick,' he added, 'look after the horse.'

He took the lantern and turned away; and for the first time, since this meeting between them, Colonel Hethersett relaxed his watch upon the man. He stepped across the road, and soon caught sight of me lying helpless by the stile. He lifted me tenderly in his strong arms as he would have done a child. 'Sherwin, my dear boy! Why, how came you here?'

I can recollect seeing Kenrick leading the horse towards the spot. I have a dim recollection of being in the dogcart with one of Colonel Hethersett's arms claspng me securely; and I have a dimmer recollection still of the limekiln fire suddenly going out, as though an extinguisher had been put upon it. I remember no more.

And then there came a semi-consciousness of distracting dreams that recurred a thousand times during a night that never had an end. It fell dimly upon my senses that I was lying within the limekiln fire with heaps of red-hot coal on every side threatening to consume me; and all the while Kenrick was looking at me with stolid eyes as he smoked his pipe and tacitly refused to drag me out. At other times the telegraph wires at Waking Junction were passing through me with the central station in my head, which became overcrowded with messages.

These feverish 'imaginings' and a hundred others at last passed away, and less startling ones fell into their place. Once more I found myself in the heart of a certain wood, where a stream was flowing between high banks into a large river beyond. I was lying in a boat and looking down into this stream, and a face was looking up into mine. Yet there was no blue sky—no cluster of leaves, only the face; and this face gradually took the shape of Sybil's face in my brain. But there was no look of laughter. The eyes were filled with tears, and the cheeks were pallid and thin.

'Sybil!'

The sound of a sweet voice touched my senses. 'Hush! I will go and tell my father'—

'No. Tell me! Am I awake or dreaming?'

I lifted my heavy eyelids like one coming out of a deep sleep and stared perplexedly about me.

'He brought you here'—

'Last night?'

'No. It will be three weeks to-morrow.'

I could not speak. A mist seemed to be gathering between her face and mine. She held a cup to my lips. I drank a refreshing draught, and then sank back upon my pillows into a dreamless sleep.

When I awoke it was night. The window curtains were now closely drawn, and I heard the wind whispering in the park outside. There

was no light in the room except from the fire. In an armchair, drawn up in front of the hearth, sat Colonel Hethersett.

Knowing this man's character as I did now, his manliness and tender nature, I felt that to express in words my sense of gratitude would be to lower myself in his esteem. It had been my privilege, ten years ago, to save his life. He had now saved mine.

It seemed to me as though I was waking into a new life—a new world—as I lay here contentedly watching the changing lights and shadows upon the walls, and listening to the red-hot cinders falling with a soft metallic ring. And if I was reminded of the limekiln fire and the terrors it had roused in my mind, there was no sense of dread awakened now. For I read in Colonel Hethersett's face, as he sat pondering there—as Sybil had doubtless read too—that all fear of danger might be dismissed from our minds.

Happening to pass the limekiln one night, a month or two after my recovery, I noticed a strange watchman standing there.

'Where is Kenrick?' said I.

'Overseer up at the Hall.'

'On Colonel Hethersett's property?'

'Yes.'

I was not surprised at this news; for, although the Colonel managed every one with iron will, I never knew a more generous master. And Kenrick proved an excellent servant. So long as they lived, he and the Colonel never exchanged another angry word.

The autumn again came round. One sultry afternoon—an afternoon never to be forgotten—I was walking with Sybil in Woking park and by the river-side.

'Is it only a year?' she was saying as she stopped; and bending forward, she peered into the stream.

'A year to-day.'

She made no reply.

'Sybil,' I went on, 'I know you love me. But tell me so here, where we first met!'

Still gazing down into the stream, she whispered it. Then she added: 'And I thought that afternoon, only a year ago, that I should never see you again.'

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

At the recent soirée of the Royal Society, an annual event which is always looked forward to by Londoners of scientific tastes, there were two exhibits which attracted more attention perhaps than any of the others. The first was the method shown by Mr Ives of producing in a photograph the colours of Nature without the use of pigments. Briefly described, this method consists in obtaining by means of a compound camera three different negatives of one object, which may be a painting or a natural landscape. By associating each of these negatives at the moment of exposure in the camera with a light filter, one of them is excited only by rays representing the fundamental red sensation; another by rays representing the

green; and the third by rays representing the blue-violet sensation. Positives from these negatives are placed in a triple lantern, the light passing through each being filtered through screens of coloured glass—red, green, and violet respectively. When those three coloured images are superposed on the lantern sheet, they coalesce, and the result is a very perfect copy of the coloured original.

The other exhibit at the soirée which met with equal attention was the collection of photographs of bullets in flight taken by Professor Boys. The method by which this seemingly impossible feat is brought about is very ingenious. The camera and lens are dispensed with altogether, and by their rejection the operation is at once much simplified. In a dark chamber the apparatus is arranged, consisting of an electric spark contrivance, which furnishes the light required, and a sensitive gelatine photographic plate. Over this plate, a rifle bullet, fired through an aperture in the chamber, wends its rapid flight, and in doing so touches two wires. This touch gives the necessary metallic contact to induce the instantaneous flash of the electric spark. The light causes the shadow of the bullet to be cast upon the plate, and this shadow makes a permanent record when that plate is afterwards developed. The most curious feature of these pictures is that the air-waves due to compression and rarefaction in front of and behind the bullet are distinctly marked.

The Royal Commission for the Chicago Exhibition, whose headquarters are the Society of Arts, London, have just issued a little handbook which will be useful to intending exhibitors, for it gives all particulars as to routes, tariffs, and regulations. In the department devoted to Electricity, it is especially pointed out that from a British point of view it is most desirable to show how large a share our electricians have had in developing this branch of science and its practical applications. Looking backward, we find that the first electrician was Gilbert; that the first practical telegraph line was worked out by an Englishman (Ronalds, in 1816), and perfected at a later date by Cooke and Wheatstone. The germ of the modern dynamo-machine—which will possibly revolutionise our mechanical industries—was discovered on Faraday's lecture-table, and afterwards applied by Wilde, Holmes, and others. And lastly, we can point with pride to the honoured name of Davy.

In a recent lecture on 'The Venomous Snakes of India and the Mortality caused by them,' Sir Joseph Fayrer said that although the chemistry of snake-poison had been much studied of late, no antidote to snake-virus had yet been found. Remedies were of little avail when the full effect from a bite had been produced; but when the poison had entered the system in smaller quantity, medical treatment might be of some service. The poison can neither be sucked from a bite nor swallowed with impunity. After naming the different snakes found in India, of which the cobra is the most formidable, the lecturer pointed out that the average loss of life for the eight years ending 1887 was nearly twenty thousand human beings, and more than two thousand head of cattle yearly. To reduce this

alarming death-rate he thinks that the best plan will be to make more fully known the appearance and habits of these dread reptiles, and to give a reward for each poisonous snake killed. The proposal to cut down and clear away the jungle in the vicinity of villages could, he thinks, hardly be expected to produce the desired effect.

The soil in winter-time is often frozen so hard that excavations are impossible, and all such work has to be postponed. Mr Kelly, superintendent of the Gas-works at Waltham, U.S.A., in a paper recently read before the New England Association of Gas Engineers, has described a method whereby this difficulty can be obviated. His system is to spread a quantity of lime some inches deep over the place where the digging has to be done. A piece of tarpaulin is spread over the lime and left there for several hours. Experience shows that by the warmth thus induced frost nearly two feet deep can be quickly melted. The lime presents an objection in many cases on account of its expense, but gas companies can afterwards employ the spent material for purifying purposes.

Railway travellers must have often experienced a difficulty in finding the compartment of the carriage in which they have been sitting, after having left it at any intermediate station for purposes of refreshment. M. Cros, a French gentleman, has suggested a method of putting an end to this difficulty. He suggests that the door of each railway carriage should, like a hotel or inn, bear an easily recognised sign. This might be a picture of a bull, swan, elephant, or any other familiar object, so long as it served the purpose in view. This plan would also be valuable in the case of a passenger forgetting a parcel or other article left behind in a carriage and finding it necessary to telegraph for it.

It would seem that the art of line-engraving on steel must now be looked upon as lost. For the last artist who devoted himself to this beautiful method of pictorial illustration, Mr Lumb Stocks, has recently gone to his rest. Another artist, who made a name in this work, is reported to have said that he was of opinion that this particular branch of art would soon become obsolete. He believed that photogravure was beating it out of the field. There are effects, he said, produced by that process which the line-engraver can never possibly approach. The photogravure is no doubt a most beautiful process in affording a faithful reproduction of every touch of the oil-painter's brush, but at the same time all lovers of art must regret the decline of a method in which British artists have always shown such pre-eminence.

After many experiments, the locomotive department of the Great Western Railway in the Argentine Republic have mastered the problem of using petroleum as fuel instead of coal or wood. The crude oil, which is about as thick as treacle, is brought down to the works of the railway by pipe, and stored there in a large tank capable of holding three thousand tons. It seems, however, that directly all difficulties had been conquered, the supply of oil failed, and the companies have now to go back to the old way of firing their engines. The Petroleum Company have not, it is stated, carried their borings deep enough, and fresh work must be

undertaken before the oil-wells will again afford their yield.

A curious instance of the way in which the value of a work of art is increased by being associated with the name of a painter of merit is afforded by a case which occurred at the recent Naval Exhibition. Many visitors to that Exhibition will remember a large picture entitled 'The Embarkation of Katherine of Braganza to marry Charles II. of England.' This picture, by an unknown artist, happened to be hung next one which had already been sent by the Earl of Sandwich, the title of which was 'The Battle of Solebay,' painted by Van de Veld. It was not until these two pictures were seen hanging together that it became evident to experts that both were by the same hand. The colouring, the design of the ships, their form, decoration, and rig, all told this most plainly. The immediate result of this discovery was that the value of the first-named picture was raised from five hundred to five thousand pounds for insurance purposes.

At the request of the British shipowners, Sir Frederic Abel and Mr Redwood have been investigating the question of transporting petroleum in bulk through the Suez Canal, and have just issued a Report thereon. They consider that the passage of tank steamers laden with oil must involve great risk to other vessels using this important waterway. The atmosphere on the Canal, as well as the water itself, is at such a temperature at certain seasons of the year, that the risk arising from an outbreak of fire, or explosion of a mixture of oil-vapour and air on board a vessel, would be grave. They also consider the danger of leakage in the case of the collision or grounding of one of these tank vessels, from the presence on the Canal of many lights, some of which are gas buoys floating on the water, would make the ignition of the oil almost a certainty. The authors admit that these risks might to some extent be reduced by proper stipulations as to the construction of the tank vessels and the storage of the oil; but still they consider the whole question involves elements of danger which it would not be wise to risk.

Boat-propulsion by means of oil-engines is certainly on the increase, and is likely to present a real rivalry to the employment of boats driven by electricity. The system presents many advantages. To begin with, it is economical and safe, there is no boiler, a complete absence of smoke, a great saving of room which can be devoted to other purposes, and a saving of time in obviating the necessity of getting up speed. On the Manchester Ship and other canals many such vessels are employed; and on the Thames every season some may be seen which have superseded the more common steam-launch. A small boat of this kind has recently been tried at Govan. The engines in this case are of five horse-power, and make about two hundred and eighty revolutions per minute. Ordinary mineral oil is used, and enough for a week's working can be stored in the vessel.

The great inland sea of North Holland, the Zuyder Zee, was up to the twelfth century a lake, but at that time it was united to the North Sea as the result of an inundation. For a long time past the Government of Holland have had

under consideration a project for draining this vast piece of water. Large vessels now make their way to Amsterdam by means of the North Sea Canal, the water being far too shallow in the Zuyder Zee to accommodate any but the smallest craft. Useless to Holland as a piece of water, the land for agricultural purposes would, if it could be drained, be very valuable. It has an area of seven hundred and sixty square miles. A Report recently issued on this subject by a Commission which was appointed some time ago to thoroughly examine the question, proposes to close the Zuyder Zee by means of a dam. The area would then be divided into four parts, and the work of draining would be carried out successively in each. The total cost, including the construction of the dam, would be about seventeen million sterling. The Dutch engineers have in past times shown themselves such adepts in recovering land from the hungry sea that they have adopted a proverb which says, 'God made the sea, but we made the land.' There is little doubt that if the financial difficulty can be met, the engineering work can be accomplished.

The theft of electricity is a new crime which the progress of science has called into existence. A case recently came before a certain law-court in the United States in which a man with some knowledge of electricity caused the meter which registered the amount which he used for illuminating purposes to record less than he had consumed. The lawyer who defended him ingeniously argued that as electricity was an intangible something of which no one could really state the exact nature, and that as at common law it was actually unknown, his client could not be convicted of stealing it. But the lawyer met with his match on the other side in one who showed that gas was also unknown at common law, but was recognised as a thing that could be stolen. In the sequel the judge took advantage of a certain statute which makes fraud committed with a view to theft, a felony, and the man who stole the electricity is therefore likely to meet with the reward of his misdeed.

A metallic alloy, closely resembling gold, which has a fine grain, is malleable, and does not easily tarnish, is described in one of the technical journals devoted to the jewellers' art. The process for producing this alloy is as follows: Pure copper, one hundred parts, is melted, and to this are gradually added fourteen parts of tin or zinc, six of magnesia, fifty-six of ammonium chloride, eighteen of quicklime, and nine of cream of tartar. This mixture is melted and stirred in a crucible for half an hour, after which it is kept in the molten state for another like period. The dross is then removed from the surface, and the metal poured into moulds.

Among the most important modern applications of electricity is that of heating and welding by the electric arc. The system which has been found to give the best results is that known as the Benardos-Howard Method. To give an idea of the way in which this work is carried out, we may describe the method by which a fractured church bell of large size was recently mended. The bell was so connected with the dynamo-machine which furnished the necessary electric current as to form one of its poles; the other pole of the machine was connected

with a tool having a carbon end. Upon turning on the current and approaching the carbon point to the cracked place, the metal was immediately brought to a white-heat, and the fractured edges were welded together. By no other means could the bell have been mended. The same system is often used in welding together iron and steel tubes, iron barrels for petroleum, &c., and is employed in repairs to steel castings and engineering work of all kinds. Messrs Lloyd and Lloyd of Birmingham and London are the pioneers in this useful branch of manufacture, and they have at present half-a-dozen large Crompton dynamo-machines constantly employed in furnishing the necessary electrical energy.

At a recent meeting of the Chemical Society, a new Egyptian mineral, to which the name of 'Masrite' has been given, was described. Examination proved this mineral to be a variety of fibrous alum, and, from the fact of from one to nearly four per cent. of cobalt being found in different samples, it was thought that the blue colour used in paintings on Egyptian monuments might be due to that pigment. Analysis of such paintings, however, showed that the blue colour was due to compounds of copper and iron. The principal interest attaching to the mineral lies in the circumstance that it contains a minute quantity of an unknown substance, believed to be a new element. To this hypothetical body the name 'Masrium' has been given, from the Arabic name for Egypt.

Mr W. C. Andrews has patented a plan for supplying fuel in an altogether novel way. He suggests that at the coal-mines the coal should be reduced to a fine powder and mixed with a large quantity of water, so as to form a thick liquid having the appearance of ink, and that this mixture should then be pumped into pipes by powerful engines and carried to any convenient point. The liquid would have to be forced through the piping at a speed of from six to seven miles an hour, so that the coal-dust should have no opportunity of settling before it arrived at its destination. Here it would be discharged into tanks, where the solid portion would gradually settle to the bottom, and the sediment so formed would afterwards be collected and compressed by hydraulic rams into blocks of convenient sizes for fuel.

All collectors of books look upon a copy of the folio edition of Shakespeare, dated 1623, as the very coping-stone of their ambition. Copies of this edition are now so rare that recently one was offered for sale for one thousand pounds. Students have now, however, an opportunity of obtaining a fac-simile copy of this work, which is being reproduced by the Dallastype Process, and a copy so exact that little mistakes in pagination and the irregular modes of spelling in vogue in the seventeenth century, are faithfully reproduced. We have recently had an opportunity of examining an advance copy of this work, which is being published by Messrs Garratt & Co. of Southampton Row, London.

Forty-three years ago there were described in our own pages the wonderful and novel effects which were then obtained by means of the magic lantern. Since that time the magic lantern has been so improved that it has ceased to be a toy

for the amusement of holiday folk. It is now to be found in every school and lecture theatre in the world, and is used not only for diagrams and microscopic projections, but also for experimental demonstrations. It is curious to compare the old form of lantern with its roughly-painted pictures on glass, with the modern instrument with its perfect photographic slides. The most perfect instrument ever seen was recently shown at the Crystal Palace, Sydenham, where, by means of a powerful electric arc light, and lenses purposely made for the lantern by Dallmeyer, pictures were shown with a brightness and on a scale hitherto unprecedented. Lantern demonstrations by means of this unique instrument have recently been given daily in connection with the successful Electrical Exhibition which has already received notice in these pages.

AMONGST THE RUSHES.

THE splendour of midsummer sunshine is once more over all the earth; the air is hot and still, and the quivering heat seems to radiate from the ground; the scent of hawthorn and newly-cut clover is all round. The morning is so absolutely perfect as to leave nothing to be desired save the low musical lapping of water. So once more flannels are put on, and the boat is in readiness for a long dawdling day upon the river. How delicious is the sense of life, as the boat glides smoothly through the gently-flowing river! How joyous are the larks, as they mount, singing, into the hazy blue; and the atmosphere seems filled with a drowsy murmur from the myriad armies of insect life. The limes have just begun to open their luscious blossoms to the eager bees. In the deep, green, translucent water is reflected the delicate feathery almond-scented meadow-sweet, the purple loosestrife, and the red and white champions that grow luxuriantly along the banks, amongst their green setting of reeds and rushes. Through the drooping boughs of the gray-green willows streams the sunshine, making dancing golden lights on low-growing cresses and forget-me-nots, and the little rippling splashes round the stones and hollows along the banks.

Flitting butterflies of gorgeous colours hover over the blooming grasses and ox-eye daisies. The tiny black chicks of the moorfowl hide and nestle amongst the bunches of dried grass during the mid-day heat. How silent are the long stretches of country on either side of the river! The panting sheep are gathered under the trees; cattle are resting in the scant shade of the low-cut hedgerows, or have waded deep into the river in the cool little backwaters, amongst the reeds and sedges. In the distance, the clink of a mowing-machine can be heard; and field after field of freshly-cut grass lies in long swaths, waiting for another machine to turn it over; for the troops of merry rustics, with their bare arms and sunburnt faces, are rarely seen anywhere now, and both rural life and the pleasant aspect of the country have lost much of their ancient charm. The comfortable old-fashioned farmsteads have fallen into decay, or are left untenanted; cottages have been turned into barns or shedding for cattle, and often pulled down entirely; and both masters and men have drifted into the

towns and found employment in the manufacturing centres. Yet still the river flows on in its old channels; still the swift and swallow skim the surface, darting and diving after the flies and midges; still the reeds and rushes sway and bend in the old way; and as the boat is shoved amongst the thick tangle of river-side herbage, the noisy willow-wren chirps sharply to her mate as her especial domain is invaded; the water-rats dive hastily into their holes; and shoals of minnows and gudgeon wriggle away into the shelter of the rushes, and are lost in the wide sweep of the river.

How cool and fragrant the air is in this dim shut-in hollow of the beech-woods; and the entrance is so hidden amidst overhanging brambles and briar roses, that a stranger would pass fifty times and fail to discover its whereabouts; but turn the rudder to the right, crash through the bed of rushes and foxtail grass, and three or four back-strokes bring the boat floating out on a deep silent pool, that mirrors the dense foliage and thick smooth trunks of the giant beeches, and the deep overhanging banks hollowed under the twisted rugged roots, where, amongst the damp water-weeds and mossy stones, grow marvellous bunches of hartstongue ferns, their dark-green glossy leaves perfect in shape and colouring.

There is always a whisper of wind among the beeches, that mingles with the lazy caw of the rooks and faint cooing of the stockdoves, and is pleasantly suggestive of the low sound of the summer sea—

And the beech-trees murmur lowly
Strange old dreamings, half awake,
As we glide beneath them slowly
O'er the forest-girdled lake.

What a charm there is in the silence and solitude when the boat is moored, and only the low slumberous lap of the river is heard a few yards away, to gaze into the dark fathomless pool, or up into the tangle of intersecting boughs and leaves, through a rift of which can be seen a glimpse of far-off sunny blue!

At first, the silence seems unbroken; then gradually little sounds of life are heard. Yonder is a tawny squirrel alert amongst the dry grass; and those frisky atoms of fur most certainly are a young family. Two or three sandpipers fly off with a startled 'tweet, tweet,' among the flags; a pair of comfortable wild-ducks are catering for their dusky downy brood; a moorhen steals softly away through the sedges; far off, in the distance, the cornrake can be heard in the barley on the sunny ridges; greenfinches and yellow-hammers are rustling in the thickets of bramble-bushes; over the pool the midges and gadflies dance and sing, making a vague murmur in the air, as if whispering together about the beauty of their short-lived summer kingdom. There is a winding path through the woods a few hundred yards up the hill; on the other side, about midway down the western slope, stands an old brown manor-house, whose massive walls are nearly hidden in ivy and clustering roses. The windows are deeply mullioned; the chimney stacks are fancifully twisted; the pointed gables and wide porch curiously decorated and carved with symbolical figures. From the wide sunshiny terrace-walk on one side is seen a richly-wooded landscape

of hill and valley, the little town half-way up, on the opposite hills. On the other side lies the sweet-scented old-world garden, where honeysuckle, musk-roses, jasmine, huge lavender bushes, and giant magnolias fill the air with perfume; thick yew hedges, many centuries old, enclose the broad shady tennis courts. There are long green alleys of quince and apple, filbert and pear trees, clusters of lilac and laburnum, and guelder roses round the lawn. Clear and cool, the 'lily-padded lake' gleams beneath the silver birch and quivering aspen, creeping lazily under the shady trees till it joins the meadow-stream and falls into the quiet pool below the mill.

History tells of the old manor as having once belonged to the Jesuits, where dwelt one of those strictly-closed orders of which the world hears so much and knows so little. It may have been so, for on the north side of the manor there is a curious little building with two beautiful twelfth-century windows, that probably was a small ante-chapel in its palmy days. The capitals of the columns are quaintly carved with heads of animals and human faces; and in one corner is a rudely-cut stoop set in the angle of the wall. It is thickly overgrown with white-veined ivy, inside and out the building, and is used in this prosaic nineteenth century as a summer smoking retreat.

Very beautiful looks this 'haunt of ancient peace,' this sunshiny July noon; very lovely this wide wind-swept landscape of 'hill and valley, lake and lea;' but the river has a still greater fascination; and the dreamy hours idled away along the banks, watching the swirling brown and green water making foaming eddies round the drooping willows, the sand-martins hovering over the rushes, the graceful sweeping reeds and the long feathery grasses moving with every breeze, and listening to the gentle ripple of the tiny wavelets on the sides of the boat—are hours that do not come too often in a lifetime; for one day that can be spent with pleasure on the river there are hundreds that are fit for walking or driving. Then, if the heat of the day has passed, and the quiet becomes monotonous, row down stream a mile, and the hollow roar of a great tumbling weir is heard, and the cry of 'Look! look!' The great green gates slowly open, and the boat is shut within the deep cool lock, and the roar of the weir is like the sound of thunder. Slowly rises the dark water, and the boat floats out on the shining placid river.

There is life and bustle here: two men and a boy are busy mending and tarring a punt; half-a-dozen youngsters playing and tumbling in and out a leaky, old, flat-bottomed boat, laughing, shouting, and scrambling in reckless glee. Two red-faced bargewomen, with violent gestures, are quarrelling shrilly; a stout girl in short blue skirt and red jersey is winding up the closing lock gate with one hand, holding a screaming infant in the other. Over the weir rush the smooth sheets of translucent green water, falling into the torrent below in great foaming billows, that rise again in impalpable spray, making numberless bits of rainbow colouring in the evening sunshine. Farther down, a fussy little steamer has brought a party of merry young folks to a rustic bungalow, standing in the shade of a noble group of chestnuts. The bright-faced girls look radiant

with happiness, and the men quite capable of enjoying their company. What wonder that, under the influence of the glowing evening, they feel a delight to live and breathe, the tide of healthful life bounding in their veins adding to the natural enjoyment of youth. The glory of summer clothes the hills, uplands, and valleys, the moors and the meadows. The wild exuberant beauty of coppice and woods, the lush leafage of the hedgerows and river-side, the singing of bird and insect life, all give to the thoughtful mind the unmistakable proof of the inherent power of Nature.

But the glory of sunset light has begun to fall across the hills and golden-green woods; the distant purple shadows grow deeper; the air is stiller than ever, save for the shrill singing of the swifts as they rush through the air; when the lock is passed again, and the roar of the weir faint in the far distance, the soft gray mists can be seen stealing up the river, and a faint warm wind sighs through the reeds and rushes, heavy with the scent of clover hay. A humble-bee booms lazily under the willows; gray and white moths flutter round; bats whirl erratically about, with their faint little cry; gradually the crimson sun has dropped to the under-world, and in the faint afterglow hangs a single golden star, with scintillating rays of green and sapphire and purple; and in all the blue immensity of space appear twinkling points of light, that are reflected in the water, and a breath of the lindens comes in the whispering shadowy darkness. The boat touches the landing-steps, the oars are shipped, and our day amongst the reeds and rushes is over.

HEART-STORMS.

THE shadow of night is falling,
But the shore is sunlit yet:
Oh tranquil tide, what a flood you bear
Of bitter and wild regret!

When the storm your waves uplifted,
When the wind was wet with spray,
My heart was eased of its long dull ache,
And I looked from my grief away.

'Tis when all is calm and peaceful,
When at rest the whole world lies,
That the heart is stirred with a storm unseen,
And utters its lonely cries.

P. W. ROOSE.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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PICCADILLY.

PICCADILLY! The historian, the essayist, the wit, the poet, all have sounded thy praises. Highway of fashion; channel through which unceasingly flows the brilliant stream of humanity which the exclusive West sends in search of pleasure and variety; beloved of loungers and beaux; happy hunting-ground for artists, dilettantes, and man-about-towns; ever-varying spectacle for country cousins—it seems almost a forlorn hope to endeavour to say anything fresh about thee, most delightful of streets.

Piccadilly is never monotonous. Either from shop-windows or passers-by, one may always gather amusement and perhaps instruction. True, it is to a great extent the street of a class. More respectable than the bohemian Strand, less prosaic than middle-class Oxford Street, its crowds are composed for the most part of that section of metropolitan humanity popularly known as the 'Upper Ten;' yet there is always sufficient leaven of the common multitude to add variety to the scene.

Turn in to it from the Circus, that vortex of traffic, whose clatter and confusion are calculated to bewilder even the accomplished urban traveller. Swan and Edgar's gay Oriental exhibit, and the neighbouring shops on the one side, make a pleasing little oasis of colour, in strange contrast to the grim frontage of the Museum of Practical Geology and Royal School of Mines over the way—truly, of all the places in the metropolis devoted to relaxation and improvement, the gloomiest and least exhilarating. Well does the writer recollect how as a boy he spent Wednesday half-holidays within its echoing and deserted halls; and the depressing remembrance of those juvenile dissipations amidst the models of coal-mines and specimens of strange and stony formations, lingers even yet.

Glance for a moment opposite at the unpretentious book-shop with the royal arms over the door. Few would think that so unpromising an exterior holds the most remarkable bookselling

business in the world, yet the name of Quaritch proclaims that here are the headquarters of the extraordinary man whose career has been a succession of bibliopolical triumphs; and here are gathered together more rare and valuable volumes than in any space of the same size outside the British Museum or the Bodleian.

Air Street—aptly named, being a very sigh of a street for brevity—marks what in 1659 was the most westerly turning out of Piccadilly, the whole district beyond being fields and lanes, and opposite we may look through the iron gateway at St James's Church, erected for Henry, Earl of St Albans, in the days of our lugubrious-looking 'Merry Monarch.' This nobleman is perhaps chiefly notable, or rather notorious, as uncle of the 'Harry Jermyn' whose escapades are frequently referred to by Grammont, which gentleman, under-sized, ugly, and, if all accounts be true, stupid as he was, seems to have been a very prince of Lotharios.

The church is a comparatively uninteresting building so far as architectural merit is concerned, very prim and formal in its seclusion behind the red brick wall. There is a white marble font by Grinling Gibbons, the canopy of which once served as strange a purpose, surely, as ever a font-cover in this world—that, namely, of a tavern sign, when stolen by sacrilegious hands. Some famous names are connected with the building. Adam Clarke, ripe scholar and upright man, was pastor for a time. Several celebrities also are buried here: Charles Cotton, who travestied Virgil, poetical historian of the Peak, and disciple of the gentle Izaak; Dr Thomas Sydenham, whose system of fever treatment marks an era in our medical history; a brother physician, Arbuthnot, whom Thackeray has dubbed 'one of the wisest, wittiest, most accomplished, gentlest of mankind,' and to whom we owe the invention of 'John Bull,' that title which so happily hits off the national characteristics.

Another doctor, but of a very different sort, also lies here—the merry deviser of those

famous *Pills to Purge Melancholy*, which cured so many of the spleen and the doldrums—witty, thriftless, coarse, yet withal genial, Tom D'Urfey. How his ballads must have been shouted and roared by the roystering blades who swaggered from tavern to tavern in those days! Glancing through the six chubby volumes which comprise the collection of these ditties, one must perforce wonder how any period, any society could tolerate some of them. Others there are less questionable, whose themes are as a rule drink and joviality, many written, doubtless, at my Lord Buckhurst's seat of Knowle, in Kent, where the poet-laureate of tavern and suppers had a room always prepared for him, and where he sang the praises of 'the Incomparable strong Beer at Knoll.' He must have been a lovable bohemian, this man, 'whom envy and spite could never sadden.' He lived to see the reign of Anne with its circle of wits and beaux, of so different a cast from those he had known in his prime; and the queen favoured him on the quiet, nor disdained to listen to his songs and jokes at her private supper-parties.

Sackville Street boasts a double singularity: it is the longest street in London without a cross or by-turning; and it has no lamp-posts, the gas lamps being fixed to arms projecting from the houses. The shop at the west corner is always an attraction, the name of Fores having long been known in connection with those coloured sporting prints which depict in such animated style the victories of the turf and the hunting-field. The most popular are the reproductions of the old pictures our sportive forefathers delighted in: 'The First Steeple-chase on Record' showing a number of eccentric gentlemen careering across country on thoroughbreds, with white night-shirts and night-caps as riding costume, or the 'Departure of the Rover' or the Firefly for Exeter, Liverpool, or York, with all the quaint surroundings of galleried inn-yard and many-caped passengers. Such subjects as these are still sought for by the sporting collector, and at Fores' he may find them in variety enough.

Princes Hall, a somewhat blank-looking structure, is chiefly noticeable for the boldly carved figures which surmount the doorway in the centre; while the Albany opposite stands the personification of solid respectability, and brings back to us Canning, Bulwer-Lytton, and Lord Macaulay. The great essayist lived here for fifteen years, and wrote most of his wonderful History within its walls. Byron, too, had rooms in the building; but we shall meet his erratic lordship later on.

The splendid frontage of Burlington House attracts attention next. It is curious to remember that its predecessor on this site was erected because its owner was sure no one would build beyond him! and was the first good house in Piccadilly. The present palatial edifice shelters numerous learned corporations, most of them familiar enough by name, though the functions of some are to the uninitiated public rather obscure. The best known and most popular of all is the Royal Academy—the 'Forty Immortals,' to borrow from our French neighbours, or, as some wag has put

it, the 'Forty Thieves.' Who would see fashionable London in a small space must stand within the fine courtyard on 'Private View' day, when every one who is any one worth mentioning flocks to see the pictures and each other.

Burlington Arcade, chief temple of frippery and frivolity, presents an unchanged aspect from year to year. The same shops, the same kind of wares, the same loungers, who never seem to buy. Are there any people bold enough to purchase goods in Burlington Arcade? There always seems such a sublime air of dearness about the daintily arranged little emporiums, that one could almost fancy seeing above each doorway, 'Highest prices for everything charged here.'

The Egyptian Hall remains the most distinctive building in London. This reproduction of an old temple sacred to the mystic rites of Isis looks strange enough in the midst of its busy nineteenth-century surroundings. The Siamese Twins; the Model of Waterloo; Tom Thumb, drawing his hundreds, while poor Haydon's works of art were disdainfully neglected in a neighbouring chamber; Albert Smith's inimitable jaunt to Mont Blanc; and nowadays the perennial séance of mystification presided over by Mr Maskelyne—these are brought to our minds as we linger awhile outside the curious frontage.

Arlington Street, quiet, sedate, and replete with memories, recalls some people famous in their day, and one at least famous now. Harry Bennet, Earl of Arlington, at one time high in favour with the monarch who 'never said a foolish thing;' but, like many others, falling into disrepute so far even as to become a laughing-stock with the frivolous good-for-nothings who fluttered round the English court.

Horace Walpole is another figure we associate with Arlington Street, where, as a boy, he listened at his mother's knee to that small-talk in which he was one day to prove so proficient. Many of his delightful letters date from thence, though Strawberry Hill was to witness the arch-dilettante at the summit of his fame. The present Prime Minister has his 'family mansion' here, sheltered behind a wall, in front of which a solitary policeman keeps guard over the residence of the Queen's chief adviser, in strange contrast to the elaborate military precautions one finds abroad in a similar case. Hatchett's, opposite, looks sadly shorn of its glories, now that the ground floor is given up to miscellaneous shops, and the upper part turned into sets of chambers. The entrance to what was the White Horse Cellars remains, it is true; but the coaches seem to be divided in their old allegiance, some going to the Bath Hotel opposite, and others preferring the modern Northumberland Avenue. Few prettier sights can London show than the evening arrival of these smart four-in-hands, as they come dashing up the hill from the corner through the stream of vehicles. The rays of the sun, setting beyond the Park, light up the red coat of the guard and the burnished coach-horn on which he sounds a merry note or two as the splendid horses, skillfully steered, go spankingly over the wood pavement, to all outward appearance little the worse for their long run.

With a brief survey of Walsingham House and the adjacent Club, which form so prominent a feature in the view as one looks up Piccadilly

from the west, let us turn a moment to the Duke of Devonshire's grim barrack, secluded behind one of the ugliest dead-walls in London. There is only one redeeming feature in this bare expanse—the remarkably beautiful bronze handles on the entrance gates. The house itself is a mean building, yet shelters priceless treasures of art. We may aptly cast back a thought to the fair Georgiana, who held her court here, assembling all who were noteworthy or fashionable, eager to pay their deference to the 'beautiful Duchess,' and a later memory is that which brings to our minds Charles Dickens and those celebrated performances of *Not so Bad as we Seem*, instituted by the novelist and Lord Lytton in aid of that still-born society the Guild of Literature.

Adjacent to Devonshire House—'over against,' as our forefathers would have said—stands, even more grimy and doleful, the town mansion of London's 'Lady Bountiful,' the Baroness Burdett-Coutts. Never, surely, was so bright, so beneficent a spirit sheltered in so unpromising a structure as this ugly corner house, from which Sir Francis Burdett was escorted, to become the last prisoner in the Tower of London. Nowadays, the building is associated with deeds of charity and benevolence of the noblest kind, and most passers are half induced to raise their hats in respect as they go by the end of Stratton Street.

We have now arrived at the most charming portion of Piccadilly. Here the aptly named Green Park commences, calling to mind the words of the poet who has sung the praises of this locality in those verses commencing:

Piccadilly! shops, palaces, bustle and breeze,
The whirling of wheels and the murmur of trees.

Nowhere in London, perhaps, is Nature seen in more delightful freshness than here. Trees and grass seem to wear a perennial emerald tint, due, perchance, to the fact that here was all marsh-land in those years long ago when, where St James's Palace now stands, a hospital for lepers reared its melancholy front.

Palmerston, 'Old Pam'—who does not know the house he inhabited, when, the ruler of the nation's destinies, his gifted spouse entertained such brilliant circles? It is a Club now, that square, solid stone block, with its brick screen and double entrance gates. Bright and gay with flowers are the windows, and through them one catches glimpses of the chambers where the gray old statesman revolved many momentous questions in that long head of his.

Near by, Hertford House shows its massive frontage to advantage. A fine building, severely classical with its Corinthian columns, yet a relief from the 'London mixture' of style which too often distinguishes our present houses. It belonged formerly to the Sir Richard Wallace whose loss Paris particularly, and the art world in general, are yet deploring; but he parted with it to one of the rich merchant princes.

The 'charming *bijou* residence' of the house-agent's circular is very much to the fore hereabouts. There is quite a line of these small, apparently inconvenient, and yet high-priced dwellings, regular bandboxes of houses, with a rear outlook on to a mews or something equally pleasant. We are here, too, in the region of 'Junior' clubs, one of which, the Junior Athe-

næum, inhabits Hope House, No. 116, a corner building, which has escaped elegance without being downright ugly. One may know it by the Hope arms over the windows, the shattered globe, and also by those panels of polished granite which gave rise to a faint witticism on the part of Dickens to the effect that the house 'looked as if its face had been scratched and then covered with strips of sticking-plaster.'

A few steps more bring us to Park Lane and Gloucester House, town residence of our illustrious Commander-in-chief. Very unpretentious for the home of the Queen's cousin, yet withal boasting as comfortable and picturesque an aspect towards the Park as any house in Piccadilly. Through the French windows, travellers outside the omnibus can catch a rapid sight of statuettes, a neat white bookcase well filled with bright volumes, a few pieces of choice French furniture—nothing approaching the palatial; but neat, tasteful, and orderly, like the home of any English gentleman.

Lord Byron was once a near neighbour to Gloucester House, though the building has disappeared, to be replaced by Sir Algernon Borthwick's stately mansion, outwardly as well as inwardly one of the most elegant in London. All that is left to remind us of Byron is the number 139. Here it was that this wild wayward spirit passed the later part of his brief, unhappy, ill-advised married life. Here, in the midst of sordid troubles which must have jarred with dreadful intensity on so sensitive a creature, happened to him that event which broke up his life, and, as he has said, 'sent him forth a wanderer'—the desertion, flight, or whatever it may be termed, of his wife. We shall probably never know the truth of that sad history. When, some years since, a justly respected hand injudiciously endeavoured to lift the dark curtain which charitably veils this part of Byron's life, the result was a storm of protest from all sides, from all classes, save perhaps the bigot and the ignorant who revelled in the besmirching of a noble name with a mire fouler and blacker than any which his own, alas! too patent indiscretions had created for passers-by to fling. It is well that such was the case. Let the 'dead past bury its dead;' and on the grave of his forgotten and forgiven imperfections, may the flowers bloom to furnish a never-fading wreath for the brow of one we must honour as one of the great poets of the nineteenth century.

We have now nearly arrived at the termination of our walk, for, passing the row of handsome stone buildings which comprise the Rothschild, the Antrobus, and other mansions, we reach Apsley House and Hyde Park Corner. What memories of the stern, gray Duke arise as one gazes at the plain, smoke-begrimed edifice! The windows on the Park side, obscured by shutters, remind us of the iron plates which the veteran hero of a hundred fights was fain to place between himself and the stones of a London mob. A strange little piece of history this, and a significant warning to soldiers, however great and gifted, to stick to warfare, which is their business, and leave politics, which are not, severely alone.

The arrangement of Hyde Park Corner is much improved since the arch at the end of Consti-

tution Hill was swung round, giving a fine open space, which reveals the grandiose block of Grosvenor Place to advantage, though it somewhat accentuates the formal ugliness of St George's Hospital. Decimus Burton's elegant arch, too, is better seen, especially since the authorities took the sensible step of restoring the stonework to something of its original whiteness. Up to 1825 there was a turnpike gate hereabouts; and in the near vicinity stood the 'Hercules Pillars,' the scene of some of Squire Western's immortal exploits when he came to town on that memorable expedition resulting in the discomfiture of Mr Blifl and the happiness of that amiable scapegrace Tom Jones.

Here we must bid adieu to Piccadilly. In our short journey we have met with many pleasant people, revived many pleasant recollections; yet they are but a tithe of the associations connected with this bright and busy thoroughfare, respecting which one may cordially endorse the opinion expressed in the verses from which we have already quoted:

Whatever my mood is, I love Piccadilly.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XXV.—CAN HE REMEMBER?

It was past ten o'clock that Sunday evening when Elsie arrived home. Athelstan and George were waiting up for her. 'Again the mysterious appointment?' asked the former. 'Are we to know anything yet?'—Elsie shook her head.—'Not to-night? Very good. You look tired, Elsie.'

'I am tired, thank you. And—and I think I would rather not talk to-night. I will go to my own room.—Have patience, both of you, for a day or two longer. Believe me, everything is going well. The only reason why I cannot tell you what I have been doing is that it is so strange—so wonderful—that I have not been able even to shape it into words in my own mind.—What is to-day? The 1st of August.'

'Only eleven days yet—eleven long days,' said George, 'but also eleven short days.'

'I do not forget. Well—you may both of you sit down—go about your business—you need do nothing more. As for me, I think you will have to get on without me every evening this week. But be quite easy. The thing is done.' And with that, nodding and laughing, she ran out of the room.

'It is done,' repeated George. 'The thing is done. Which thing?'

'It is done,' repeated Athelstan. 'What is done? How was it done? Who did it? When was it done?'

'Since Elsie says it is done, I am bound to accept her assurance. Presumably, she has caught old Checkley at South Square, in the very act. Never mind; I am quite sure that Elsie knows what she says.'

In her own retreat Elsie sat down to consider.

If you think of it, she had a good deal to

consider. She had, in fact, a tremendous weapon, an eighty-ton Woolwich, in her possession; a thing which had to be handled so that when it was fired it should not produce a general massacre. All those who had maligned and spoken and thought evil of her brother and her lover should, she thought, be laid prostrate by the mere puff and whiff of the discharge. Checkley should fall backwards, and raise a bump at the back of his head as big as an egg. Sir Samuel and Hilda should be tumbled down in the most ignominious fashion, just as if they had no money at all. And her mother should be forced to cry out that she had been wrong and hasty.

She held in her own hands nothing less than the complete demolition of all this erection of suspicion and malignity. Nothing less. She could restore to her brother that which he had never lost, save in the eyes of his own people, who should have been the most jealous to preserve it. No greater service could be rendered to him. And she could clear from her lover's name whatever shreds and mists had been gathered round it by the industrious breath of Checkley—that humble Cloud Compeller. You see, we all have this much of Zeus in us, even in the compelling of Clouds: every man by the exercise of a little malignity, a little insinuation, and a few falsehoods, can raise quite a considerable mist about the head or the name or the figure or the reputation of any one. Women—some women, that is—are constantly engaged in this occupation; and after they have been at their work, it is sometimes hard for the brightest sunshine to melt those mists away.

To be able to clear away clouds is a great thing. Besides this, Elsie had found out what the rest had failed to find out—and by the simplest method. She had learned from the only person who knew at what hour she should be most likely to find the mysterious Edmund Gray, and she had then waited on the stairs until he came. No method more direct—yet nobody thought of it except herself. She had done it. As the result, there was no longer any mystery. The man who forged the first cheque: the man who wrote those letters and conducted their transfer: was, as they all thought at first, Edmund Gray. No other. And Edmund Gray was Edward Dering, one and the same person—and Edward Dering was a Madman, and this discovery it was which so profoundly impressed her. There were no confederates: there was no one wanted to intercept the post: no one had tampered with the safe: the Chief himself had received the letters and conducted the correspondence alternately as Edmund Gray himself, or Edmund Gray acting unconsciously for Edward Dering.

Perfectly impossible—Perfectly simple—Perfectly intelligible. As for the impossibility, a fact may remain when its impossibility is established. Elsie was not a psychologist or a student of the brain. She knew nothing about mental maladies. She only said after what she had seen and heard: 'The man is mad.'

Then she thought how she should best act. To establish the identity of Mr Dering and Edmund Gray must be done. It was the one thing necessary. Very well. That could easily be done, and in a simple way. She had only to march into his office at the head of a small

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band of witnesses and say: 'You wanted us to find out Edmund Gray! I have found him. And thou art the man!'

He would deny it. He certainly knew nothing about it. Then she would call upon her witnesses. First, Athelstan's commissionaire, who declared that he should remember, even after eight years or eighty years, the gentleman who sent him to cash that cheque. 'Who is this man, commissionaire?'

'That is Mr Edmund Gray.'

Next the landlord of his chambers. 'Who is this man?'

'That is Mr Edmund Gray, my tenant for nine years.'

Then she would call the eminent Barrister, Mr Langhorne. 'Do you know this man?'

'He is my neighbour, Mr Edmund Gray.'

And Freddy Carstone the Coach.

'He is my neighbour, Mr Edmund Gray.'

And the laundress, and she would say: 'I have done for the gentleman for nine years. He's a very good gentleman, and generous—and his name is Mr Edmund Gray.'

And the people from the Hall—and they would make answer, with one consent: 'That is Mr Edmund Gray, our preacher and our teacher.'

And she herself would give her testimony: 'I have sat with you in your chambers. I have heard you lecture in your Hall, surrounded by these good people, and you are Edmund Gray.'

The thing was quite easy to do. She could bring forward all this evidence at once, and it would be unanswerable and convincing even to Sir Samuel.

Except for one thing which made it difficult.

The discovery would be a most dreadful—a most terrible—revelation to one who believed himself to be the most respectable solicitor in the whole of London; the most trustworthy; the clearest in mind; the keenest in vision; the coldest in judgment. He would learn without the least previous suspicion or preparation, or any softening of the blow, that for many years he had been—What? Is there any other word—any kinder word—any word less terrifying or less humiliating by which the news could be conveyed to him that he had been Mad—Mad—Mad? Heavens! what a word it is! How terrible to look at with its three little letters which mean so much. All the words that mean much are monosyllables: God—Love—Joy—Hate—Fear—Glad—Sad—Mad—Bad—Hell—Home—Wife—Child—House—Song—Feast—Wine—Kiss—everything—they are the oldest words, you see; they have been used from time immemorial by prehistoric man as well as by ourselves.

Mr Dering had to be told that he was Mad. Somehow or other, he must be told that. It seemed at first the only way out of the difficulty. How could this girl communicate the dreadful news to her guardian, who had always been to her considerate, and even affectionate? She shrank from the task. Then she thought she would hand it over to her brother Athelstan. But he was far more concerned about clearing up the hateful business than about softening the blow for Mr Dering. Or of communicating it to George. What should she do? Mr Dering was mad. Not mad all the time, but mad now and then, sometimes every day, sometimes with

intervals. This kind of madness, I believe, takes many forms—a fact which should make the strongest men tremble. Sometimes it lasts a long time before it is found out. Sometimes even it is never found out at all. Solicitors and doctors tell queer stories about it. For instance, that story—quite a common story—of an old gentleman of irreproachable reputation, a speaker and leader in religious circles, a man enormously respected by all classes, concerning whom not his bitterest enemy had a word of scandal—yet, after his death, things deplorable, things incredible, things to be suppressed at any cost, were brought to the knowledge of his lawyers. At certain times he went mad, you see. Then he forgot who he was: he forgot his reputation, his place in the world, and the awful penalties of being found out: he went down: he lived among people of the baser sort, and became an inferior man with another name, and died without ever knowing his own dreadful record. Another of whom I have heard was mad for fifteen years, yet the Chief of a great House, who all the time conducted the business with great ability. He was found out at last because he began to buy things. Once he sent home six grand pianos: another time he bought all the cricket bats that were in stock in a certain shop; and another time he bought all the hats that fitted him at all the hatters' shops within a circle whose centre was Piccadilly Circus and the radius a mile long. After this they gave him a cheerful companion, who took walks abroad with him, and he retired from active business.

Some philosophers maintain that we are all gone mad on certain points. In that case, if one does not know it or suspect it, and if our friends neither know nor suspect it, what does it matter? There are also, we all know, points on which some of us are mad, and everybody knows it. There is the man who believes that he is a great poet, and publishes volume after volume all at his own expense to prove it: there is the man—but he ought to be taken away and put on a treadmill—who writes letters to the papers on every conceivable subject with the day before yesterday's wisdom: there is the man who thinks he can paint—we all know plenty of men mad like unto these, and we are for the most part willing to tolerate them. Considerations, however, on the universality of the complaint fail to bring consolation to any except those who have it not. In the same way, nobody who dies of any disease is comforted with the thought of the rarity or the frequency of that disease; its interesting character has no charm for him. Nor is the man on his way to be hanged consoled by the reminder that thousands have trodden that flowery way before him. To Mr Dering, proud of his own intellect, self-sufficient and strong, the discovery of these things would certainly bring humiliation intolerable, perhaps—even—shame unto Death itself. How—oh! how could things be managed so as to spare him this pain?

Elsie's difficulties grew greater the more she pondered over them. It was past midnight when she closed the volume of thought and her eyes at the same moment.

In the morning, Athelstan kissed her gravely.

'Do you remember what you said last night, Elsie? You said that we could rest at peace because the thing was done.'

'Well, Athelstan, the words could only have one meaning, could they? I mean, if you want me to be more explicit, that the thing is actually done. My dear brother, I know all about it now. I know who signed that first cheque—who sent the commissionaire to the Bank, who received the notes—who placed them in the safe—who wrote about the transfers—who received the letters and carried on the whole business. I can place my hand upon him to-day, if necessary.'

'Without doubt? With proofs, ample proofs?'

'Without the least doubt—with a cloud of witnesses. My dear brother, do not doubt me. I have done it. Yet—for a reason—to spare one most deeply concerned—for the pity of it—if you knew—give me a few days—a week, perhaps, to find a way if I can. If I cannot, then the cruel truth must be told bluntly whatever happens.'

'Remember all the mischief, the old villain has done.'

'The old villain? Oh! you mean Checkley?'

'Of course; whom should I mean?'

'Nobody—nothing. Brother, if you bid me speak to-day, I will speak. No one has a better right to command. But if this—this person—were to die to-day, my proofs are so ample that there could be no doubt possible. Yes—even my mother—it is dreadful to say it—but she is so hard and so obstinate—even my mother would acknowledge that there is no doubt possible.'

Athelstan stooped and kissed her. 'Order it exactly as you please, my child. If I have waited eight long years, I can wait another week. Another week! Then I shall at last be able to speak of my people at home. I shall go back to California with belongings like other men. I shall be able to make friends; I can even, if it comes in my way, make love, Elsie. Do you think you understand quite what this means to me?'

He left her presently to go about his work.

In the corner of the room stood her easel with the portrait, the fancy portrait, of Mr Dering the Benevolent—Mr Dering the Optimist—Mr Dering as he might be with the same features and the least little change in their habitual setting.

Elsie stood before this picture, looking at it curiously.

'Yes,' she murmured, 'you are a dear, tender-hearted, kindly benevolent, simple old Thing. You believe in human nature: you think that everybody is longing for the Kingdom of Heaven. You think that everybody would be comfortable in it: that everybody longs for honesty. Before I altered you and improved your face, you were Justice without mercy: you were Law without leniency: you were Experience which knows that all men are wicked by choice when they get the chance: you had no soft place anywhere: you held that Society exists only for the preservation of Property. Oh! you are so much more lovable now, if you would only think so—if you only knew. You believe in men and women: that is a wonderful advance—and you have done well to change your old name to your new name. I think I should like you always to be Edmund Gray. But how am I to tell you? How, in the

name of wonder, am I to tell you that you are Edmund Gray? First of all, I must see you—I must break the thing gently—I must force you somehow to recollect, as soon as possible. I must make you somehow understand what has happened.'

She had promised to meet Mr Edmund Gray at his Chambers that evening at five. He showed his confidence in her by giving her a latchkey, so that she might let herself in if he happened not to be in the Chambers when she called, at five. She would try, then, to bring him back to himself. She pictured his amazement—his shame—at finding himself in strange rooms under another name, preaching wild doctrines. It would be too much for him. Better go to Mr Dering, the real Mr Dering, and try to move him, in his own office, to recollect what had happened. Because, you see, Elsie, unacquainted with these obscure forms of brain disease, imagined that she might by artful question and suggestion clear that clouded memory, and show the lawyer his double figuring as a Socialist.

She waited till the afternoon. She arrived at New Square about three, two hours before her engagement at Gray's Inn.

Mr. Dering received her with his usual kindness. He was austere but benignant.

'I tried to see you last night,' she said, untruthfully, because the words conveyed the impression that she had called upon him.

'No—no. I was—I suppose I was out. I went out'—His face clouded, and he stopped.

'Yes—you were saying, Mr Dering, that you went out.'

'Last night was Sunday, wasn't it? Yes; I went out.—Where did I go?' He drummed the table with his fingers irritably. 'Where did I go? Where?—What does it matter?'

'Nothing at all. Only it is strange that you should not remember.'

'I told you once before, Elsie,' he said, 'I suffer—I labour—under curious fits of forgetfulness. Now, at this moment, I—it really is absurd—I cannot remember where I was last night. I am an old man. It is the privilege of age to forget yesterday, and to remember fifty years ago.'

'I was talking last night to an old gentleman who said much the same. He has Chambers where he goes to write: he has a Lecture Hall—where he preaches to the people.'

Mr Dering looked at her in mild surprise. What did she mean? Elsie coloured.

'Of course,' she said, 'this has nothing to do with you.'

'How I spent the evening I know very well,' Mr Dering went on. 'Yet I forget. That is the trouble with me. My housekeeper will not give me dinner on Sunday evening, and on that day I go to my Club. I get there about five or six: I read the magazines till seven. Sometimes I drop off to sleep—we old fellows will drop off, you know—about seven I have dinner. After dinner I take my coffee, and read or talk if there is any one I know. About nine I walk home. That has been my custom for many years. Therefore, that is how I spent the evening of yesterday.—But, you see, I cannot remember it. Breakfast I remember, and the Church service afterwards. Luncheon I remember: getting home at ten I

remember. But the interval between I cannot remember.'

'Do you forget other things? Do you remember Saturday afternoon, for instance?'

'Yes—perfectly. I left the office about five. I walked straight home.—No—no—that isn't right. It was nearly eight when I got home, I remember. The dinner was spoiled.—No—I did not go straight home.'

'Perhaps you stayed here till past seven?'

'No—no. I remember looking at the clock as I put on my hat. It was half-past five when I went out—Five. What did I do between half-past five o'clock and eight? I forget. You see, my trouble, Elsie—I forget. Perhaps I went to the Club: perhaps I strolled about: perhaps I came back here. There are three hours to account for—and I have forgotten them all.'

DEEP MINING AT MANCHESTER.

THE various textile industries of Manchester are so extensive that they quite overshadow its doings in the world of mining, and the town is hardly looked upon as a mining centre at all. Nevertheless, the Manchester coal-field has been the scene of the greatest activity and advancement; difficulties have been encountered and overcome and depths have been reached which are not so much as thought of elsewhere in the kingdom. On the eastern side of Manchester the coal-field forms a half-basin, and the strata of the rocks lie inclined towards the city at an angle of ten to twenty degrees from the horizon, the direction of the line of greatest dip being pretty nearly coincident with the main roads leading from the various outlying towns, which on a map look like the spokes of a wheel. Hence it is that coal-seams which lie near the surface some ten or twelve miles from Manchester gradually attain a greater depth as you approach the city, though at intervals they are suddenly uplifted nearer to the surface by dislocations known as 'faults;' or it may be that faults intervene, throwing down the seams of coal, and causing them to lie at a depth greater than that due to the ordinary inclination of the strata.

In the spring of 1875 a number of gentlemen, headed by the late Earl of Stamford and Warrington, decided to sink two shafts at Audenshaw, a village five miles from the Manchester Cathedral, and on the 6th of March in that year the first sod of the Ashton Moss Colliery was cut. In the town of Ashton-under-Lyne, which is situated about a mile to the east of Audenshaw, coal-mining had been vigorously carried on for many years, and most of the beds of coal had been investigated. Among the seams most profitable to work there were two, known as the 'Great' and 'Roger' seams; and by calculations based on the operations of several old collieries, it was considered that these seams might be pierced by the Ashton Moss shafts at a depth of some seven or eight hundred yards. Below the 'Roger' seam there lies a bed of coal called, from its shiny appearance, the 'Black Mine,' and this seam had also been largely worked in

the neighbourhood. Its depth below the 'Roger' is about four hundred yards.

The initial difficulty encountered was a thick deposit of sand, gravel, and marl, covering the solid rocks, and nearly sixty yards in thickness. This surface deposit had previously been explored by boring, and was known to contain a considerable amount of water. The shafts—two are required by the Mines Regulation Acts—were intended to be circular in shape, and sixteen feet in diameter when finished. In order to provide for the difficulties in sinking through the sand, they were commenced with a diameter of twenty-four feet; and after the solid rocks had been reached, inner walls, resting on a bed of impervious rock, were built, reducing the shafts to the required dimensions. These walls contained a cavity into which Portland cement was run; holes were left open at the lower part, to allow free passage for water during the construction of the walls; and on their completion, these holes were plugged up, and the whole of the water found in the wet sand was kept out of the shafts. The rocks under the surface deposit proved to be true coal-measures, although marked on the Geological Ordnance maps as 'Permian' red sandstones.

The early sinking did not offer any matter of interest except that down to a depth of two hundred and fifty yards, feeders of water were constantly met with, necessitating expensive pumping machinery. Seams of coal were met from time to time varying from one inch to two feet in thickness; huge beds of beautiful stained sandstone were passed through; but there was no indication of the whereabouts of the 'Roger' seam.

Years went on, and at length it was decided to make an exploration by driving a heading in one of the seams of coal passed through, to try to discover how the ground lay around the shafts. All proved useless, and it appeared as though the coal-beds had become attenuated in the locality. Finally, in 1880 it was decided to put down a bore-hole, and accordingly operations were commenced with a 'diamond' boring-machine, starting at the bottom of the deeper of the shafts, which had then attained a depth of seven hundred yards. The diamond boring-machine is a very simple apparatus, consisting of a pipe which is made to revolve, and which is furnished with a cutting edge, the cutting arrangement being formed of a number of discoloured Cape diamonds. This pipe penetrates the ground very rapidly, and samples of the rocks are procured in the shape of cores left in the pipe, much in the same way that a cheesemonger dips his knife into the middle of a cheese and extracts a sample from the interior.

The bore-hole was commenced with a diameter of nine inches, and this was gradually reduced to about an inch and a quarter at the bottom, the diminution being rendered necessary by the introduction of iron casings from time to time to keep the hole open, so that the hole eventually assumed the form of a very long telescope. The total depth ultimately reached was a thousand and eighteen yards from the surface, which is very much deeper than that of any boring previously made in England, or than any likely to be made again for some time to come. At nine hundred yards a bed of coal six feet thick was

found, and at nine hundred and fifty yards another bed of four feet. In addition there were several smaller seams, the total number of beds of coal of all thicknesses passed through by sinking or boring being sixty-eight.

After this successful exploration, the shafts were sunk down to the workable seams. These beds on a closer acquaintance turned out to be not the 'Great' and 'Roger' Mines, but the 'Black Mine,' and a somewhat inferior bed of coal known as 'The Saltpetre' seam. As the 'Black' Mine lies below the 'Roger,' this discovery raised the problem of what had become of the latter. There could be little doubt of its actual existence, and its absence in the shaft was to be explained by the theory of a large fault which must have been passed through in sinking. The existence of the fault was proved beyond all doubt in May 1891. A heading started in the 'Saltpetre' Seam was driven right through the fault, and by a piece of wonderful luck the 'Roger' Mine was discovered on the eastern side of it. There can be no doubt that the 'Great' Mine lies about fifty yards above the 'Roger,' and that they may both be found on the western side of the fault at a depth of some four hundred and fifty yards.

This extraordinary feat of driving from one seam of coal to another four hundred yards geologically higher is what, in sporting language, would be termed a 'thousand-to-one chance.' To illustrate the position, let the reader imagine a building to be severed by a fracture, running from roof to cellar, not quite vertically, but leaning over to the left hand. On the right-hand side of the fracture let a portion of the building be supposed to have sunk down until its roof is below the level of the cellar of the other portion. Imagine that in the process of subsiding, the building has not gone down vertically, but along the line of fracture. Under these circumstances, the part which has gone down will lie to one side of the other part, and a perpendicular line might be drawn between the two portions of the severed building without passing through either of them. This is the condition of things usually met with in mining, although it does not often occur that shafts happen to be sunk through a fault so as to just miss the severed coal-seams. If, however, the fracture were to lean over towards the right hand, and the right-hand portion of the building were to subside along the line of fracture, it might be brought into the position of lying exactly under the remaining portion of the building, and a vertical line might be drawn through both portions, cutting bedrooms, ground-floor, cellars, &c., twice. This condition of things is known in geology as a 'reversed fault,' and is not often met with.

A sinking pit is usually kept going continuously, Sundays excepted, the workmen being employed in shifts of eight hours each; in a sixteen-foot pit there would be from twelve to sixteen men employed at once. The material is drawn out by means of an iron vessel called a 'hoppet,' which contains about a ton and a half of broken rock. It is not usual to employ any mechanical means of preventing the hoppet from swinging from side to side, but it has to be held still for a few minutes, so that the rope is exactly perpendicular before it is sent up the pit. At a

great depth, the slightest touch will send the hoppet across the pit; therefore, the operation of steadying is a delicate and most important one.

The only accident of a serious nature which occurred during the sinking at Ashton Moss was one caused by the hoppet being sent up while swinging slightly: the contractor was in it with one leg hanging over the side; the hoppet struck a beam placed across one side of the shaft, and broke the contractor's thigh.

It is almost always necessary to loosen the ground sunk through by means of some kind of explosive, gunpowder being generally employed in dry places, and dynamite or some such disagreeable substance when water is present. Three or four holes are bored and charged and fired at once, time fuses of different lengths being used, so that each shot may be distinctly heard, to make sure that all have gone off. Of course, all the men have to get out of the way when the shots are fired, and great care taken to keep everything in order with the engine and signals, so that the men whose duty it is to light the fuses may be safely and rapidly drawn out when that duty has been performed. Blasting is sometimes carried on by means of an electric current, but there are many objections to this method.

The sides of a shaft are protected by brickwork, which is put in during the course of the sinking from time to time, in lengths varying with the nature of the ground; each length is laid on a foundation consisting of an iron ring, and the ring itself rests on plugs driven into the solid rock.

Water is not often met with at great depths: at Ashton Moss there are continuous feeders down to two hundred and twenty yards, in all amounting to twelve thousand gallons per hour, weighing about five times as much as the coal raised. In extracting coal at these depths, the very greatest care has to be taken to prevent the weight of the overlying rocks destroying the underground works. Roof, sides, and floor are constantly moving, and the enormous thrusting power exerted by the weight of the rocks rapidly smashes timber and brickwork.

The natural temperature at the bottom of the Ashton Moss Mine is eighty-four degrees, being very much lower than the theoretical temperature calculated upon by the Royal Coal Commission. The barometer stands three inches higher than at the surface.

How far this venture has influenced the question of the duration of the British coal-fields, it is not easy to say. The limit of depth laid down by the Royal Coal Commission in 1871 was four thousand feet, and this limit was fixed largely from the temperature calculated to obtain at that depth. It is well known that temperatures at the same depth vary largely at different places. Heat escapes along the lines of stratification, and where the stratification lends itself—as at Ashton Moss—to a ready escape, the temperature is much lower than at a place where the stratification is flat or otherwise unsuitable to the easy emission of heat. There seems no reason why the limit of four thousand feet should not be passed at Ashton Moss, leaving out the question of cost. Sinking at nine hundred yards deep presents to skilful men no greater difficulties than at two hundred

yards. We have certainly not reached the limit of strength in ropes and winding power, and when the pinch of scarcity comes, the difficulty of cost will disappear with the enhancement of prices.

THE BELLS OF LINLAVEN.

BY JOHN RUSSELL.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.—THE VOICE ON THE FELL.

THE way is long when the foot is weary ; and that old man, with white locks tossed and dishevelled, will have a hard fight with the strong west wind ere he gain the summit of Brathrig Fell. He pulls his cap closer down over his brow, and struggles on, with head bent forward to the gale. His step is slow and uncertain, and he frequently pauses to take breath, turning the while his back to the wind to let the fierce gust pass. One hand holds the staff with which he props his fainting limbs ; the other clutches the fastenings of a small valise or knapsack, brown and much worn, which he carries slung over his shoulder.

The man certainly looks old, yet his feebleness would almost seem due less to age than to illness. For as he gains the shelter of the pine-wood that skirts the brow of the hill, and sits down by the wayside to rest, there is a hectic flush on his cheek, a quick coming and going of the breath, as if some spasm of agony, mental or physical, were about to seize upon and destroy him. His lips move tremulously, like those of one speaking in pain, but a half-stifled groan is all that is audible.

It was evening, and the mingled gloom and glory of the red October sunset fired the western sky. The great hills of Westmoreland and Cumberland rose up huge and black against that burning background of light, the smooth round crest of Helvellyn contrasting with the sharper ridges of Skiddaw and Saddleback. Dense masses of black cloud swept along the nearer sky, or lay in the far distance like bars of darkness across the western flame. A misty dimness was creeping up into the valleys on the farther side of the Fell, showing like a thin white mist against the purple shadows of the hills. And away down there to the left, glimpses might be had through the trees of the glittering surface of a wind-swept lake, giving back the colours of the western sky in waves of slowly-fading brightness.

The light in the west gradually died down from fiery red to soft amber, and ere long from amber to a cold frosty gray. Yet still the winds blew, and roared among the great pines above upon the hill. Down in its wild ravine, Brathrig Beck sent its hurrying waters crashing from cataract and linn, making, with the creaking and groaning of the trees, a gloomy confused music as of Dis. Through it all, the old man sat silent, introspective, self-absorbed. He was heedless

alike of sunset hues, of driving cloud-rack, of the rush of winds and waters. There was a fierce stormy beauty in the scene around him, but his eye marked it not. Nature may deliver her message to the pensive-souled, the love-lorn, the calm thinker of deep things, but her still small voice cannot reach the heart that is torn by compunction and remorse. For so this old man's heart seemed to be. He, with his weak, melancholy eyes, and sad introspective vision, heard another voice within him than that of Nature, and the half-unconscious gaze beneath his drooping eyelids showed that his heart was like his eyes, and these were far away.

'Ah !' said he, as if speaking within himself, 'be thou ever so fleet o' foot, the vengeance o' God is fleet.'

And then, suddenly roused by the sound of his own voice, he looked up, and, conscious that the twilight was visibly deepening around him, started to his feet with a quick nervous motion, and once more continued his ascent.

The narrow hill-road led zigzag fashion along the ridge towards the higher ground, and was in some parts smooth and easy, in others rugged and uneven. For long he toiled wearily on, making little headway against the masterful gale, and with more and more frequent pauses for rest. Now and again, as some gust more fierce than its predecessors caught him, he was fain to cling to the grassy bank on his right, like a man who on shipboard, when the vessel heels suddenly to the wind, grasps eagerly whatever support is within reach. Away down on the left, the shimmering lake was coming more fully into sight, but the opalescent brightness of the sunset was no longer upon it, and its aspect, cold and leaden, was gloomy and depressing.

At that moment there came up on the wind the faint and distant clangour of bells. It was the hour of curfew, rung out from the tall square tower of Linlaven Church, outlined, with its surrounding trees, against the gray background of the lake. It did not seem at first as if the solitary wayfarer heard the bells. But as the wind brought towards him, now and then, a fuller and deeper swell of sound, he would pause for a moment and listen. He was like a man in a dream, not quite sure whether what he heard was reality or not.

At last the bells ceased ; but the old man still pressed wearily on—on into the gathering darkness ; till presently his waning strength failed him altogether, and he sank down by the wayside. A faint groan escaped his lips : no more. The night closed around him ; dim stars peeped glimmering through the torn rack of the sky ; no voice or footstep of living thing broke the solitude : he lay there, alone, beneath the darkness, with the winds and the clouds and the falling waters.

The Rev. Francis Norham, the aged Vicar of Linlaven, was sitting that same evening by his

study window, looking out upon the gathering storm, watching apparently the effect of the swift wind upon the trees that surrounded his home. There had been a touch of frost a few days before, and now, as blast after blast struck the swaying boughs, the sere and yellow foliage was driven off in showers, flying thick as snow-flakes across the garden, and across the churchyard, in great eddying whirls. The slates upon the roof rattled in sharp dissonance; and now and again the walls of the house shook as some neglected door was banged to by the wind. Things were evidently lively outside. The Vicar loved his garden and his flowers; and as he saw the tall chrysanthemums, staked along the side-walks, bending to breakage in the windy air, he may have thought sadly for a moment that much of their autumn glory would be shorn away, and not a little of his gardening labour lost.

It is just possible, however, that his thoughts were otherwise; for when the curfew bell rang out, he started to his feet and looked at his watch. Was it really so late?

'Wilfrid should have been home before now,' he said. 'If he is not across Brathrig Fell before darkness sets in, he will have an awkward ride of it.'

And as he spoke, he walked to his writing-table, and struck a small hand-bell. Presently a servant entered with a lighted lamp, which she placed on the table.

'Has Mr Wilfrid not returned, Maria?'

'No, sir.'

'Then would you say to Mrs George that when she has seen the children to bed, she might come here.'

'Yes, sir,' replied the servant, who, after drawing the blinds, closing the shutters, and extending the thick curtains across the windows, left the room.

The one lamp, with its heavy shade, lit the large library but feebly, although it shone on the writing-table with sufficient brilliancy. The Vicar was slightly distrait to-night. He did not sit down, but walked to and fro in a somewhat restless and anxious fashion. The wind without still roared among the trees, but he did not appear to heed it now.

After a time he drew a bunch of keys from his pocket, opened a drawer in his writing-table, and took therefrom a small packet of letters slightly yellowed with age. Selecting one, he replaced the others, and sat down in his study chair, with the light of the lamp full upon him. Opening the sheet of paper, which had been addressed to himself, he began to read it over. It was dated December 21, 1853, and ran thus:

DEAR FRANK—I am afraid you will think I have got into a sorry scrape. It was bad enough for me to break with my father on the question of my profession in life, but I do not know how much worse it will be for him—or how much more perplexing for you, who have always stood by me—when it is known that I have married without his knowledge or consent. But such the fact is. I see now, what you have often told me, that when a young man breaks, as I did, with his natural and accustomed surroundings, he may, instead of conquering the new and

unexperienced surroundings, be conquered by them. I need not argue the point now. It is enough that I am married. Nor do I for a moment regret it.

My marriage took place nearly a year ago, but, not to aggravate my father beyond endurance, I have hitherto kept it a secret from you all. Circumstances, however, have so come about that I do not think it desirable to keep the matter a secret any longer. A month ago, a little girl was born to us, and justice both to the mother and the child demands that I should make my marriage known to my father. I have therefore written to him, informing him of what he will no doubt regard as but an additional exhibition of my headstrong folly.

My wife is a good and beautiful woman. Her name is Esther Hales, and she is the daughter of a dissenting minister. I have boarded with her mother—who is a widow—since I came to this town; and Esther, who is well educated, was for a time a day-governess. In manners and culture she is a lady; but as her pedigree is not so long-preserved as that of the Norhams, I am afraid my father will not regard her as being entitled to that distinction. Will you, therefore, like a good fellow, when you get this, go over to the Hall and see my father, and try to calm him down a little. I know he will be ever so wild when he gets the news I send him; but, after all, he is my father, and I am his son. You know, Frank, how much he and I loved each other until I tried to strike out a course in the world for myself, and how much the subsequent estrangement has cost the feelings of both of us. Things will, I trust, come right between us by-and-by.

In the meantime, I do not—for reasons which are not quite pleasant to me—wish you to answer this letter, and therefore do not send you my present address. I had yours of a month ago forwarded to me by a friend from my old address; but you must not use that address any more, as it might be attended with some risk to me. I cannot at present explain further; but you will understand. When fortune favours me with a more propitious gale, I will write you again.

A. N.

This letter was, as we have said, addressed to the man who was now for the twentieth time reading it, and the initials appended to it were those of Arthur Norham, the elder of the two sons of Squire Norham of Brathrig Hall.

The estate of Brathrig was a large one, as far as number of acres went; but when these acres are in great part composed of dry upland fells, mountain peaks, and stretches of picturesque water, the results in the shape of rent are not quite so imposing. The estate, moreover, was—as often happens in old family possessions—not much the richer by the operations of a long line of preceding Squires; and the holders of the mortgages were believed to have a greater personal interest in the rent-roll than even the Squire himself. Nevertheless, he hunted and shot, and went to Quarter Sessions, and gave dinners to his county neighbours, much as was done by other Squires, and managed, year in and year out, to pull through. He had married a lady whose family was of precisely the same antiquity as

his own, both counting back to the inevitable Conqueror, and beyond that to Charlemagne; and three children had been born to them—two sons and a daughter, the latter being the youngest.

It so happens in many cases that children as they grow up do not exhibit either the qualities or defects of their parents. And in Squire Norham's instance this was so as regarded both of his sons. The elder, Arthur, had as a boy manifested a most unaristocratic taste for mechanical operations; so much so, that if on any occasion he did not appear at the luncheon hour, he was to be found either in the carpenter's or the blacksmith's workshop—the latter most frequently. As he grew out of his boyhood's years, this passion made itself still more apparent; and when, after his second year at Oxford, he returned home, and announced what he proposed to follow as his future career, the first breach between himself and his father occurred. Arthur's declaration was no less than this, that he did not intend to return to Oxford, but that he wished instead to enter himself for the profession of a mining engineer.

It was a great shock to the Squire. It almost took his breath away. That a young man descended from the knights who came thither with William the Norman, should take to so mean a profession, was unheard of. Business of any kind was mean in the eyes of the Squire, whose views of life were based severely on aristocratic and hereditary principles. His son might go into the army or navy if he chose; but to speak of any other form of profession was preposterous. Army and navy apart, the right thing for a young Squire to do was to prolong the sports and pleasures of boyhood into the remainder of his natural life, varied perhaps by an occasional attendance at Quarter Sessions; or possibly if he developed brains enough, by finding for himself a seat in Parliament. Anything else was little short of absolute madness.

He could scarcely believe that he had heard aright. 'Arthur,' he at length said, 'who has put this preposterous notion into your head?'

'No one in particular, father. You know I always had a taste for working with tools and machinery; and since I went to the university, I have been reading, and thinking about things, and keeping my eyes about me. You have often told me that the family property was much encumbered, and I do not think we shall ever be able to relieve it by my following upon the old lines. I am not strong in classics, and I do not see that any further knowledge of Latin and Greek on my part will ever help the estate. There are valuable minerals upon it, if we had the money to secure them; and I have formed the idea that, if I could qualify myself as a professional engineer, I might be able, with the little money we have, to make an attempt to work those minerals.'

It was a sensible and manly proposal; but the father could not see it. If the minerals were to be worked, surely there were sufficient men to be got for the purpose.

'But don't you see, father, that if I had a technical knowledge of the operations required, and of the minerals to be sought for, the knowledge would be worth money to us, and we should

not then be dependent upon the many mining adventurers upon whom gold has hitherto been simply thrown away.'

This last observation was somewhat unwise, or rather impolitic, on the part of Arthur; for it called up some unpleasant reflections in the Squire's mind, and did not improve his temper. The interview ended by the Squire informing Arthur that he must go back to Oxford as before.

Arthur was a headstrong youth; that was not to be denied. What he had set his mind upon, he would carry out, if he possibly could. By a legacy from a distant relative, he had something like two hundred pounds a year in his own right, and he thought that, with this, he could manage to qualify himself for the profession at which he aimed. Hence, without saying anything more to his father on the subject, he left home one morning secretly, and nothing further was known of him till the Squire received a letter in which Arthur told him that he had entered himself as a pupil to a mining engineer in Manchester.

His father received the intelligence as was to be expected. He stormed, and stamped, and denounced the insane folly of his son. Nor need we altogether withhold our sympathy from the Squire in this emergency. A man cannot change his *principles* and instincts as he changes his clothes; he cannot divest himself of life-long habits as a snake creeps out of its slough, and start afresh with a brand-new set. That the Squire, according to his lights, should regard his son's conduct as monstrous, was perhaps, after all, only natural.

At the first, his rage took the form of a threat to disinherit the young man; and possibly not even the persuasions of Mr Brookes, the family lawyer, would have been successful in withholding him from executing his purpose had the character of his second son been quite satisfactory.

But the character of James Norham—or Jim, as his associates called him—was very far from being satisfactory. Unlike his brother, he was so far from disregarding the sports with which the country Squires and their sons filled up a portion of their time, that he could have filled up his whole time with them. Guns, and horses, and dogs were his unflinching solace during such hours as he did not spend in the parlour of the *Three Pigeons*—and he spent a great many hours there. Nor were his companions of the most select order. Jim would sit down and tattle with any groom or stableman in the countryside, and was constantly making bets which he was unable to pay, much to the detriment of his father's income. At length, by the influence of friends, a commission was got for him in the army, and thus for a time the district was happily rid of his presence.

So the years passed, until that letter came to the Squire in which Arthur announced to him his marriage. The father declared at once what he should do. By a former will he had left the estate largely at the disposal of his wife, should she outlive him, and Arthur's share in it was only to depend upon certain contingencies. Now he had resolved to disinherit him, and would at once ride to town for that purpose.

He gave orders that the groom should bring round Black Prince immediately.

The groom, when he appeared with the horse, suggested that his master should ride another, as he had not been out much for some days. 'Your honour knows his temper,' he said, 'and this morning he is very fresh.'

'No,' replied the impatient and angry Squire; 'I must have him—the others are too slow for my errand.'

He proceeded to mount; but it was not till after a bit of a fight between horse and rider that Black Prince yielded to rein and spur. At length, however, he started off, and went tearing down the avenue at a furious pace.

The groom stood for a moment and watched them, dubiously. He had not failed to observe that both horse and rider were in a bad state of temper; and, as they disappeared round a bend of the road, a thought seemed to strike him. Hurrying back to the stables, he quickly led out and saddled another horse, which he at once mounted and rode off after his master.

At the entrance lodge the gates were open; and through these he passed rapidly, after having informed himself in which direction the Squire had ridden. For a couple of miles he never once got sight of him; but at length he did. The Squire was at a point where two roads forked off, and Black Prince was evidently refusing to take the one the Squire wished. A stiff battle was raging between the two, the horse lashing out and rearing. Just as the groom approached, the animal reared up and fell over—his rider underneath. When the servant dismounted to assist the Squire, it was to find him stone dead.

That same morning, the Vicar, having also received Arthur Norham's letter, had ridden over to Brathrig Hall, as the young man requested, in the hope of reconciling the Squire to the new situation. But he arrived too late. He was but in time to see the Squire's servants, with mournful faces, bearing the dead body of their master into the hall. The widow and her daughter were distracted with grief; and the Vicar soon found that he had more responsible duties to perform, and more solemn tasks to undertake, than were laid upon him by his friend Arthur's letter.

The Squire's death happened two days before Christmas; and what rendered this more remarkable was the fact—ascertained after long, and, for a time, baffled inquiries—that Arthur Norham had left his home on the day following that on which he had written to his father and the Vicar, and no trace of him had since been found. On the one day the son had disappeared; on the following the Squire had met his death. The dead Squire was laid with his ancestors in the chancel of Linlaven Church; but of Arthur—from that day to this not a word had ever been heard.

The Vicar sat this evening—the storm still roaring without—with the open letter in his hand, musing on the sad history and mystery which that letter had awakened once more in his mind. It was now nearly thirty years since he had first received and read it; but the effects which it brought about were operating to this

day. As he thought of all this, he heard the tramp of a horse outside, and presently the door of his room opened and a lady entered.

'Grandpapa,' she said, with an anxious look, 'that must be Wilfrid. Oh, how I wonder if he has a letter for me!'

CREMATION.

BY S. BARING-GOULD.

It would certainly be a singular fact, should what appears to be a fact prove to be one—that Cremation was a means of disposal of the dead peculiar to that great Aryan or Indo-Germanic branch of the human family to which we belong. Nor is it a less singular fact—and fact this is beyond dispute—that cremation has never been more than a fashion among those peoples who have adopted it, that has never wholly overmastered and driven out the more ancient and more generally customary usage of interment.

In the Bible, cremation is spoken of as a sharpening of the punishment of death, as something conveying disgrace with it; and the only exceptions were those of Saul and his sons—when the bodies were burnt probably because it was not possible in any other way to convey their bones from the land of the Philistines to that of their fathers; and secondly, in cases of pestilence, when it was done in the hope of thereby arresting the spread of contagion.

As far as we have any evidence from history, the burning of the dead was confined to the Indo-Germanic stock, and was not universally practised even among it. Of the nations of antiquity, the Greeks are those of whom we know most, and the poetical descriptions in Homer of the burning of the bodies of Patroclus and of Achilles have given occasion to the supposition that cremation was the usual method among the Greeks of disposing of their dead. That this was not the case, however, has been revealed by the discoveries of Dr Schliemann at Mycenæ, where he has found bodies buried of those who were contemporaries of the heroes engaged in the Trojan war, if the interments be not in some cases those of some of these very heroes themselves. In later times, moreover, cremation was by no means universal among the Greeks; and owing to the expense of a funeral pyre, the interment of the dead was usual among those of moderate means and the poor. Cremation was a funeral luxury.

Since the fourth century before Christ, an idea prevailed that the dead required a sort of purification, and that this purification could be effected by fire. It was the same with the Etruscans and Romans. Pliny distinctly affirms that cremation was not the institution of the ancients, but that it arose much as in the case of Saul and his sons, through death far from home, and the impossibility of bringing home to be buried with their fathers those who had fallen in foreign wars in any other way than in ashes. Some of the noble Roman families refused to adopt the fashion when it spread. Conspicuous among these was the great Cornelian gens; and Sulla was the first member of this family who was burned, and he only because, having cast

out of their sepulchre and scattered the remains of his great adversary Marius, he feared lest his own body should be subjected to indignities, and consequently ordered that it should be cremated.

The custom of burning the dead had, however, come in long before this, as we may see from a law of the Twelve Tables that forbade the interment or the burning of a body within the precincts of the city. This law was broken by the populace at the funeral of Julius Cæsar, when they tumultuously seized on the corpse, collected benches and stools, and burnt it in the Forum.

Among the ancient Germans, according to Tacitus, cremation was customary, and the Anglo-Saxons brought the usage over into Britain. In *Beowulf*, an Anglo-Saxon epic of the eighth century, there is a description of the burning of the dead.

In Scandinavia, both kinds of burial were in usage: the 'Brunaöld,' or age of burning of the dead; and the 'Haugaöld,' or age of interment of the dead. Baldur and Brunhild were both burnt on funeral pyres; but, on the other hand, numerous notices in the Sagas relate to the burial of the corpses in mounds. Moreover, the cairns and tumuli tell the same story—that both methods of disposing of the dead were in use. Some old chiefs were laid in their ships and mounds heaped over them; and some were first consumed to ashes.

Among the Celts, another great branch of the Indo-Germanic family, according to both Diodorus and Cæsar, the burning of the dead was customary; and Cæsar relates how that with the deceased were burned whatever he had most affected, as his horses and dogs, and formerly clients and slaves. It was the same with the Slavonic peoples. St Boniface tells how that the Wends at the beginning of the eighth century burned their dead, and how that wives committed suicide so as to be burned along with their deceased husbands. And Nestor, the historian of the Russians at the beginning of the twelfth century, says the same of those concerning whom he writes.

The great branch of the Aryan stock which turned eastward in like manner carried cremation with it, but not as a sole and exclusive usage, for it never took its place among the Parsees, who would regard it as a desecration of the pure and sacred flame; on the other hand, in India the practice of suttee became customary among the high-caste Brahmins: the wife was burnt along with the body of her husband. The usage of burning the dead is not, however, by any means universal. Corpses are cast into the sacred waters of the Ganges; and the burning of the dead is only of general practice in the valleys of the Himalaya among some of the savage or half-savage tribes. As concerns the Semitic races, cremation was never a prevalent usage. We see with what repugnance it was regarded by the Hebrews, whose highest conception of honour shown to the dead was embalming them, a conception probably derived from the Egyptians.

In Babylonia are the burial-places of the dead, who had not been subjected to fire, but, curiously enough, there has been discovered of recent years a necropolis of burnt bodies. Whether these are

the remains of foreigners of the Aryan race, settled in Babylonia, preserving their peculiar usage, or whether they represent the destruction of bodies by fire after a plague—an exceptional case in which alone cremation was endured—cannot be told.

The countless barrows and cairns dispersed over the downs and hills of Scotland, England, and Ireland tell of both cremation and inhumation. Not only so, but of both having been in use at one and the same time. In the same barrow, at the same interment, one corpse was reduced to ashes, the other not. Dr Anderson, in his *Scotland in Pagan Times*, says: 'With regard to the burial customs (in the Bronze Age), it is apparent that we have no evidence sufficient to separate the custom of cremation from the custom of burying the body unburnt. We have frequently found the burnt interments and the interments unburnt in close juxtaposition in the same group of burials, and in point of fact the two modes of burial are occasionally present in the same cairn.'

Canon Greenwell of Durham, who has made exhaustive and scientific exploration of the barrows on the Yorkshire wolds, gives precisely similar testimony. In his *British Barrows* he mentions several instances in which indubitably the two methods of burial have been practised simultaneously. He says: 'I have found many cases where a burnt and an unburnt body have been laid in the grave most unquestionably at the same time. It is difficult to say why one was burnt, while the other was interred without having undergone the process of cremation. I have thought we have in the burnt bodies those of wives and slaves killed at the time of the funeral of the man; still that is mere conjecture, and men are found burnt and laid alongside of unburnt women, if we may judge of the sex by the accompanying implements or weapons, which seems a fair deduction; but I am certain that inhumation and cremation were practised not only at the same time, but for interments made the same day.'

In one very curious instance brought under the writer's notice at St Sernin in Corrèze, a cairn contained a woman, one half of her unconsumed, the other half burned and placed in an urn.

It has been a matter of debate among antiquaries and ethnologists as to the race or races that erected the cairns and barrows and left their inhumated and incinerated remains in them. It has been conjectured that some belong to a pure Celtic race, others to the swarthy Ivernian stock which first occupied the British Isles, and is possibly of Turanian origin, represented now by the Basques, Lapps, and Finns. But as far as is known, incineration was a speciality of the Aryan stock, though never a permanent practice, one that appeared and disappeared, that prevailed, and was then abandoned by the branches of that great stock. And this fact, if fact it be—and it seems to be well established—goes far to make us believe that the barrow and cairn builders, at all events such as burnt their dead, were of the same Aryan race as ourselves.

But again, the fact, and fact it is, that at one and the same time, and in one and the same interment, both fashions of burial are found, is probably explained by the conduct of the mighty

men who rescued the bodies of Saul and his sons from the Philistines. When a chief had died at a distance from home, then he was incinerated, so that his body might be brought to the same necropolis where were buried the unburnt dead of his family or tribe. We find this explanation of the burning of the dead in the first book of Samuel, and also in Pliny, as explaining the introduction of the fashion among the Romans. Moreover, in some interments—though of an earlier age—the bones are found to be scratched, as though the flesh had been removed from them before burial. These were probably cases of dead warriors at a distance from their family resting-places, who were thus treated so as to enable their remains to be conveyed home.

IN THE EVENING OF LIFE.

THE sunshine lay so hot upon the old garden outside the grateful shadow of the trees, that there was no stir of life. The grass looked almost dead, and a film of shimmering heat hung over it that seemed to scorch the eyeballs like a blast of hot air from a furnace of molten metal. It was mid-day—and mid-day in July. Scarcely a sound made the silence conscious; once only a big lumbering bee hummed across the open, but did not pause to levy contribution upon the heliotrope, which seemed the predominating savour in the strangely mingled scent that filled the place.

The garden was so old that it had an air almost of decrepitude, that was peculiarly delightful. It looked as though it might have been precisely as it was any summer these fifty years. The plants had luxuriated in an unpruned freedom that was their symmetrical death. The geraniums and gillyflowers, never among the aristocracy of plants, had degenerated to mere vagabondage; a carpet bed, that once had shown an even and close-set face of many colours to the sun, now survived only in a ragged and forlorn decay, like a beauty who has outlived her charms, yet still persists in revealing the rags and tatters of her once bright youth. The roses, too, had cast aside all notion of decorum, and wasted their strength in a prodigality of blossom, sweet indeed, but frail and heartless.

The garden had once been trim; the beds were cut into curious shapes, dividing the grass into numberless intricacies, and almost wearying the eye with their multiplicity of varying line. On the right, looking towards the south, stood some fine elms and a few copper beeches; while set, as it seemed, in the very centre of the place was a huge Portugal laurel, laden with its creamy flower-cones; and encircling this, a seat. All round the garden was a high wall, the sunny sides of which were covered with plum and pear and peach and nectarine; these seemed to have received more attention than their kindred of the beds. If you passed between the two tallest of the elms, you came to a little wicket gate, and there your eyes and nostrils at once would be assailed with a strange delight of scent and colour. Beyond the gate there lay an orchard, so old, so quiet, so reminiscent of old memories, that, under the shade of its gnarled and twisted branches, you would have forgotten the world

completely, or thought of it only as of a tale that is told. The red-cheeked, sun-baked apples diffused a subtle odour upon the air, and seemed to glint a homely welcome from their glossy skins. The trees were gray with lichen, and the long grass reached high up about their ancient trunks, as though the ripe and mature growth of a single spring and summer would claim protection from the still vigorous bearers of the wet and sunshine of many years. The thick growth was borne down in places by the weight of fallen fruit, as yet ungathered. The orchard was bounded on the further side by a tall nut-hedge; and beneath this, again, there was a rustic bench. The shadow of the trees lay still upon the grass, not a branch or a leaf stirring, and the light and shadow made a luxurious carpet like a black and gold brocade.

The house to which these ancient grounds belonged was as old and quiet as they. It stood, blinking in the light, with open casements and drawn blinds. It was a low building of gray stone, with heavy mullioned windows and queer gables; the overhanging eaves were thickly plastered on the under-side with swallows' nests; there were so many that the eye wearied in counting them before the tale was complete. At either side of the hall door roses climbed, which trespassed upon the wall-space of some jessamines and mingled their pink-tipped blossoms with their companions' yellow stars. About the house, too, there was no sign of life. Everything was quiet, and mellow, and world-proof; even the pigeons on the roof, whose burnished throats gleamed in the light, were as still and drowsy as the rest.

The hours glided slowly away, and as the declining sun made the elms cast longer shadows, the birds found voice again and called to one another through the cooling air. At about six o'clock the door opened, and an old gentleman stepped out and walked towards the Portugal laurel with a slow and measured pace. Having reached the seat, he sat down upon it, disposing himself comfortably with his back against the tree and his face towards the door, which he had left open. He was of a tall and stately bearing, half through his seventh decade, and with a simple, benevolent, and open countenance. His dress was of black velvet, the quality very fine, and at his breast and wrists were falls of rich amber-coloured lace. His stockings, too, were black; and his shoes were fastened by old paste buckles, framed in gold. The point of a black cane rested on the ground beside him; and his left hand, very delicate and finely jewelled, lay upon its golden knob. His look wandered round the garden slowly and contentedly, not with any sign of disquiet; but it always paused for a little longer when it returned to the open door, as though, without perturbation, but still with certainty, he expected some one to pass through it as he had done, and take the same way towards the seat on which he was sitting.

Under the shade of the dark-green leaves and blossoms, the air was cool and balmy; a black-bird up above him gave an occasional contented chuckle; and a wren, somewhere near, was piping its little song with all the strength of its small throat.

The old gentleman had sat thus for some ten

minutes, when he put his right hand into his pocket, drew out a snuff-box, transferred it to his left hand, opened it, and took a pinch with an appearance of calm enjoyment. The snuff-box was of gold, beautifully chased, and on the cover was a miniature. It represented a girl of perhaps twenty years of age, with long golden curls falling round a face so young and fresh, that, as the old gentleman looked at it after closing the box, and before returning it to his pocket, the sight brought a pleasant smile to his face, that seemed to take ten years from his age.

'She has altered very little,' he said, half aloud; 'the hair is gray; but the fashion of my wig has changed as well.'

He slipped the box into his pocket and resumed his former attitude.

As his eye reached the open door again, a new light flashed into his glance; for there came forth a lady as stately as himself, though not so tall, dressed in a black silk gown with trimmings of old gold. The old gentleman rose and walked towards her; half-way between the laurel and the door they met. He took off his hat with a low bow, and offered her his arm, which she accepted with an inclination as courtly as his own. He led her to the seat, and they sat down there, side by side. They were like a companion pair of antique drawings; even the colour of their dresses harmonised, like two notes making a perfect chord.

'It is forty years,' said the old gentleman, 'since we sat alone together in this garden. You may, perhaps, remember?'

Across the old lady's face there passed the suggestion of a blush; it was so slight that it seemed but the memory of one. 'I remember well,' she said.

'It was good of you,' he said, with an inclination of the head, 'to remain another day after my guests had gone; perhaps it was not right of me to ask you.'

'After the very pleasant time that I have spent here—and remembering our old friendship—I could not very well refuse so small a request; nor did I wish to refuse it,' she answered.

'You may recollect,' he said, tapping the knob of his stick with his finger, 'that I asked a greater favour of you forty years ago—if I offend you, pray bid me be silent—and now that so many, so very many, years have passed, can there be any wrong in asking why you wrote this letter?'

He took from his pocket, first his snuff-box, which he laid upon his knee, and then a leather case, from which he drew a letter, yellow at the edges, but untorn, as though preserved with infinite care. This he unfolded, and handed to his companion.

'Before I read this,' she said, 'will you permit me to look more closely at your snuff-box?'

'Madam,' he answered, 'you will do me honour—by looking at yourself.' He handed the box to her with another inclination.

As the old lady gazed at that fresh picture of her vanished youth, old memories seemed to stir within her, and the hand that held the box trembled, and her eyes saw it through a kindly mist. She returned it to him; he opened it and took another pinch; his hand, too, must have

been unsteady, for a little powder fell upon his ruffles. Having returned the box, she read the letter, which ran as follows:

'I am sorry that I cannot be as you desire; there are reasons which I cannot explain to prevent it. I trust to your honour to let no word escape you of what has passed, and to make no effort to see me again. Farewell.'

She held the letter between her fingers for full five minutes, then refolded it and handed it back.

'My hand,' she then said slowly, 'wrote that letter, but my heart did not. After so many years, and as you desire to know, I may tell the truth concerning it. May I trouble you with a few words of family history?'

'Anything, Madam, relating to yourself cannot but be pleasant to me to hear.'

'You are courteous, as ever.—Well, then, when I was here, in this house, forty years ago, as your father's guest, I was about twenty-two: yes—that is right—this year I shall be sixty-three.'

'And I,' said the old gentleman, 'sixty-six.—Excuse me; pray go on.'

'I met in this house a gentleman, young, frank, honourable, who, for some reason, chose to think he loved me.'

'Madam, he not only thought— But again, forgive me.'

'Who loved me, then. I, too, felt that counter-attraction towards him which—which a young girl may be permitted to feel under such circumstances. Just before the end of my visit, we chanced to meet alone under the shade of a large Portugal laurel in a well-trimmed garden.' Here the speaker looked round upon the unpruned beds, as though trying to recall a recollection.

The old gentleman said nothing; his head was bent slightly forward, his left hand still resting upon his stick.

'Certain words were spoken—true words, no doubt.'

The bowed head did not stir, but a low voice said: 'As true words, Madam, God help me, as were ever spoken—on one part.'

'And on mine. After so many years one may speak without reserve. I, on my return home, was to gain my father's consent. I could not obtain that consent; it would have been treason to run counter to his wishes; he was old, and there were reasons. Those reasons were simply these: his fortunes, my father's fortunes, were on the verge of ruin; the only thing that could save them was for his daughter to make a good marriage. The gentleman with whom I wished to mate was poor; even at his father's death, and that seemed distant, his fortune would not have been sufficient to save a falling house. Therefore the letter which you have done me the honour to keep so carefully, was written—not without pain, not without many vain tears, many years ago.'

The steady voice failed a little at the close, and the small dainty hands were pressed close together on the carefully smoothed gown. It was still quite light in the old garden; the cool air was full of perfume; the thud of a falling apple came from the orchard.

At length the old gentleman raised his head and said: 'I thank you, Madam, for the freedom with which you have spoken of these things.'

There is one more point upon which, if I may be permitted to speak'—

'Perhaps you would like to see the orchard again; the wrens build there still.'

Arm in arm they walked to the gate leading into it. He lifted the latch, and went in first, beating a pathway through the long grass with his stick. Then he returned and led his companion to the bench under the nut-hedge.

'You did not make this great marriage, after all, I think? Indeed, I think I am right in supposing that you have never married?'

'You are quite right. My father died within a year. There was enough left for a lonely woman to live upon; the necessity for my marriage was buried in my father's grave.'

'But, Madam, you were young and beautiful. I have heard that a disappointed love may bestow itself upon some other object.'

'My love was perhaps an old-fashioned love,' she answered, 'and perhaps I waited, thinking I might receive some sign or message from the gentleman of whom I have told you.'

'But you bound him, upon his honour, to say nothing!'

'I have heard of an honour that could'—

'Madam, perhaps his honour was an old-fashioned honour.—But I interrupt again—forgive me.'

'I will not finish the sentence; his honour and my love kept both apart—and this was forty years ago!'

'Let us no longer treat the matter thus. You were the lady; I was the gentleman. Do I surmise correctly?'

'You do,' answered the old lady.

'Then, during these forty years I have guarded both my love and honour. I have left this garden and orchard just as you saw it last; the beds have been weeded, that is all. The plants are the same, or have been succeeded by a self-sown posterity: the trees are the same—you may find your name, Madam, cut into the bark of more than one: the pigeons now upon the roof are the descendants of those which you fed from your hand forty years ago. I, too, have remained unchanged.—Madam!—and he sank upon one knee and took her hand—'we are both unchanged.'

'This, I believe, is not the manner of a gallant nowadays,' said the old lady, smiling; 'I understand that they do not kneel now.'

'My gallantry,' said the old gentleman, returning the smile, 'is an old-fashioned gallantry. But may we not come together at the end? In the beginning we were separated; let the end atone.'

'But I am an old woman now, sir. You will find at least four wrinkles on the hand you hold!'

'Madam,' he answered, 'there are at least four wrinkles upon my forehead; they may be set off against each other.'

He kissed the hand he held; and the old lady, bending a little nearer to the brave old face, said: 'As you will. If you wish it, we will pass the end together.'

He kissed her hand again silently; and drawing a ring from his finger, he slipped it upon one of those he held. Then he rose from his knee, still holding the hand, and drew it gently

within his arm, keeping his own still clasped upon it.

'May I see your snuff-box once more?' said the old lady.

'Take it,' he answered, 'and keep it in memory of these forty years—and of to-night.'

'Nay,' she said, taking it from him; 'I have this; and she pressed the diamond he had just placed upon her finger against his palm; 'but when I have need of it, I will ask you for it.'

She looked again at the face that smiled back upon her from the past, and then opened the box and took a grain or two between her fingers; so small a pinch that the old gentleman could not restrain a smile. She handed the box back in silence.

'That is the greatest compliment that has ever been paid to me,' he said.

The pulses of each had beaten so calmly for so many years, that there was no great tumult then. The two lives glided together into one stream, and journeyed on towards the darkness which would end in light.

'You have stayed here too long; the dew is falling, and I am sure you cannot see to work.'

I looked up, as though awakened out of a dream.

'It is late,' I said. 'What time is it?'

'Half an hour past tea-time.—What have you been doing?'

I pointed to the sheaf of papers on the table which I carry out into the garden on fine days to work upon, and my sweet tyrant took them up and carried them out of the shadow of the nut-hedge to the light.

'Why, this is not the story you have been working at,' she said. 'Here you seem to have described this house; but our garden is as trim and neat as any garden, I am sure, could be.'

'Yes,' I answered; 'but it was not always so. This lovely summer day and a lazy fancy have produced the little scrap of true ancestral history which you now hold in your hand.—Let us go in.'

And so we went.

T W I L I G H T.

TWILIGHT, the gray-eyed child of Day and Night,
Comes wandering through the wood with pensive face,
Tender as thoughts of home; a placid grace
Follows her footsteps, and a holy light
Strikes amid leafless boughs, as childhood's dreams,
At sight of youth, awaken in the old.
And as I watch her take her noiseless way
By glen and field and lonely water-gleams,
Lost hopes, like buds of spring, again unfold,
And rosy light comes trembling through life's gray.
Thus have I watched thee, Twilight, long ago,
Thy coming but a herald to mine eyes
Of one who followed, and who filled my skies
Not as with night, but Love's own morning glow.

MARY CROSS.

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MONTSERRAT.

MONTSERRAT is a little too remote from the beaten tracks of the tourist to receive many of the kind of visitors who inscribe their names in much-frayed quarto volumes, with various appendices of sonnets or criticisms about the spectacle they have travelled to see. Yet it is so lovely and peculiar a spot, that the tourist who comes within a hundred miles of it may reproach himself if he neglect it. And all things considered—especially the fact that the monastery is in Spain, and of course, therefore, accessible only by Spanish methods of locomotion—the facilities for getting at the mountain are many rather than few.

Perhaps the best idea of what one may expect to behold in Montserrat may be had from the deck of a steamer nearing Barcelona upon a calm clear morning or evening. The gaunt points of the mountain (Mons Serratus), rising one above the other, some thirty miles inland, are then very impressive. The sunset effect at such a time is one not easily matched. The glow lights up the many pinnacles with a certain glory thoroughly adapted to convince our ancestors that the mountain had something supernatural about it. Its isolation, too, in the midst of a country much less elevated than it, with convenient perches for the building of habitations of a simple kind, was sure to tempt the anchorites of old, even as nowadays it may tempt the traveller for its superb outlook over Catalonia and towards the Pyrenees.

One travels for a couple of hours from Barcelona until the little station of Monistrol is reached on the Zaragoza Railway. For the last hour of the journey the mountain has been in sight, with its white perpendicular club-like rocks, and its thick green mantle of shrubs. The aspect of it becomes more sensational every minute, especially if there be a black cloud settled on its sharp crest to pique the imagination into fancying that it towers skywards as abruptly as Babel. The eyes of the Spaniards in the train

turn towards it from all parts of the cars. They may have seen the mountain hundreds of times. It may even be as much a routine sight with them as are the chimneys of suburban London to the business man whose vocation bandies him to and fro between his villa and the city. Yet they do not tire of it, and are willing to talk of it with the neighbour to whom it is a novelty.

There is rumour of an eventual railway from the station on the main line to the plateau of the monastery some two thousand feet above it. The railway would no doubt be of the funicular kind. But one may be allowed to hope it will never be made. It is much more agreeable, and more in keeping with the savage beauty of the rocks and glens, to ascend as one does in the great coach drawn by six mules which twice a day meets the train, and takes to Montserrat what the railway has brought for it. The pace of this ascent is a little tedious; but it gives one all the more time to gaze at the rocks and admire the ingenuity of the road-makers. The track winds to and fro among the precipices, so as to give one almost a surfeit of the picturesque.

Once arrived in the monastery precincts, you must try to realise the conditions of the life into which you have entered. You are here on sufferance if you are a Protestant. But there is no fear that in such a case you may be expelled at a moment's notice. The age of persecution and intolerance has passed for Spain; or at least the Church is no longer its agent. Protestant or Catholic, therefore, you are given the key of the little bedroom in the great ugly guest-house to the right or left; and having been informed that the candle is at your own charge, and that the restaurant is at one end of the courtyard, you are free to roam about the ruins of the old building, the chambers of the new, the hermitages of the mountain above you, or its wondrous peaks and miniature plateaux. Of course, at leaving you must pay something for your room, unless you are very much out-at-elbows. But, according to the laws of Montserrat, even if you decided to endure no expense save that of your candle and

your food, the monastery would let you depart in peace, though without its benediction.

In the summer, all the scores of rooms in the building are often filled with guests from different parts of Spain. What can be more delightful? The place is notoriously sacred, even as it is notoriously beautiful, and in summer, notoriously healthy and cool in comparison with the hot plains and the seaboard. Picnic parties, therefore, arrive in brisk succession, with portly baskets and echoing laughter. Mules and horses are requisitioned; they may be wired for from Barcelona direct to the convent; and the caval-cades make the final ascent to the summit to feast among the homes of the hermits of past days, and to dally in company with the ravens and hawks until the first streaks of evening are in the sky, and the snow of the Pyrenees is paling in the north. Anon, the Ave Maria bell sounds from the high-roofed chapel of the convent; the boys of the convent school—training for missionaries beyond the sea—chant the service in a dim religious light; and supper-time has arrived. It is by no means right to approach the restaurant before the hour of the Ave, though appetite be ever so restive; and according to one of the bylaws, the service must precede the supper.

Architecturally, the monastery is ugly to the last degree. It is like nothing so much as a reformatory. The great walls of its residential blocks, pierced with little windows which give them the appearance of a number of prisons, are enough to frighten the sentimental traveller. It seems as if a night or two spent in such a place must give the deathblow to any romance that might have been dreamed about it. In truth, however, one soon turns one's eyes away from the monastery and its heavy roofs to the fascinating grotesque peaks behind it. These are like sugar-loaves set roughly side by side so as to leave a succession of abysses between them. But the sugar-loaves must be thought of as many hundreds of feet high, and the abysses between them are therefore deep enough to make one hold one's breath while gazing down them.

The monastery, which assumes to provide most things needful for the comfort of the visitor, and has a shop in its courtyard where you may buy a multitude of articles—from pins to potted meats—has also its staff of guides for the mountain, who work by a tariff. But one does not really want a guide for Montserrat. With ordinary prudence, one may roam by one's self at pleasure about the glens and defiles, and climb by steep artificial staircases from one hermitage to another until the last and the summit are reached simultaneously. This is the way to get the best impression of Montserrat. It is detestable in such a spot to be prattled at by a man whose phrases are as unromantic as Ollendorff's. The reverend fathers sell a wonderful little book which may well displace this gentleman, if the visitor yearns for a guide of some kind. It has hundreds of pages, and is arranged in the question-and-answer mode. But even this ought not to be allowed to ascend the mountain. It is better as light entertainment after supper in the monastery restaurant. One can then be sure of going to one's hard, clean, monastic bed in good-humour; and one may even laugh between

the sheets in recalling some of its exquisite simplicity.

For my part I was content to roam among the myrtles and lentisk and wild lavender of the mountain and its precipices as an unattached vagrant. It was glorious to rest at my own sweet will first on the edge of one precipice and anon on the edge of another a few hundred feet higher. The river Llobregat ran like a thread through the ruddy land at the base of the mountain, and withal so near that it seemed not impossible to spring two or three thousand feet down headlong into its turbid stream. It had been heavy weather for the past week, and from the red and purpled uplands on the other side of the river—sadly lacking in trees, like the greater part of Spain—a number of impetuous little torrents were rushing towards the greater river in the valley. I could fancy I heard their several voices as it were in a chorus, to the accompaniment of the deep bass of the Llobregat, which absorbed them and carried them all towards the sea. The birds sang in the bushes round about me, and the faint echo of the shouts of the school-boys of the monastery at play in the gardens by the avenue of cypresses, also drifted towards the white peaks of the mountain. Now and again, as my standpoint changed, I gazed across many a mile of broken land towards the Pyrenees in the north-west. It was a day of meteorological moods and fancies. At one time, a mighty storm-cloud held all the snow-peaks of the range in its black embrace. I knew fresh snow was then whirling furiously about their summits. The air chilled as the breeze stiffened from the north. Stray fringes of the cloud began to make a demonstration near the massy pinnacles of Montserrat itself; and the portents were all bad. But when everything looked at its worst, the storm on the Pyrenees began to abate, the dark cloud scampered off, much attenuated by its conflict with the pointed peaks, or broke to show the sunlight upon the new-fallen snow. The spectacle, then—of the unveiling of the Pyrenees from Montserrat—was something to be remembered with a certain feeling of awe, and never to be forgotten; and the renewal of the blue over my head with the white rocks towering towards it was no less delightful.

Thus I wandered upwards towards the summit, and those ruined hovels near it which were formerly the habitations of a number of hermits who lived and died on the mountain. One may marvel how these simple ascetics could conceive that they were doing good work in thus isolating themselves from their fellows. In the summer, their manner of life no doubt had its gratifications for such lovers of nature as they could hardly fail to become. It was then no intolerable hardship for each of them to get up at two o'clock in the morning to ring the bell of his little chapel. But in winter, even the most strenuous advocate of self-mortification among them must often have sighed for a spell of life in the plain. It was the custom for the youngest member of this community of devotees to occupy the highest hermitage—that of San Gerónimo. By-and-by, as he grew older, he was degraded to another nest, and so, when he became fourscore or thereabouts, he might chance to be tenant of the hermitage of St Anna or St Dimas, which are comparatively

near the monastery, whence medical or other aid could be more readily obtained in case of need.

The Napoleonic era, which put an end to so many ancient institutions in Europe, fairly extinguished the hermits of Montserrat. The ribald Frenchmen under Suchet hunted these good men from cliff to cliff of the mountain 'as if they had been chamois,' and slaughtered certain of them in their sanctuaries. To the same Frenchmen is due also the sack of the monastery itself, the expulsion of the monks, and the burning of its buildings. One still sees traces of the ruin thus wrought so many years ago. This was a revival with a vengeance of the early medieval vicissitudes of the mountain, when it was in the hands of a robber who had a castle on it, whence he ravaged the lower lands without mercy. The site of this rogue's castle is still preserved in one of the ruined hermitages, very appropriately the one dedicated to St Dimas, the good thief.

Nowadays, of course the ordinary visitor cannot be expected to feel any very keen reverence for these disestablished chapels and their adjacent dilapidated and vacant tenements. The clouds and the storms are year by year helping to remove them altogether. The hermitage of San Gerónimo on the summit of the mountain is a capital place for a picnic; and in summer there may be many processions thither in a day with baskets of portly size and bottles in their midst. It is certainly good to breakfast here after a climb of two hours in the fresh morning air, and to drink one's wine face to face with the stupendous Pyrenees, or neck deep in the clouds. The air is the best in Spain, and there is no stint of it. The thrills of agreeable horror excited by the precipices which intervene between the breakfast-table and the monastery, let alone the lowlands—which look insufferably bleak and hot from this fair eyrie—are like a sauce to the feast. One knows that by-and-by a deliberate false step in descent may send one speeding into a chasm that seems to be bottomless. It is always a pleasure to be thus decisively the master of one's destiny, and especially when one is in good-humour with one's self and the world. And so there is generally much more of jollity than aught else at this hermitage of San Gerónimo, even though there is a crucifix upon the adjacent mountain-top.

For three days the visitor may lead this placid kind of life at Montserrat, occupying the same room, and with no charge upon him except what the restaurant and his candle involve. But on the fourth morning the bylaws of the monastery gently but firmly put him outside the gates. The assumption in old times was probably this: even the blackest of hearts may be purged of its sin in three days, even as the generosity of the most opulent of pilgrims may be supposed in that time to have been proven to the uttermost. One might go farther, and fancy that the monks thought a little of that variety which gives such pleasant colour to life, and made this rule that their eyes might constantly be refreshed by the sight of new faces. Be that as it may, nowadays the conventional pretext is that, but for this rule, the hospitality of Montserrat would be in peril of being abused. Such and such a pilgrim might take up his abode in the *hospederia* for life, and though his means enabled him to pay daily for his bed, he would thus be lodging shamefully at the cost of the

establishment. One may therefore bow, though perhaps with reluctance, to this regulation, which compels one to depart just when the charms of the place are fastening upon the heart.

The six mules are harnessed to the big coach, and the other passengers, pilgrims like one's self, though of very different kinds, are waiting. In surrendering the key of your little room you are giving up a pleasure you could well have protracted for as many weeks as you have been allowed days for its enjoyment. The courteous steward of the bedchamber department of the monastery receives your donation with a complacent though somewhat critical eye. Perhaps your exterior has begotten high hopes in his heart. The hopes are disinterested, of course, for he is but an automaton giver and receiver. There are pilgrims who think nothing of leaving a gold piece for every night they spend on the holy mountain. They do not, by any exact standard, reckon up the worth of the bare flags of the bedchamber and the coarse sheets and linen that are supplied to them, and then pay perhaps precisely what they would have paid in an hotel. Visitors of this kind are loved at Montserrat, as elsewhere. For them the tongues of the 'fathers' are always ready to wag in the honourable office of guide, familiar, and friend. These are they who can be relied upon to buy from the store of medals and pictures and books and rosaries which under one of the most ancient nooks of the monastery offers its particoloured window to tempt the faithful. And after all, it may further be said that these are they who derive the utmost profit and pleasure from places so hallowed by age and tradition as Montserrat.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XXVI.—WILL HE REMEMBER?

SHOULD she tell him? She could not. The way must somehow be prepared. No—she could not tell him just so—in cold blood. How would he look if she were to begin: 'I have found out the mystery. You are Edmund Gray. During the hours that you cannot recall, you are playing the part of a Socialist teacher and leader: you are actively propagating the doctrines that you hold to be dangerous and misleading?' What would he say? What would he feel when he realised the truth?

On the table lay a copy of the *Times*—a fortnight old copy—open at the place where there was a certain letter from a certain Edmund Gray. Elsie pointed to it. Mr Dering sighed. 'Again,' he said, 'they persecute me. Now it is a letter addressed to Edmund Gray, lying on my table: now it is the bill of a pernicious lecture by Edmund Gray: to-day it is this paper with the letter that appeared a week or two ago. Who brought it here? Checkley says he didn't. Who put it on my table?'

Elsie made no reply. It was useless to test her former theory of the boy under the table.

'As for the man who wrote this letter,' Mr Dering went on, 'he bears the name of our forger

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and writes from the same address. Yet he is not the man. Of that I am convinced. This man is a fool because he believes in the honesty of mankind: he is a generous fool because he believes that people would rather be good than bad. Nonsense! They would rather be stealing from each other's plates, like the monkeys, than dividing openly. He has what they call a good heart—that is, he is a soft creature—and he is full of pity for the poor. Now, in my young days, I was taught—what after-experience has only brought more home to me—that the poor are poor in consequence of their vices. We used to say to them: "Go away—practise thrift. Be sober—work hard. By exercising these virtues we rose out of your ranks. By continuing to exercise them we remain on these levels. Go away. There is no remedy for disease contracted by vice. Go away and suffer." That's what we said formerly. What they say now is: "Victims of greed! You are filled with every virtue possible to humanity. You are down-trodden by the Capitalist. You are oppressed. Make and produce for others to enjoy. We will change all this. We will put the fruits—the harvest—of your labour in your own hands, and you shall show the world your justice, your noble disinterestedness, your generosity, your love of the common weal." That's the new gospel, Elsie, and I prefer the old.

Strange that a man should at one time hold and preach with so much fervour and earnestness the very creed which at another time he denounced as fiercely!

'This man, and such as he,' continued Mr Dering, lifted out of his anxieties by that subject, 'would destroy Property in order to make the workman rich. Wonderful doctrine! He would advance the world by destroying the only true incentive and stimulant for work, invention, civilisation, association, and every good and useful thing. He would destroy Property. And then? Can he not see what would follow? Why, these people do not know the very alphabet of the thing. By Property they mean the possession by individuals of land or money. But that is only a part of Property. Take that away, and the individual remains. And he has got—what you cannot take away—the rest of his Property, by which he will speedily repair the temporary loss. Consider, child, if you can, what does a man possess? He has, I say, Property—all his own—which cannot be taken from him or shared with another—Property in his brain, his trade, his wit, his craft, his art, his skill, his invention, his enterprise, his quickness to grip an opportunity. Again, he has his wife and children—sometimes a very valuable Property: he has, besides, his memories, his knowledge, his experience, his thoughts, his hopes, his projects, and intentions: he has his past and he has his future: he has, or thinks he has, his inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven. Take away all these things bit by bit, what is left? Nothing. Not even the shadow of a man. Not even a naked figure. This, Elsie, is Property. These things separate the individual from the mass and each man from his neighbour. A shallow fanatic, like this Edmund Gray, thinks that wealth is the whole of Property. Why, I say, it is only a part of Property: it is the external and visible side

of certain forms of Property. Take all the wealth away to-day—even if you make ten thousand laws, the same qualities—the same forms of Property—the same lack of those qualities will produce like results to-morrow.—Do you now understand, child, what is meant by Property? It is everything which makes humanity. Wealth is only the symbol or proof of society so organised that all these qualities—the whole Property of a man, can be exercised freely and without injustice.'

'I see,' said Elsie, gazing with wonder undisguised. Was this last night's Prophet? Could the same brain hold two such diverse views?

'You are surprised, child. That is because you have never taken or understood this larger view of Property. It is new to you. Confess, however, that it lends sacredness to things which we are becoming accustomed to have derided. Believe me, it is not without reason that some of us venerate the laws which have been slowly, very slowly, framed: and the forms which have been slowly, very slowly, framed as experience has taught us wisdom for the protection of man—working man, not loafing lazy man. It is wise and right of us to maintain all those institutions which encourage the best among us to work and invent and distribute. By these forms alone is industry protected and enterprise encouraged. Then such as this Edmund Gray—he laid his hand again upon the letter—'will tell you that Property—Property—causes certain crimes—ergo, Property must be destroyed. Everything desirable causes its own peculiar class of crime. Consider the universal passion of Love. It daily causes crimes innumerable. Yet no one has yet proposed the abolition of Love—eh?'

'I believe not,' Elsie replied, smiling. 'I hope no one will—yet.'

'No. But the desire for Property, which is equally universal—which is the most potent factor in the cause of Law and Order—they desire and propose to destroy. I have shown you that it is impossible. Let the companies pay no dividends, let all go to the working men: let the lands pay no rent: the houses no rent: let the merchants' capital yield no profit: to-morrow the clever man will be to the front again, using for his own purposes the dull and the stupid and the lazy. That is my opinion.—Forgive this sermon, Elsie. You started me on the subject. It is one on which I have felt very strongly for a long time. In fact, the more I think upon it the more I am convinced that the most important thing in any social system is the protection of the individual—personal liberty: freedom of contract: right to enjoy in safety what his ability, his enterprise, and his dexterity may gain for him.'

Elsie made no reply for a moment. The conversation had taken an unexpected turn. The vehemence of the upholder of Property overwhelmed her as much as the earnestness of its destroyer. Besides, what chance has a girl of one-and-twenty on a subject of which she knows nothing with a man who has thought upon it for fifty years? Besides, she was thinking all the time of the other man. And now there was no doubt—none whatever—that Mr Dering knew nothing of Mr Edmund Gray—nothing at all. He knew nothing and suspected nothing of the

truth. And which should she believe? The man who was filled with pity for the poor and saw nothing but their sufferings, or the man who was full of sympathy with the rich and saw in the poor nothing but their vices? Are all men who work oppressed? Or are there no oppressed at all, but only some lazy and stupid and some clever?

'Tell me more another time,' she said with a sigh. 'Come back to the case—the robbery. Is anything discovered yet?'

'I have heard nothing. George refuses to go on with the case out of some scruple because'—

'Oh! I know the cause. Very cruel things have been said about him. Do you not intend to stand by your own partner, Mr Dering?'

'To stand by him? Why, what can I do?'

'You know what has been said of him—what is said of him—why I have had to leave home'—

'I know what is said, certainly. It matters nothing what is said. The only important thing is to find out—and that they cannot do.'

'They want to connect Edmund Gray with the forgeries, and they are trying the wrong way. Checkley is not the connecting link—nor is George.'

'You talk in riddles, child.'

'Perhaps. Do you think, yourself, that George has had anything whatever to do with the business?'

'If you put it so, I do not. If you ask me what I have a right to think—it is that everything is possible.'

'That is what you said about Athelstan. Yet now his innocence is established.'

'That is to say, his guilt is not proved. Find me the man who forged that cheque, and I will acknowledge that he is innocent. Until then, he is as guilty as the other man—Checkley—who was also named in connection with the matter. Mind, I say, I do not believe that my Partner could do this thing. I will tell him so. I have told him so. If it had to be done over again, I would ask him to become my Partner. But all things are possible. My brother is hot upon it. Well—let him search as he pleases. In such a case the solution is always the simplest and the most unexpected. I told him only this morning—he had lunch with me—that he was on a wrong scent—but he is obstinate. Let him go on.'

'Yes—let him divide a family—keep up bitterness between mother and son—make a lifelong separation between those who ought to love each other most— Oh! it is shameful! It is shameful! And you make no effort—none at all—to stop it.'

'What can I do? What can I say, more than I have said? If they would only not accuse each other—but find out something!'

'Mr Dering—forgive me—what I am going to say'—she began with jerks. 'The honour of my brother—of my lover—are at stake.'

'Say, child, what you please.'

'I think that perhaps'—she did not dare to look at him—'if you could remember sometimes those dropped and forgotten evenings—those hours when you do not know what you have said and done—if you could only remember a little—we might find out more.'

He watched her face blushing, and her eyes confused, and her voice stammering, and he saw that there was something behind—something that she hinted, but would not or could not express. He sat upright, suspicious and disquieted.

'Tell me what you mean, child.'

'I cannot—if you do not remember anything. You come late in the morning—sometimes two hours late. You think it is only ten o'clock when it is twelve. You do not know where you have been for the last two hours. Try to remember that. You were late on Saturday morning. Perhaps this morning. Where were you?'

His face was quite white. He understood that something was going—soon—to happen.

'I know not, Elsie—indeed—I cannot remember. Where was I?'

'You leave here at five. You have ordered dinner, and your housekeeper tells me that you come home at ten or eleven. Where are you all that time?'

'I am at the Club.'

'Can you remember? Think—were you at the Club last night? George went there to find you, but you were not there—and you were not at home. Where were you?'

He tried to speak—but he could not. He shook his head—he gasped twice.

'You cannot remember? Oh! try—Mr Dering—try—for the sake of everybody—to put an end to this miserable condition—try.'

'I cannot remember,' he said again feebly.

'Is it possible—just possible—that while you are away—during these intervals—you yourself may be actually—in the company—of this Socialist—this Edmund Gray?'

'Elsie—what do you mean?'

'I mean—can you not remember?'

'You mean more, child! Do you know what you mean? If what you suggest is true, then I must be mad—mad. Do you mean it? Do you mean it? Do you understand what you say?'

'Try—try to remember,' she replied. 'That is all I mean. My dear guardian, is there any one to whom I am more grateful than yourself? You have given me a fortune and my lover an income. Try—try to remember.'

She left him without more words.

He sat looking straight before him—the horror of the most awful thing that can befall a man upon him. Presently, he touched his bell, and his old clerk appeared.

'Checkley,' he said, 'tell me the truth.'

'I always do,' he replied surlily.

'I have been suffering from fits of forgetfulness. Have you observed any impairing of the faculties? When a man's mental powers are decaying, he forgets things: he loses the power of work: his old skill leaves him: he cannot distinguish between good work and bad. He shows his mental decay, I believe, in physical ways—he shuffles as he walks: he stoops and shambles—and in his speech—he wanders and he repeats—and in his food and manner of eating. Have you observed any of these symptoms upon me, Checkley?'

'Not one. You are as upright as a lance: you eat like five-and-twenty: your talk is as good and your work is as good as when you were forty.—Don't think such things. To be sure you do forget a bit. But not your work. You only

forget sometimes what you did out of the office—as if that matters. Do you remember the case you tackled yesterday afternoon?’

‘Certainly.’

‘Do you tell me that any man—forty years younger than you—could have tackled that case more neatly? Garn! Go ‘long!’

Checkley went back to his office.

‘What did she mean by it, then?’ Mr Dering murmured. ‘Who put her on to such a suspicion? What did she mean by it? Of course it’s nonsense.’ So reassuring himself, he yet remained disquieted. For he could not remember.

At half-past five or so, Mr Edmund Gray arrived at his Chambers. The outer door was closed, but he found his disciple waiting for him. She had been there an hour or more, she said. She was reading one of the books he had recommended to her. With the words of Mr Dering in her ears, she read as if two voices were speaking to her—talking to each other across her.

She laid down the book and rose to greet him. ‘Master,’ she said, ‘I have come from Mr Dering. He is your solicitor, you told me.’

‘Assuredly. He manages my affairs.’

‘It is curious—I asked him if he knew you—and he said that he knew nothing about you.’

‘That is curious, certainly. My solicitor for— for many years. He must have mistaken the name. Or—he grows old—perhaps he forgets people.’

‘Do you often see him?’

‘I saw him this morning. I took him my letter to the *Times*. He is narrow—very narrow in his views. We argued the thing for a bit. But, really, one might as well argue with a stick as with Dering when Property is concerned. So he forgets, does he? Poor old chap! He forgets—well—we all grow old together.’ He sighed. ‘It is his time to-day and mine to-morrow.—My Scholar, let us talk.’

The Scholar left her Master at seven. On her way out she ran against Checkley, who was prowling round the court. ‘You!’ he cried. ‘You! Ah! I’ve caught you, have I? On Saturday afternoon I thought I see you going into No. 22. Now I’ve caught you coming out, have I?’

‘Checkley,’ she said, ‘if you are insolent, I shall have to speak to Mr Dering;’ and walked away.

‘There’s another of ‘em,’ Checkley murmured, looking after her—‘a hardened one, if ever there was. All for her lover and her brother! A pretty nest of ‘em. And calls herself a lady!’

WRECK-RAISING.

WRECK-RAISING has long passed from the experimental stage. It has become a very necessary part of the economics of Great Britain’s maritime trade. Years ago, when ships were built of wood, and our sea-trade was but in embryo, maritime disasters were of necessity much less numerous than they are at present; nor were they of so complete or serious a nature as those which mark the iron age of the nineteenth century. The percentage of vessels so mysteriously abstracted from our merchant fleets and returned as ‘missing’ was then less than the number now included in that sad category. The buoyancy of the ship-

building material then used, combined with the great structural toughness of the wooden vessel, enabled these old-time carriers to make comparatively little of a stranding. They could ‘get off’ and ‘proceed’ under circumstances that must have resulted in the total loss of an iron or steel vessel.

Modern vessels have been aptly compared to pieces of crockery, very useful and very necessary, but extremely liable to get cracked. The cracking process, whether the result of collision with another vessel or of sudden impact with some submerged rock, frequently leads to the foundering of the vessel. Under the old *régime* a vessel that thus went to the bottom remained there until she was entombed in the shifting mud or sand, or else had undergone a process of gradual dissolution, hastened by the ebb and flow of tides and currents. Wreck-raising was then a science practically undreamt of. Some crude operations were carried on, it is true, at several sunken wrecks; but the object aimed at was the recovery of treasure, and not the raising to the surface of the vessel containing it. The development of mechanical science and steam-power has placed in the hands of modern wreck-raisers machinery that has enabled them to lift many a fine ship from her oozy bed, and restore her to her proper place among the floating argosies of commerce. Most of the vessels that are raised, after suffering submergence beneath the waves, are the victims of collisions; and these, as might naturally be expected, are most frequent in the crowded waters of our own harbours and their approaches. The chief economic purpose served by wreck-raising is the keeping clear of *impedimenta* the fairways leading to the large seaports. Sensational wreck-raising attracts the attention of the whole civilised world, especially when the catastrophe which resulted in the sinking of the vessel was attended by an awful life-loss or other sensational features.

Her Majesty’s ship *Eurydice* was lost during a blinding snow-storm off the Isle of Wight on the 24th of March 1878. The sad loss of so many bright young lives was very painfully felt over the whole country. All subsequent information relative to the fate of the sunken training-ship was eagerly sought for by the public; and the raising of the vessel herself was witnessed by the Prince of Wales from his yacht *Aline*. The waters of the English Channel then looked as calm and clear as possible, and the sun shone brightly upon a scene which must have been in marked contrast to that which obtained when the blinding snow-squall capsized the ill-fated *Eurydice*, and sent her and her living freight to the bottom.

The raising of Her Majesty’s ship *Sultan*, which struck upon an uncharted rock in one of the water-channels of the Maltese group of islands, was another case that excited much attention. The foundering of the *Utopia* after collision with some of the British fleet riding at anchor in the Bay of Gibraltar, and the awful life-loss that resulted, will long be remembered. The mishap, however, occurred in comparatively shallow water, and but little difficulty was experienced in raising the sunken vessel.

But the most valuable work accomplished by wreck-raising processes is done so quietly and

unobtrusively that the general public are unaware of its magnitude and importance. The harbours of Great Britain are the points to which is focussed a vast amount of the world's trade, and as a result, the convergence of so many vessels to these waterways means very great risk of collision. Strandings, too, are frequent, for the difficulties of navigating tortuous channels and keeping out of the way of other vessels are very great. The average number of vessels that meet with mishap each year in the Thames above Gravesend is about eleven hundred; while in the Mersey over three hundred come to grief; and some sixty annually meet with disaster in the section of the Clyde above Greenock. Of course many of these accidents are of no very serious nature; but some result in vessels sinking right in the path of ships using the much-frequented waterways mentioned above. These wrecks must be removed with all possible speed, for they are a source of great danger. To guard against collision with the sunken vessel the first step taken is to moor the warning wreck-boat near the scene of the disaster and to issue 'Notices to Mariners,' apprising them of the submerged danger to navigation. The form that these notices generally take will be best seen from the one quoted below:

SUNKEN STEAMER.

NOTICE is hereby given that the large screw steamer CRYSTAL, 330 feet long, lies SUNK in about seven fathoms at low water, outside the ENTRANCE to the RIVER TYNE, about 200 yards south of the line of Harbour leading lights, and about 400 yards east of the south pier end. The vessel, which is entirely submerged, is heading west with the following marks and compass bearing, viz.: Tynemouth Castle Light, NW. $\frac{1}{4}$ N. South Groyne Light, W. $\frac{3}{4}$ N. The sunken vessel is marked by day by a GREEN BUOY, placed a little to the eastward thereof, and at night a STEAM-TUG, exhibiting Two WHITE LIGHTS placed horizontally, will ride or be in proximity thereto.

Many Harbour Boards have their own wreck-removing plant, and then their divers make a preliminary examination of the sunken vessel, with the view of ascertaining whether it is a case for blowing up or raising. When Harbour Commissioners do not possess the necessary plant, they advertise for tenders for the performance of the work. This of itself shows to what an extent the science of wreck-raising has developed. Years ago, the practice pretty generally obtained of removing submerged dangers by blowing them to pieces; but when the disaster has occurred in shallow water, this is now regarded as wasteful and quite unnecessary. It is now some fifteen years since the Thames Conservancy Board perpetrated such an act of destruction. Within the last eleven years they have raised no fewer than 399 vessels from the river-bed and restored them to their owners. Of this number, 72 were steamers with a registered tonnage of 57,992 tons; 49 were sailing-vessels, with a total tonnage of 9781; and 278 were barges, with a total tonnage of 11,113.

The wreck-raising plant includes a screw-tug, three 150-ton lighters, each fitted with steam-winch and steam-pumps; two 150-ton and two

300-ton lighters without steam-power; and two 400-ton lighters with central wells, and fitted with patent wire compressors. Of course, the other vessels of the Conservancy Board can be requisitioned for salvage-work as well, if occasion requires. A complete diving equipment is also provided, and an abundant stock of wire and other rope.

When a collision takes place and a vessel sinks in the fairway of the river, the wreck-boat alluded to above is moored *in situ*, and the diver makes his examination. All the loose gear that may militate against the success of the undertaking is removed, and a number of wire-cables are made fast. Care must be taken to ensure a perfect distribution of the strain over the submerged vessel. The cables are entrusted to stand a tension of 150 tons, and although they sometimes, though very seldom, break, the point of fracture is generally under water along the keel of the vessel operated upon, and thus the lives of the sailors are not endangered. The number of cables passed under the vessel varies with her size, as many as twelve or fifteen sometimes being employed. These are made fast to the lighters at dead low-water. The lighters themselves are submerged as far as possible when this is done. They are then pumped dry, and as the tide rises, the wrecked vessel leaves her bed in the mud and sand and slowly rises to the surface. Then the powerful centrifugal pumps, one of which is capable of raising something like 110,000 gallons per hour, are set at work, and the wreck pumped sufficiently dry to enable her being floated away for repairs. With the appliances possessed by the Conservancy Board, ships can be raised whose weight under water does not exceed 1800 tons. A multiplication of the existent means would of course enable larger vessels to be raised. But larger vessels very rarely sink in the fairway, as, after being in collision, they remain afloat long enough to enable their masters to run them aground before they finally settle down.

The necessity for adequate means of wreck-raising increases each year, for, in spite of every care, casualties do and always will happen. During the past year, no fewer than 42,598 vessels used the navigable channels of the Mersey. When it is remembered that this gives a daily average of 117 vessels, and that this traffic, instead of being spread uniformly over the whole day, is concentrated to the time of high-water, the liability to collision will be readily understood. The difficulties of wreck-raising in the Mersey are very great; the silt accumulates so rapidly that a vessel is speedily buried to a great extent. In some cases it has been found necessary, where a vessel had sunk upon a rocky bottom, to cut channels through the solid rock under the vessel's keel, in order that the cables might be passed underneath her.

One of the most interesting cases of wreck-raising that the annals of the Mersey can boast is that of the sailing-ship *Locksley Hall*. It is now some years since ferry passengers were surprised to see on one Sunday morning the top-masts of a full-rigged ship projecting above the water right in the middle of the Mersey. They belonged to the above-named vessel, which had arrived the night previous from San Francisco, and after surviving the risks incidental to a

long ocean voyage, had been sunk in collision right on the very threshold of home. The appliances possessed by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board were inadequate to raise so large a vessel; and it was agreed that to destroy so fine a ship by blowing her up would be a wanton piece of destruction. At length the principle which Archimedes of old had enunciated, that a body weighs less and requires less suspending force in water than air, was acted upon; and the firm entrusted with the work had the satisfaction of successfully beaching the ship. The method adopted was somewhat similar to that we have described as practised on the Thames. 'Camels'—as the lifting lighters are generally called—were attached to the cables that were passed under the vessel at low-water. After much labour, the ship was raised. But it was no part of the plan to raise her to the surface—that could not be done. She was raised from her resting-place as the tide rose; and as the lighters floated on the surface, the vessel to which they were attached was just raised the tide's height and no more. Tugs were then employed to tow the lighters and their sunken prize towards the spot selected for beaching. This, of course, could not be made in a single tide, for, when the tide dropped, the *Locksley Hall* again took the ground, and the submarine voyage had to be accomplished in easy stages. The journey over, the vessel was beached on the strip of shore adjacent to the pretty residential district of Rock Ferry, on the Cheshire shore of the Mersey.

Although at the time such a method of wreck-raising was regarded as unique, and attracted much attention, the inhabitants of the locality were glad to see the *Locksley Hall* temporarily repaired and towed across to Liverpool, to undergo a thorough overhaul prior to again sailing the seas. Her cargo consisted principally of grain, and this during the vessel's sojourn in the river-bed had undergone decomposition, so that the unsavoury odour emanating from the beached vessel when the tide left her at low-water can be better imagined than described.

With sailors, a raised vessel is always popular. The fact that she has been sunk once argues, they think, against her repeating the operation by visiting the bottom. It very frequently happens in a swift tidal estuary like the Mersey, whose dock entrances are at right angles to the direction of the stream, that collisions are so violent that small vessels are absolutely cut in two by the sharp knife-like stem of the large merchant steamer's bow. Then each half of the wreck is raised and beached separately, and sometimes the strange sight is presented of the fore-part of a vessel lying on the beach all rusted and deranged, while the after-portion of the same vessel lies a quarter or half a mile away.

A curious incident occurred quite recently in connection with a collision which resulted in the sinking of a coasting schooner. The colliding steamer stood by after running into the smaller vessel, and seeing she was evidently settling down, launched a boat to rescue the crew. The night was dark and the sea rough, and though the shore was but some four or five hundred yards away, the situation was a dangerous one. One of the crew of the coaster when about to jump into the steamer's boat said he had for-

gotten to see to the dog. The animal was a large one, of the Newfoundland type, and his deep bark had never ceased since the first impact of the collision. When the owner of the dog returned, the rescued crew were soon on board the sailing-vessel's deck. Nothing more was thought of the dog incident, until his frantic appeals for help made it patent to all that he was still on board the sinking vessel. When remonstrated with for not bringing him off, the owner stated that he had left him to see to the vessel, that he had securely fastened him so that he could not be washed away either dead or alive. The boat was again hurriedly lowered; but the schooner had drifted away, and by the time she was reached, the dog's struggles were over, for she had settled down, and only the top of her mainmast was visible. When the wreck was raised, the body of the dog was discovered secured in such a manner as to render it impossible for him to be separated either in life or death from the wreck. In the early days of our merchant shipping, the 'schippe dogge' was a necessary part of the equipment of every vessel.

All wrecks in ancient time were deemed the property of the crown, but by a statute of Henry I. the harsh consequences of this law were avoided when any person, male or female, escaped. A still more humane enactment of Henry II. extended the property-saving clauses of the statute so as to include man or beast. Hence the custom that still lingers of having a 'ship dog' on board. It must be remembered, too, in connection with the above incident, that coasting hands are derived in the main from old-fashioned fishing villages and secluded coast towns, where old-world traditions die hard. It was some vague and shadowy idea that by the possible sacrifice of the dog the vessel might be secured to her owner in spite of her being wrecked, that led to the animal being abandoned without being allowed a chance to escape from a watery death.

With all our modern scientific and mechanical knowledge, wreck-raising can only be carried on in comparatively shallow water. Diving operations can, of course, be carried on at a greater depth. Thus, in the year 1885 the screw steamer *Alfonso XII.* went down off Las Palmas in 165 feet of water. As she had specie on board to the amount of £70,000, it was very desirable that steps should be taken to recover this amount, if possible. Accordingly, a London firm were engaged, with the result that the £70,000 was removed in safety from the bullion-room of the sunken vessel, and raised to the surface.

Progress in wreck-raising has been very rapid during the past few years; but there is still room for extension and improvement. A perusal of each succeeding wreck-chart issued by the British Board of Trade shows that the floor of the English Channel and the Strait of Dover must be literally paved with wrecks. It is the graveyard where many a gallant ship, cut off with years of useful service before her, lies buried in the shifting sand and silt. An extension of wreck-raising facilities would result in many of these sunken vessels being restored to their owners, for the sea in question is but shallow. The only means that existed in the past for removing a wreck from a fairway was to destroy the impediment by blasting. This is, however, a wasteful

process, and has been to a very large extent superseded by raising. To raise a wreck was once regarded as impossible; now, within certain limits, it is quite an every-day operation. Extend those limits, and many a valuable ship that lies on the sea-floor near our coasts will again resume her career of usefulness, and much loss and waste of energy and wealth will be prevented.

THE BELLS OF LINLAVEN.

CHAPTER II.—RAFE THE PEDLAR'S DISCOVERY.

It was the year of that Egyptian campaign in which the battle of Tel-el-Kebir had been fought and won after the long night-march beneath the stars. The British army thereafter entered Cairo, carrying their sick and wounded with them. In the hospital quarters an officer sat writing at a table. He was dark in complexion, as if he had been for many months under the burning glare of a sub-tropical sun; while the thin and wasted face showed that he had been and still was an invalid. In the regiment he was known as Captain Norham, but to the Vicar of Linlaven and to the Captain's young wife whom we saw enter the Vicar's study at the close of the last chapter, he, the absent one, was simply and more kindly spoken of as George. And it was to these dear ones at home—to his wife—he was writing now. Let us look over his shoulder and follow his pen.

'One evening,' he writes, 'I had a strange experience. It was after the receipt of my father's letter in which he informed me that your grandmother had resolved to settle her own property otherwise than upon you. I had been in a despairing mood for some days. My wound was not healing well, and I worried myself into something like delirium as I thought of the helpless state in which my death would leave you and our poor children. That you should be entitled by all the obligations of natural law and family ties to the provision which your father's mother has it in her power to make for you, and yet to be cut off therefrom by a perverse and unnatural act of will on the part of one so nearly related to you—I say, the thought of all this burned into my brain, and must have goaded me into a kind of frenzy.'

'I do not know whether it was in a state of delirium or in a dream, but I found myself in the dear old church at home—the church of Linlaven. I was seated in my father's pew, all alone. It was night, and yet somehow it was not quite dark. The church was filled with a soft luminous haze, as of moonlight through obscured glass. I sat, absorbed in the perfect stillness of the place. Then up in the church tower I heard the bell strike one—two—three—slowly, solemnly—till it had struck twelve; the last stroke dying away in long melancholy vibrations; and once more the church was all still as death. I then observed that the west door was open, and that a white belt of light lay across the porch. I saw, too, a figure standing there, shadowy, ghost-like, and yet alive. He entered, and moved slowly up the aisle until he had almost reached the altar. But he did not approach farther, for at this point he came over

towards where I was sitting, then turned and stood before the burial-place of the Norhams of Brathrig Hall. I was close to him, and I knew him. My dear wife, it was your father, Arthur Norham! I never saw your father in life; and yet somehow I knew that this ghost, or apparition, or eidolon, or whatever it was, was your father. I could have touched him, I was so near; but I could not stir. He did not appear to be aware of my presence; but my eyes followed his, and I saw he was reading the letters on the white marble tablet which records his father's death. He stood before it with bowed head, as if in deep dejection and grief, and I heard these words uttered: "*He—gone; and I—unforgiven!*" At that moment, a crash as of thunder rang through the church, and the whole scene disappeared in the twinkling of an eye. I woke up. It was only the sunset gun; and I must have been dreaming.

'I was greatly disturbed by the dream, and am still. That I should identify a man whom I never saw in life, and should feel so sure that he was your father, almost appears to indicate something like an insane delusion on my part. Your father must have quitted his father's house about the time of my birth, and so his personal appearance could not be known to me. But I will describe him, and my father will judge. He was dressed in a riding-coat and boots, his head was uncovered, and his hair was dark, and curled closely round his head. He wore no beard; but there was not light enough for me to note his complexion or the colour of his eyes. Only, somehow, I knew it was your father as surely as if he had been known to me all my life. I wonder what all this portends, and whether it is due alone to my feverish state of mind, or to some other cause which has hitherto shrouded in darkness the mystery of his disappearance.'

The above letter, with all its other details of love and longing for absent ones—which we leave to the reader's imagination, only giving what concerns our story—this letter, written in the hot glare of an Egyptian sun, was that which Wilfrid Norham carried to the vicarage of Linlaven on the night of the fierce October storm. Wilfrid was the Vicar's second son, destined to succeed him in his sacred office. The lady, the wife of the absent soldier, was the Vicar's daughter-in-law, and the sole child of that ill-fated marriage between Arthur Norham and Esther Hales, the announcement of which at Brathrig Hall thirty years before had led to the old Squire's fierce wrath, driving him onwards within the hour to a violent death.

The Vicar of Linlaven was of the kin of the Norhams of Brathrig Hall, but the tie of relationship was thinning with time, and would hardly bear the strain of any degree of cousinship. But still he and his two sons—Captain George in Egypt, and Wilfrid at home—were of the true Norham stock. The Vicar and the missing Arthur Norham had been at school and university together, and their friendship had been close and keen. So also had been the Vicar's relations with the family at the Hall, till the time came when Arthur went off upon what his father regarded as a mission of folly; after which the friendship between the Vicar and the Squire

somewhat cooled. The latter was angry with his son for quitting the ways of his ancestors, and he was equally angry with the Vicar because he refused to take the Squire's side against Arthur.

Nor was the death of the Squire the only calamity that followed upon these events. The Squire's lady, now a widow, had hitherto been of a gentle and loving nature, particularly fond of her husband and children. But from the hour that she saw her husband's dead body carried into the hall, a change, almost phenomenal, passed over her. Her husband's death had been due to her son Arthur's disobedience. It was much as if he had struck a dagger into his father's bosom. It was simply murder. The boy had left his home without his father's knowledge; had married without his father's consent; had married a low woman they had never seen; had disgraced the family name, and then had written a letter that killed his father. That was how the grief-stricken mother looked at it, until the bitterness of her soul deepened into something like deadly hatred of her son Arthur. She would not allow the Vicar to speak to her on the subject; he had simply aided and abetted her son in the murder of her husband.

And Arthur himself, and Arthur's wife or widow—what calamity had likewise overtaken them? Everything that was possible was done to trace Arthur, but nothing availed. He had gone like last winter's snow. He could not have wilfully deserted his wife, because the deepest and warmest affection had always existed between them. And she, left with her little baby Clara, was heart-broken, and did not survive much over a year. The Vicar's wife was then alive, and, when the young mother died, took home the little Clara, and brought her up with her own two boys, and was a true mother to the child.

Even the fact of this poor child's orphaned condition failed to soften the wild and unnatural resentment of the old lady at the Hall—Dame Norham, as she was generally styled. She would not see the child; refused to look upon it. That it was the offspring of her own son was nothing to her; he had been a wicked and unnatural son, and had murdered—yes, murdered—his own father. She had been left by her husband sole executrix of his property and estates, and never, so long as she could help it, should the child of this unknown, meanly-born Esther Hales, own a single shred of them.

Her only remaining son, Jim, counted upon succeeding to the estates of his father after his mother should depart this life; but Jim the dissipated youth had grown up to be a dissipated man—had burned, so to speak, the candle of life at both ends, and had, good ten years ago, passed into a nameless grave in a foreign land. His sister, too, had died, unmarried; and now, the estates and other property were designed for the possession of a very distant branch of the family, the Linleys of Longarth, according to the fiat of this hardened old mother, whom neither calamity nor death was able to soften.

So variously does adversity act and react on different natures. Some it ripens into a sweeter and nobler fruition; others it dries up and warps into sapless rigidity.

All this was in the minds of this little family group as they sat there with George's letter before them. To the Vicar it recalled thoughts of Arthur Norham in the days of their youth and friendship long ago.

'Yes,' he said to Clara, 'the appearance of the figure which George saw in his dream is like your father as I last saw him. I expect that I must have described him at some time or other to George, and that the picture I then drew has lain latent in his mind until recalled to his memory while in a state of semi-delirium. Yet it is very strange and very painful to have the past brought back to me so vividly as this dream does.'

No one spoke for a time. Clara was evidently thinking less about the dream and the strangeness of it, than of her husband's condition in that distant foreign land. Where, in the course of his letter, he spoke with much hope of his final recovery to health, she, as she read these words silently to herself, strove with a woman's insight to read between the lines much which she fancied he had left unspoken lest he should add to the sorrow and the hope deferred from which she had already suffered so much. The tears that came unbidden to her eyes were an index of the mental struggle through which she was passing.

'It is a shame!' said Wilfrid, angrily breaking the silence, as he rose and began to walk hurriedly up and down the room.

'What is a shame, my boy?' asked the Vicar.

'That Arthur's own mother up there at the Hall should act with such persistent and merciless hostility towards her son's children. Why, Arthur Norham was flesh of her flesh and blood of her blood, so also are Clara and her two children. The woman cannot get rid of that fact; why, then, should she exhibit a kind of savage delight in facilitating arrangements to put the estates past them? I had some talk to-day with Mr Brookes when I was in town, and he says everything is practically settled, that that rascally Linley of Longarth is to have the property, and Clara and her children are to be left to starve, so far as Arthur's mother is concerned. I say again, it is worse than a shame—it is a scandal. Why, Arthur Norham did not sin half so deeply against his father, as she, his own mother, is sinning against him and his.'

Clara lifted her eyes to Wilfrid, and there was a look of gratitude on her face. It sometimes does us good to hear our own feelings expressed for us.

The Vicar was silent for a while, and then he spoke, calmly, and as if to check the rising anger of his son.

'You must not forget, Wilfrid,' he said, 'that it is doubtful if Arthur's mother can help herself so far as the Brathrig estates are concerned. No doubt she could—and as a Christian and a mother she should—make provision for Clara and the children out of her own private possessions. But as for the estates, that is a somewhat different matter, and she has not quite a free hand. When Arthur Norham left his father's house and remained so many years absent, the Squire, as a man of perception and knowledge of the world, could not fail to perceive that a young man with the strong and heady impulses of his son, and at an age when youth is peculiarly susceptible,

would run a danger of marrying some one in the class of life with which he had now associated himself. However respectable and worthy that class might be, the persons forming it were not such as the Squire, with his old-world notions of things, could quite approve of as family connections.—Do not speak, Wilfrid; I am not going to argue the point.—Well, things being so, he had made up his mind that, if Arthur survived him, he should, married or unmarried, succeed to the property, being the elder of his two sons. But—and this is what I draw your attention to—if he predeceased his father, and had previously made a marriage without his father's consent, then the children of that marriage were to be completely and perpetually cut off from any benefit in, or succession to, the estates.'

'Ah,' said Wilfrid, 'that's rather a different story.'

'Yes,' continued the Vicar; 'that is why I am so much moved by this dream of George's. We found it quite impossible to obtain any clue to Arthur's movements after he left his home, which was but the day before his father's fatal accident. From that time Arthur no longer communicated with the family lawyer, or drew upon the sum of money which was payable to him, as previous to his disappearance he had regularly done. We might, if we were rich, fight the matter out in the courts of law; but the presumption would still remain against us, as we could not prove that Arthur Norham was alive at the time of his father's death. Nearly thirty years have passed, and the mystery of his disappearance has never yet been solved. But I agree with you in thinking that Arthur's mother, seeing that she has ample means of her own, ought to make some provision for the future of Clara and her children.'

For more than an hour the three sat conversing on what lay so near to the heart of each—George's restoration to health, and the sad possibilities that might ensue if the event were not restoration. At length Clara pleaded fatigue, and retired for the night, carrying her husband's letter with her, no doubt to weep and pray over it alone, as good women do. Father and son continued to sit there for another hour, not saying much one to the other, but smoking together in the silent confidence of friendship, which at such times is better than talk.

The hour of eleven had pealed out from the church-tower, when a loud ring was heard at the door-bell. Shortly thereafter Mrs Sommes, the old housekeeper, entered the study.

'Please, sir,' she said, addressing the Vicar, 'that be the gardener come to tell us that Rafe, the owd Scotch pedlar, have found a pore man a-lying to-night on Brathrig Fell, and Lawrence Dale the miller and some more o' them ha' gone up and carried him down. They ha' made a bed for him in the Owd Grange, and please, sir, could Mrs George let us have some blankets and wraps to cover the pore man, for gardener says he be as near dead as ever man can be?'

The Vicar replied that Mrs George had retired for the night, and was not to be disturbed; but that she, the housekeeper, was herself to give the gardener what was necessary.

Wilfrid started to his feet, and said he would

himself go down to the Old Grange, and see what was afoot.

The Grange was a tall building just beyond the vicarage garden. The night was now comparatively calm, and the old building could be seen standing out black against the sky. From the doorway a gleam of light shone out; and on entering, Wilfrid saw the pedlar, with some others, standing beside his pack, lantern in hand, and before him the figure of a prostrate man on a roughly extemporised bed, evidently in a state of unconsciousness. Wilfrid put his hand on the man's wrist, and after a time satisfied himself that the pulse was beating—feebly and intermittently, but still beating. The gardener arrived from the vicarage with blankets and other coverings, in which the old man was carefully wrapt; and the pedlar volunteered to stay there for the rest of the night beside the man, and to give warning to the neighbours if anything happened to render help necessary.

Wilfrid thanked him for his kind offer, and bade the men good-night, promising to see to the sufferer in the morning. The others also retired, all except the pedlar, to whom Lawrence Dale the miller stepped back a pace, and whispered: 'Rafe, I fear that poor creature has something on his mind. Let what we heard him say yonder on the hillside to-night lie a secret between thou and I. It would ill become us to bring mischief on gray hairs like his.'

And so exit.

The cold gray light of morning crept slowly over the silent hills and into the brown dales of Cumberland. The wind had died away; but Nature, like an ailing child that has not slept, met the coming day with a dim and tearful look. In the Old Grange at Linlaven the sufferer of yesternight still lay tossing in the weird delirium of pain, and with the fierce light of fever in his eyes.

Wilfrid and Clara entered early, and stood together a little distance off, arrested in their approach by the wild look on the sufferer's face. He heeded not their presence. He saw them not, nor heard. Clara went close up to him, and could note that the pale light of the October morning was revealing the pinched and worn face of an aged man, with suffering writ large on every feature. He was still in a state of unconsciousness, and the sounds that escaped his lips were but the rapid, unintelligible, continuous monotone of delirium, which falls so strangely on the watcher's ear.

She returned softly to Wilfrid's side, and advised him to send immediately for a doctor. When left alone, she turned once more to where the man lay.

'Poor creature,' she said aloud; 'what can have brought his gray hairs to this?'

The sound of her voice appeared to arrest the attention of the man, and to recall his wandering mind. By a quick movement, but evidently not without pain, he half raised himself on his elbow, stretching out the other hand towards Clara with an agitated gesture of appeal.

'Esther,' he cried, in wild, distracted tones—'Esther! ha' thou coomed to forgive me? Ha' thou coomed to tell me it were all a black mistake—a horrible dream from which I am

now awaking? Tell me, truly, Esther—tell me! And in his eagerness he seized her hand and pressed it to his burning lips. Then, as if the effort had utterly exhausted his feeble strength, he fell back on the rude couch, and his eyes relapsed into their former look of wild and wandering vacuity. If the veil of oblivion had for a brief moment been lifted from his mind, it must have fallen again as suddenly; for the room is once more only filled with the hoarse murmur of his inarticulate ravings.

Clara, as she dropped his hand, turned from him with a scared and bewildered look. Her face was ashy pale; and, as Wilfrid at that moment re-entered, she made him some hurried excuse and fled out into the open air.

She did not stay till she had reached the vicarage and had entered the house.

'What a strange thing to fancy,' she said to herself. 'Yet why did he call me Esther? That was my mother's name. It cannot be!'

And she entered her own room, and shut to the door.

CORSICAN FOLKLORE.

SOMEWHAT more than a hundred miles from the southern coast of France lies the island of Corsica, an island which, for its wild romantic scenery, its wealth of historical associations, and the distinct individuality of its people, is well calculated to awaken the keenest interest of the student, the antiquary, and the traveller. The Cyrnos of the Greeks, the Corsica of the Normans, its possession was often fiercely contested by the great naval powers of ancient times. It has been conquered in turn by the Carthaginians, the Romans, the Saracens, the Genoese, and the French; but through all these varied changes of government, through all the vicissitudes of centuries, the inhabitants have still preserved those peculiarities of manners and customs, and that strange mixture of civilisation and semi-barbarism, that serve to stamp them as a race apart from the other peoples of the South. In this nineteenth century of progress, when the speculative mind of man refuses credence to much that were established beliefs fifty years ago, it is refreshing to meet with a people who have not yet lost their primitive simplicity.

The Corsicans have an aptitude for learning, but they have a still greater love for liberty; and the protracted struggles they have had to sustain against the enemies who threatened that liberty from without will in some degree help to explain the mental condition of a large proportion of the race. The very character of the country, too—the lofty mountains, the wild and gloomy gorges, the dark monotonous extent of forests—all tend to nurture a host of superstitions, which retain a firm hold upon the minds of the dwellers among them. In the towns and the more frequented parts of the island, there is a well-defined fringe of civilisation, and the visitor to Ajaccio or Bastia may enjoy all the ordinary comforts and luxuries of continental life; but in the more remote districts, where the little hamlets cluster like eagles' eyries on the mountain sides, the natives preserve in all their integrity many of the peculiarities and customs of olden times. The

national characteristics of this people are strangely complex; brave, hospitable to strangers, virtuous and intelligent, with a love of freedom and a simplicity of life unspoiled by contact with the outer world—these wholesome traits are yet counterbalanced by an insatiable thirst for revenge, a ferocity in resenting insult or injury that belong rather to a wholly savage than to a semi-civilised nation. The *vendetta*, which in by-gone days made murder not only justifiable but righteous, has at times almost depopulated the island; and though now put down by the government with a strong hand, there are still occasional outbreaks of savagery that carry one back to that early period when the philosopher Seneca inveighed in no flattering terms against the barbarians amongst whom he was condemned to spend eight dreary years of banishment.

It is not astonishing that the folklore of such a people is full of interest to the student, and that a rich harvest may be gathered from the national songs and ballads, the quaint tales and curious legends that abound. The wild *voceri*, too, or funeral dirges, are often strangely pathetic, and recall in some degree the wailing chants and lamentations of the ancients at the funeral obsequies of their dead. There is scarcely a male amongst the hardy mountaineers who cannot sing these songs, or relate stories of giants and fairies, of saints or the devil—the latter plays an important part in most Corsican folk-tales—or who is not able to rouse the enthusiasm of his attentive audience by narrating some stirring incident of the wars the island has had to sustain against the Saracens or the Genoese, for the memory of these long-past struggles for freedom is ever fresh in the minds of the people.

When the summer days are ended and the vintage is over—when the shepherds have brought down their flocks and herds from the upper pastures of the mountains—when the autumn evenings begin to grow chilly and damp, and it is no longer the season for outdoor amusements—then the villagers are accustomed to gather together in one house rather larger, perhaps, than its neighbours, to pass the hours in friendly intercourse. A huge log burns in the wide open chimney, its fitful flames ever and anon illuminating the dark corners of the room, or throwing strange distorted shadows on the raftered roof; the frugal supper of chestnuts is roasting amid the embers; the pitcher of home-made wine circulates freely; and while the young people laugh and jest, the women knit, and the men discuss the result of the day's sport or fishing, the incidents of the last *vendetta*, or the latest exploits of some well-known brigand. Then there is a pause; the conversation flags, and some one calls upon the *raconteur* of the party: 'Suppose you tell us a story—*una fola*?'

We can picture the scene; it is like a study of Rembrandt; the circle of eager faces lit up by the ruddy glare of the great log, and in the centre the old man, leaning forward, his clasped hands resting on the table, his eyes shut in concentrated thought; silence reigns, except for the clinking of glasses, the click-click of the women's needles, the crackling of the burning wood, and the occasional 'pop' of a chestnut, or the outbursts of merry laughter at some spicy anecdote or well-turned jest.

There is no more laughter-loving being than the Corsican peasant. With him no subject is too sacred to be provocative of mirth; a witty epigram or a good story will often turn aside his anger; and if by chance a priest should come off the worst in it, well, so much the better; for in spite of his superstition, there is a levity and lack of reverence in his composition that leads him to make a scoff of sacred things. Many of these folk-tales, indeed, are more than irreverent, and often border on the profane; others, again, as is not unnatural if we consider the intellectual and social condition of the people, are too coarse for the delectation of ears polite; but from the collection before us, published by Maisonneuve & Co., in their series of 'The Popular Literature of all Nations,' we shall endeavour to cull a few specimens typical of the style of narrative most in vogue.

In some of the so-called 'fairy tales' it is curious to trace a resemblance to much of the familiar nursery lore of our childhood. Cinderella appears—though under another name—and dazzles the Prince with her beauty at a ball which he gives on three consecutive nights. She vanishes each night at the same hour by the help of her fairy godmother, leaving not a trace behind, and is only discovered at last through a ring that the Prince has given her, and which she kneads into a cake and sends to him by the hands of her waiting-woman. Then, too, we might almost suppose that the Arabian Nights' Entertainment had penetrated into the mountains of Corsica, as we read of the poor peasant Stevanu who discovers the secret of the brigands' treasure-cave in the depths of a vast forest. The magic words 'Serchia, uncloze!' remind us of the 'Open Sesame' that brought wealth and prosperity to Ali Baba, and the sequel of the story is no less familiar. The robbers, finding themselves robbed in their turn, seek to discover by means of a ruse the man who has most speedily grown rich in the neighbouring village. Disguised as an itinerant dealer in olive oil, their chief drives before him his mules; the foremost of these are laden with great jars filled with oil; but in each of the last six jars a brigand lies concealed. A night's lodging is solicited at the house of Stevanu; the chief has a room assigned to him, and the jars containing his merchandise are left in the kitchen. But Stevanu's suspicions have been aroused by the unusual weight of some of the jars; he guesses the stratagem, and orders his servants to heat a caldron of oil, which he proceeds to pour over the six robbers. Their chief is soon overpowered and killed; and Stevanu is left in undisputed possession of all their ill-gotten gains.

The quaint vein of humour running through some of these popular tales reminds us strongly of old Æsop's Fables. Bastelica is now a fairly prosperous village in Corsica, of some three thousand inhabitants, who would probably one and all resent the imputation that their mental calibre is below the average; yet, for some occult reason, from time immemorial the very name 'Il Bastelicacciu' has been held as a synonym for 'fool'; and shouts of ironical laughter will reward the narrator as he tells the well-known story of the man of Bastelica who once upon a time possessed a wife and a mill. The mill

brought him in next to nothing; but his wife—there are perhaps few just like her—thought her good man could do nothing wrong. Said the miller, then, one day: 'Let us sell our mill; it hardly earns us bread; while if we only had a cow, she would supply us with fresh milk and butter, and maybe a calf, which we could sell with profit.'

'Thou art right as ever,' replied his wife; 'let us sell the mill.'

So the miller sold it for six hundred francs, and with this money he purchased a cow at the neighbouring fair, and started merrily on his homeward way. He had not travelled far, however, before he began to feel fatigued.

'I was stupid,' thought he, 'to buy this cow; some day she may toss me with her horns and kill me; whereas a horse would always be useful. He would carry me on my journeys; and a little grass would suffice for his food.'

Just then, a man on horseback passed that way, and an exchange was soon effected. The animal was of no great value, certainly; but for a time the miller rejoiced over his bargain. Then he began to reflect: 'A horse will be of little use to me, for I cannot ride all day; assuredly, a goat would serve my purpose better.'

A shepherd coming along readily gave the finest goat of his flock for the miller's horse. Our Bastelicacciu was not yet satisfied, however; the goat was sold for twenty francs; the twenty francs bought a hen and her brood of chickens; these in their turn were disposed of for a sack of potatoes. But the way was long and the potatoes were heavy; so the miller, in a fit of anger, tumbled sack and all into the nearest stream, and finally reached home empty-handed.

'And the cow, where hast thou put her?' asked his wife.

'Oh, I exchanged her for a good horse; and then, as the horse would not always be useful to us, I chose instead a fine fat goat, that might supply us daily with fresh milk.'

To the wife's query, 'Where was the goat?' our friend related how the goat was disposed of, how he bought the hen and chickens, how these were replaced by the sack of potatoes, which was finally emptied into the stream.

'Thou hast done wisely,' quoth the good woman. 'Such a heavy load might perchance have crushed thee by its weight.' And so, quite contentedly, the miller and the miller's wife went supperless to bed; and the story-teller adds a moral à la Æsopian method: 'May every youth one day possess such a treasure of a wife as this; but Heaven preserve the maidens from marrying a Bastelicacciu!'

It is not only the nursery tales of our childish days, however, that reappear in these popular *foli* of the Corsican peasantry; many other familiar stories have somehow found their way into the wild mountains and wooded valleys, and are curiously interwoven with threads of local colouring. Shakespeare might be a name unknown to the swarthy herdsman; but tell him the story of King Lear, and of the fatuous decision that brought his life to so pitiful an end, and his dark eyes will flash and his mobile features kindle with interest as he gives you its counterpart from his store of legends, save and except the tragic sequel of the play. Here, also,

he will tell you the king has three children, two daughters and a son. Feeling the approach of old age and its infirmities, he summons them before him, and declares his intention of dividing among them his kingdom and all his wealth; but first of all desires to know the measure of their affection. The eldest daughter vows that she loves him more than her life, that for his sake she would renounce her hopes of Heaven. The son in his turn declares that his affection for his father outweighs his desire to reign in his place, that to please such a parent he would throw himself, if need be, into a fiery furnace. Then comes the old king's youngest daughter, his favourite child, and, like Cordelia, she makes no extravagant protestations, but modestly says that she loves him as a dutiful and affectionate daughter ought to love so kind a father. This reply enrages the infatuated king, and he orders her out of his sight. Marie wanders away in the disguise of a shepherdess, and meets with many wonderful adventures before the inevitable Prince comes to her rescue; but she steadfastly refuses to marry him unless her father can be present at the ceremony. Meanwhile, however, the poor old king has been so cruelly ill-treated by his unnatural children that he has lost his reason; and it is only after many months of tender care and loving attention that Marie's devotion is rewarded, and the king regains his throne. Then the wicked son and daughter are punished as they deserve; Cordelia's prototype is married, and everybody lives happily ever after.

We have spoken hitherto of the popular folk-tales, or of those in which may be traced a resemblance to stories familiar to us from our childhood. If we turn now to the class of legends properly so called, we shall see how deep a vein of superstition runs through the nature of the true-born Corsican. Not even the superstitious Irish peasant can have a firmer belief in the 'good people' whom he sees dancing in the pale moonlight by the edge of a lonely bog, or beneath the green shade of the forest trees, than has the hardy mountaineer of this wild, half-civilised island in the fairies supposed to haunt some gloomy grotto or rocky cave. It may be by the side of a little mountain lake, half hidden by the overhanging cliff, or in the dim recesses of some wild forest but rarely trodden by the foot of man, that the fairy has made her home; it matters little; but her presence there is as certain, her personality as real to the credulous villagers, as were ever the dryads and nymphs of old to the cultured imaginative Greeks and Romans. From time to time she appears in human form to some favoured mortal; but vanishes out of sight if he dare venture on too familiar an approach.

How much or little of these wild fancies may have owed their origin to the myths of ancient Rome would now be impossible to determine; but it is curious to trace in some few lingering superstitions a vague resemblance to certain rites and ceremonies that were familiar to the Romans from earliest times, and which would doubtless have been introduced by them into the lands they conquered. When Corsica became a Roman province, heathen temples were erected here and there, in which the augurs were wont to pro-

pitiate the gods by sacrifices, or to foretell future events through such mystic signs as the flight of birds and the entrails of beasts. Of these dim remembrance still exists in the practice of sooth-saying by means of bones. The fortune-teller will take the left shoulder-blade (scapula) of a goat or sheep, and in the vague lines or marks upon its polished surface pretend to read the destiny of the person who seeks his aid. That the left shoulder-blade alone is efficacious is proved by an old proverb, '*la destra spalla sfalla*' (the right one deceives). Many famous Corsicans are said to have had their fortunes told by means of the scapula, the most noteworthy example being that of Napoleon I. When the future Emperor was a child, an old herdsman of Ghidaggio renowned for his skill in augury examined the scapula one day, and saw depicted there a forest tree rising straight and tall with wide-spreading branches, but scanty and feeble roots. From this he foresaw that a Corsican would one day rise to honour and renown, and would become a mighty ruler for a time; but that his reign, though glorious, would be short and his overthrow complete.

Omens and portents are firmly believed in, and probably nowhere are ghosts treated with such profound respect as in Corsica. Many a stalwart peasant who would not flinch before the onslaught of an enemy, who is brave in battle, untiring in the chase, will shrink and tremble in abject terror if compelled to traverse a burial-ground at dead of night. Should a sudden death occur in the village, there will not be wanting those who will tell you with scared looks and bated breath that they at least were prepared to hear the sad tidings, for did not the *malucella*—a bird of evil omen, somewhat resembling the banshee of Irish folk-tales—utter its wailing cry three nights in succession over the roof of the dead man's house, and was not the sound heard of a muffled drum beaten by invisible hands upon its doorstep? In this class there is one specially grim superstition which relates to the *Squadra d'Arrozza* (the Brotherhood of the Dead). It is supposed to consist of those whose earthly career was ended long ago, but who still retain a semblance of the duties they were once called upon to perform. Before the death of some exalted personage, just at the midnight hour they sweep, a ghostly train, through the silent streets, each phantom form concealed beneath a monkish cloak and cowl, and bearing lighted tapers in their hands. Not a sound is heard as this gruesome mockery of a funeral procession passes by, but woe betide the unfortunate individual who may chance to cross its path: let him beware lest the spectres surround him unawares; in such a case he is surely lost, but if he preserve his presence of mind and keep a firm front, they will disappear at earliest cockcrow, and thus he may know the warning is not meant for him.

We might easily multiply these instances of strange credulity, and quote many more of the quaint superstitions, that, handed down as they are by word of mouth from father to son, have grown into the very hearts of the people; but enough has been told to show how far behind his contemporaries the Corsican peasant still is in the scale of civilisation. After all, is he on that account an object of unmixed pity? Surely

not. When we think how slight an impression the 'education of the masses' can ever make upon the squalid misery that throngs the courts and alleys of our great cities, we may be content to leave to the simple-hearted mountaineer his myths and fancies, since they are nurtured by the very conditions of the untrammelled life he leads amidst the wild scenery and beneath the blue cloudless skies of his beautiful island home.

ÆSTHETIC BIRDS.

SOME little time ago a naturalist called the attention of the public to a pair of goldfinches which had made use of the blossoms of the blue forget-me-not to form a border to their nest, thus showing both appreciation of colour, and taste for art. Darwin, indeed, has attributed much of the beauty of the plumage of birds, those loveliest of Nature's children, to their innate love of colour and beauty of form, which has tended to improve and perfect the various ornamental colours and appendages adorning the winged denizens of forest and woodland, whether in the tropics or in more temperate climes.

Leaving the difficult and complex, although most interesting subject of bodily adornment to be treated of by professed naturalists, we would call attention to a few less known instances of the æsthetic tastes of birds, which, as leading sometimes to theft and cruelty, can hardly be said to redound to their credit.

The fact has long been recognised that many birds are fond of glittering objects. The raven, the magpie, jackdaw, and many other British birds will steal and hide anything which pleases the eye, using the stolen goods sometimes in the adornment of their nests, perhaps for the gratification of their youthful progeny; but birds kept in captivity will often make a secret hoard of glittering things, apparently for their own special gratification. Many instances are on record of rings, spoons, chains, &c., supposed to have been stolen, having been found after months or years, in the hiding-place to which they have been conveyed by some favourite bird, or in some cases by rats, which seem to share the æsthetic tastes of 'feathered fowl.'

The ostrich when domesticated will snatch at buttons, rings, thimbles, or anything shining, and swallow it—a propensity shared by the crane and some other large birds requiring hard substances to assist the process of digestion. Mrs Martin in her amusing book, *Home Life on an Ostrich Farm*, tells a story of an ostrich which snatched and swallowed a valuable diamond pin, upon which a council was held as to which was the most valuable, the bird or the diamond; and as it was during the time when ostriches realised fabulous prices, the bird's life was spared, and he was allowed to retain his prize. It has been proved that ostriches in the Zoological Gardens have been killed by swallowing the pence presented to them by a curious and injudicious public. But in their wild state there does not appear to be any special fondness for glittering objects; at least no instances are recorded of any accumulated hoard of shining stones or other bright-looking substances in or around

the nests of these birds; otherwise, the nests of ostriches would have been frequently searched in expectation of finding in them diamonds and gold.

The most remarkable instance of æstheticism among birds is that exhibited by the Australian bower-birds, who build long galleries in which to play, adorning them with shells, feathers, leaves, bones, or any coloured or glittering object which comes in their way. Captain Stokes described one of these bower-birds as taking a shell alternately from each side of the bower and carrying it through in its beak. Lumholtz describes several of these play-houses of the bower-birds; he says they are always to be found 'in small brushwood, never in the open field; and in their immediate vicinity the bird collects a mass of different kinds of objects, especially snail-shells, which are laid in two heaps, one at each entrance—the one being always much larger than the other. There are frequently hundreds of shells, about three hundred in one heap and thirty in the other. There is usually a handful of green berries partly inside and partly outside the bower.' He also in his interesting book, *Among Cannibals*, describes a play-ground of what would appear to be a different species of this bird, showing even greater æsthetic taste. 'On the top of the mountains I heard in the dense scrubs the loud and unceasing voice of a bird. I carefully approached it as it sat on the ground, and shot it. It was one of the bower-birds, with a gray and very modest plumage, and of the size of a thrush. As I picked up the bird, my attention was drawn to a fresh covering of green leaves on the black soil. This was the bird's place of amusement, which beneath the dense scrubs formed a square about a yard each way, the ground having been cleared of leaves and rubbish. On this neatly-cleared spot, the bird had laid large fresh leaves, one by the side of the other, with considerable regularity; and close by he sat singing, apparently extremely happy over his work. As soon as the leaves decay they are replaced by new ones. On this excursion I saw three such places of amusement all near each other, and all had fresh leaves from the same kind of trees, while a large heap of dry withered leaves was lying close by. It seems that the bird scrapes away the mould every time it changes the leaves, so as to have a dark background, against which the green leaves make a better appearance. Can any one doubt that this bird has the sense of beauty?'

'The satin bower-bird,' says Darwin, 'collects gaily-coloured articles, such as the blue tail-feathers of parrakeets, bleached bones and shells, which it sticks between the twigs or arranges at the entrance. Mr Gould found in one bower a neatly-worked stone tomahawk and a slip of blue cotton, evidently procured from a native encampment. The bower of the spotted bower-bird is beautifully lined with tall grasses so disposed that the heads nearly meet; and the decorations are very profuse. Round stones are used to keep the grass-stems in their proper places, and to make divergent paths leading to the bower.'

In all these birds the collection of beautiful objects appears to be simply for ornament, the gratification of æsthetic taste at the cost of much labour; and this taste for the beautiful

would seem to be common to all birds from the lordly ostrich to the tiny humming-bird, which, according to Mr Gould, adorns its nest with bits of coloured lichen and pretty feathers.

There is, however, another species of bird which unites cruelty with its love for the beautiful. This is the butcher-bird, which here in England adorns the thorns around its nest with bees, flies, and other small insects, and even young birds, thus providing for itself, as it would seem, a variety of meat hung till tender, or even a little 'high,' to suit its gastronomic tastes; and hence its name. But it seems doubtful whether these things are intended to serve as food; in some cases they are certainly impaled simply to gratify the æsthetic taste of the cruel little executioner; and it has been noticed that the insects chosen are usually of a bright colour or lustrous in appearance. In countries where gaily-coloured insects abound, this is particularly noticeable; and in South Africa the cruel thorns of the mimosa are adorned with bright-hued beetles, locusts, humble-bees, small birds, and frogs, and sometimes little snakes or lizards, marking the home of the butcher-bird.

Thunberg says: 'Fiscal and Canary-byter were the appellations given to a black and white bird (*Lanius collaris*) which was common in the town, and was to be found in every garden there. As it was a bird of prey, though very small, it sought its food among the insects, such as beetles and grasshoppers, which it not only caught with great dexterity, but likewise, when it could not consume them all, it would stick them upon the pales of farmyards till it had occasion for them, so that one would have supposed them to have been impaled in this manner by human beings. It also caught sparrows and canary birds, but did not devour any more of them than the brains.'

Here we see this little Elagabalus, the dainty epicure, killing birds to regale himself upon their brains, and impaling the corpses in order to enjoy the beauty of colour, changing his wild habits to accommodate himself to town-life, and making use of the pointed stakes set up as fences in gardens and farmyards, instead of the thorns of his native habitat. A similar instance is recorded in America, where, upon the vast prairies of late years, barbed wire fences have been erected; and, there being no thorn-bushes near, this little bird-demon has taken possession of the cruel barbs and used them for his butcheries. For yards, we are told, these iron barbs are hung with beetles, small snakes, and birds, all generally impaled alive; whilst the barbarous little executioner sits on the pole supporting the wire chirping and hopping about in evident enjoyment of the raree-show he has made. His especial delight appears to be a beetle possessing scarlet gauzy wings; this he always impales in a certain manner, which causes the scarlet under wing to drop from the outer wing-case, the bright colour being evidently a great attraction.

The curious thing is that these butcher-birds, or 'shrikes,' living as they do in so many widely-separated lands, should possess everywhere the same æsthetic proclivities and the same adaptability. Whenever they are found in their native wilds, they cover the thorns in the immediate neighbourhood of their nest with their victims; but when they are drawn within the boundary of

human handiwork, they do not scruple to put the resources of civilisation to their own use, thus as it were throwing upon man the burden of their evil deeds. They seem to say in bird language: 'You call us cruel; but why do you place the instruments of cruelty so temptingly before us? You cut down the thorns, but supply their places with spikes and barbs, which are the same as thorns to us, since we can use them for ornamental purposes.'

Tennyson sings of 'Nature red in tooth and claw;' but he has not credited birds of prey with the love of beauty; yet the raven, the magpie, the jay, and the shrike or butcher-bird show as much appreciation of colour and brightness as the bower-bird and the lark, which may be lured from his song at 'heaven's gate' by the glitter of a bit of glass on the greensward; and we may imagine that the hawks were proud of the bells and trappings with which they were adorned by the falconer of old, and attracted by the lure held out to them. Almost all land-birds show something more than architectural skill in the construction of their nests. In the choice of material and the mode of arrangement, the artistic element is often apparent; but with water-birds this is generally wanting. Their nests are rudely constructed, consisting sometimes of only a little hollow scraped in the sand; nevertheless the surroundings, whether by accident or design, are often very beautiful. What can exceed the beauty of a swan's nest embowered in tall reeds and lined with the lovely down from her own breast? But she does not appear to require or desire any foreign adornment, and certainly does not attempt to line her bower with leaves and berries; nor, as far as we recollect, does any sea-bird adorn its habitation with its glittering prey, like the butcher-bird. Their life is probably too hard, and their surroundings too wild, to allow of care for mere ornament; but they need not, therefore, be deficient in æstheticism, although it is less apparent than in the more familiar birds of forest and woodland.

WHEN ROSES BLOW.

WHEN Roses blow, you will return to me,
True heart! across the glad blue summer sea;
And we through quiet paths again shall stray,
Or loiter in the old, fond, foolish way,
To read the names you cut upon a tree,

What time you said: 'Love, I am bound to thee
In such sweet thrall that nought can set me free,
And our two lives shall be made one for aye
When roses blow.'

Now, while pink blossoms flush the grassy lea,
And wood-birds sing, and winds for very glee
Shake over all the land the sweet white May,
I watch the stately ships come in, and say:
'Please God, how bright and fair my world will be
When roses blow.'

E. MATHESON.

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THE WORLD-OLD YEW.

THERE are two kinds of trees peculiarly interesting, by reason of the rich historical and poetical associations which surround them. One, the Oak, we personify as 'King of the Woods'; the other, the Yew, we tenderly plant where our lost loved ones rest. Much that is ennobling in our thoughts is associated with them. The oak is ever to us an emblem of strength, majesty, and courage; the yew, of sorrow, immortality, and gloom. Our poets have often used them to embellish their word-pictures and point their precepts; and our historians have told us with pride of the parts played by their branches, shaped to 'good yew bows' and 'oaken walls' in our country's hours of need. No other trees are so closely connected with our national life and history as the oak and the yew, and the story of their lives is full of interest and instruction. To the latter we wish here more particularly to refer.

The yew (*Taxus baccata*) is indigenous to nearly every country in Europe, being found as far north as the Gulf of Finland, and south to the shores of the Mediterranean. Botanically it belongs to the natural order Coniferae, or Pines, in which family many of the most useful and ornamental trees are classed. The flowers are dioecious—that is, with the staminate and pistillate organs on different trees. It is the oldest of British trees, specimens being still alive which, according to De Candolle, are not less than two thousand years old. In many places throughout the country, especially in the west of England and in Wales, we may still stand beneath the flourishing branches of yews which were nearly full grown at the time of the Conquest. At Aldsworth, in Berkshire, there is still living a yew which measures at the present time twenty-seven feet in circumference, and must be at least one thousand years old. This fine tree is referred to in More's *Berkshire Queries*, under the date 1760, where it is recorded that it was 'nine yards in girth.' So that for at least one hundred and

thirty years it has not increased in size. At Bucklebury, in the same county, stands another time-scarred patriarch, which also measures twenty-seven feet in girth where the branches spring from the trunk.

An interesting group of fine yews exists at Watcombe, on the road from Hungerford to Oxford. The trees are planted in the shape of a cloister court with a pond in the centre, on the site of a pre-Reformation religious edifice connected with the Benedictine Monastery of Huxley, to which house it was given by Geoffrey de Mandeville about 1086 A.D., and referred to in the 'Pipe Rolls' under the date 1166 A.D. The enclosure is still called, by the people of the district, 'Paradise,' the origin of which name can now only be conjectured. It is probably a relic of some ancient monastic symbol. The same name is given to other groups, such as those at Gresford, near Chester; at Chichester, and at Winchester.

A fine pair of trees standing together a little to the rear of the group at Watcombe are known as 'Adam and Eve,' and represent, according to the local legend, our first parents driven out of Paradise. They are of the male and female species, while the foliage of 'Adam' is of a darker shade than that of his companion 'Eve.' Standing still farther from the group is a solitary specimen twenty feet in circumference, which, in the emblematic language of the legend, is the 'Serpent.' This tree shows the effects of time more than any of the others, the trunk being now nearly reduced to a shell, though the top growth is still flourishing. A lateral opening in the trunk is large enough to afford standing-room for six or eight persons.

At Iffley, near Oxford, may be seen an ancient tree, whose furrowed half-prostrate trunk seems 'weary worn with care;' and as we stand beside its bending form, a feeling of sympathy, akin to that which we extend to a fellow-being stooping low with a load of years, rises within us. This yew is considered by competent judges to be the oldest living tree in Britain, and must have been

full-grown long before the first Oxford spire was raised in the vale below.

The largest and finest yew in Scotland is at Craighends, Renfrewshire. It is of a conical shape, and being a comparatively young tree, is in a most vigorous condition. It covers an area of about two hundred and fifty feet in circumference, and rises to a height of forty feet. The bole is eight feet in diameter. This is a grand specimen, and worthy of a visit by any one who appreciates the sublime beauty of trees, and finds in their presence that 'soothing companionship' which Oliver Wendell-Holmes so eloquently praises. There is also a fine group of yews, forming a noble avenue, near the church at Roseneath, on the Gareloch. It stands not far distant from the grand silver firs which are the largest of their kind in the kingdom.

From a geological point of view also, the yew is an interesting tree. We find its trunks in a surprising state of preservation, imbedded in the remains of British forests which flourished long anterior to historic times. On the Norfolk coast near Cromer, and in the remains of the vast forest which existed where the waters of the Bristol Channel now roll, gnarled yew-trunks have been discovered in recent times side by side with the bones of animals which must have been similar in size and form to the elephant and rhinoceros of the present day. It has also been turned up in the bogs of Ireland and Scotland, in the fens of the eastern counties of England, and among the 'moor-logs' submerged at the mouth of the Thames.

At a very early date, the yew was associated with the ideas of sorrow and immortality. We know that the Egyptians used it as a symbol of mourning, and its use in this way seems to have passed from them to the Greek and Roman nations. The early Britons probably learned to attach a funereal signification to it from their Roman conquerors, and the idea has descended from them to us. The reason of its employment in this typical sense is now difficult to trace. Very likely it arose from the characteristic aspect of the tree. To an age ever ready to express its thoughts by symbols, the sombre foliage would suggest the idea of gloom, and its almost unchanging aspect, alike in summer's sunshine and winter's storm, would produce that of immortality.

From an economic point of view the yew is now of little value. When every English army had its contingent of archers its branches supplied wood for bows. By an Act of Edward IV., every Englishman was compelled to procure a bow of his own length, made of yew, wych-hazel, or ash. At one time the wood, which is susceptible of an extremely fine polish, was much used in cabinet-making. It is now, however, very little employed in this way, other kinds of timber having been found more serviceable.

Besides being largely planted in cemeteries, the yew is extensively used as an ornamental tree, on lawns and in shrubberies, its distinctive, erect form, and dark glossy evergreen foliage, making a pleasing contrast to trees of a more spreading habit and with foliage of a lighter shade. In the days when arboriculture was very much a science of clipping, and trees and shrubs were tortured into such fantastic shapes as the figures

of various birds and animals, teapots, pyramids, cones, tables, chairs, and even of human beings, the yew, on account of its dense twiggy habit of growth, and patience under such unnatural treatment, was much used. Some wonderful examples of this kind of tree-culture may still be seen; but happily the fashion is now almost extinct, and the yew, like its fellow-victims the box and juniper, is allowed to assume its natural form.

Our poets make many beautiful and apt allusions to the yew, which seems to have been an interesting object to them. In *Twelfth Night*, Shakespeare refers to its use at funerals: 'My shroud of white, stuck all with yew;' and in *Macbeth*, 'the slips of yew silver'd in the moon's eclipse,' point to the well-known poisonous nature of the leaves, as well as to the awe with which the tree was regarded. Tennyson, in *In Memoriam*, refers to the yew's gloom and unchanging aspect in the well-known verses:

Old Yew, which graspest at the stones
That name the under-lying dead;
Thy fibres net the dreamless head,
Thy roots are wrapped about the bones.
O! not for thee the glow, the bloom,
Who changest not in any gale;
Nor branding summer suns avail
To touch thy thousand years of gloom.

In *The Holy Grail*, also, the Laureate makes a beautiful reference to the yew, in his usual accurate manner:

As they sat
Beneath a world-old yew-tree darkening half
The Cloisters, on a gustful April morn
That puffed the swaying branches into smoke
Above them, ere the summer when he died,
The monk Ambrosius questioned Percivale:
'O! brother, I have seen this yew-tree smoke,
Spring after spring for half a hundred years.'

The gusty April morn puffing the branches into smoke is a fine poetic touch, and is strictly true to Nature, although it is an incident not often noted, even by keen observers of Nature's signs and moods. The 'smoke' is the fine dusty pollen produced by the flowers of the male species shaken from the anther-cells by the wind.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XXVII.—THE LESSON OF THE STREET.

'CHILD,' said the Master, 'it is time that you should take another lesson.'

'I am ready. Let us begin.' She crossed her hands in her lap and looked up obedient.

'Not a lesson this time from books. A practical lesson from men and women, boys and girls, children and infants in arms. Let us go forth and hear the teaching of the wrecks and the slaves. I will show you creatures who are men and women mutilated in body and mind—mutilated by the social order. Come. I will show you, not by words, but by sight, why Property must be destroyed.'

It was seven o'clock, when Mr Dering ought to have been thinking of his dinner, that Mr

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Edmund Gray proposed this expedition. Now, since that other discourse on the sacredness of Property, a strange thing had fallen upon Elsie. Whenever her Master spoke and taught, she seemed to hear, following him, the other Voice speaking and teaching exactly the opposite. Sometimes—this is absurd, but many true things are absurd—she seemed to hear both voices speaking together: yet she heard them distinctly and apart. Looking at Mr Dering, she knew what he was saying: looking at Mr Edmund Gray, she heard what he was saying. So that no sooner had these words been spoken, than, like a response in Church, there arose the voice of Mr Dering. And it said: 'Come. You shall see the wretched lives and the sufferings of those who are punished because their fathers or themselves have refused to work and save. Not to be able to get Property is the real curse of labour. It is no evil to work provided one chooses the work and creates for one's self Property. The curse is to have to work for starvation wages at what can never create Property, if the worker should live for a thousand years.'

Of the two voices she preferred the one which promised the abolition of poverty and crime. She was young: she was generous: any hope of a return of the Saturnian reign made her heart glow. Of the two old men—the mad man and the sane man—she loved the madman. Who would not love such a man? Why, he knew how to make the whole world happy! Ever since the time of Adam we have been looking and calling out and praying for such a man. Every year the world runs after such a man. He promises, but he does not perform. The world tries his patent medicine, and is no better. Then, the year after, the world runs after another man.

Elsie rose and followed the Master. It was always with a certain anxiety that she sat or talked with him. Always she dreaded lest, by some unlucky accident, he should awaken and be restored to himself suddenly and without warning—say in his Lecture Hall. How would he look? What should she say? 'See—in this place for many years past you have in course of madness preached the very doctrines which in hours of sanity you have most reprobated. These people around you are your disciples. You have taught them by reason and by illustration with vehemence and earnestness to regard the destruction of Property as the one thing needful for the salvation of the world. What will you say now? Will you begin to teach the contrary? They will chase you out of the Hall for a madman. Will you go on with your present teaching? You will despise yourself for a madman.' Truly a difficult position. Habit, however, was too strong. There was little chance that Edmund Gray among his own people, and at work upon his own hobby, would become Edward Dering.

They went out together. He led her—whither? It mattered not. North and South and East and West you may find everywhere the streets and houses of the very poor hidden away behind the streets of the working-people and the well to do.

The Master stopped at the entrance of one of those streets—it seemed to Elsie as if she was standing between two men both alike with different eyes. At the corner was a public-house with swinging doors. It was filled with men

talking, but not loudly. Now and then a woman went in or came out, but they were mostly men. It was a street long and narrow, squalid to the last degree, with small two-storeyed houses on either side. The bricks were grimy; the mortar was constantly falling out between them: the woodwork of doors and windows was insufferably grimy: many of the panes were broken in the windows. It was full of children: they swarmed: they ran about in the road, they danced on the pavement, they ran and jumped and laughed as if their lot was the happiest in the world and their future the brightest. Moreover, most of them, though their parents were steeped in poverty, looked well fed and even rosy. 'All these children,' said Mr Edmund Gray, 'will grow up without a trade: they will enter life with nothing but their hands and their legs and their time. That is the whole of their inheritance. They go to school, and they like school: but as for the things they learn, they will forget them, or they will have no use for them. Hewers of wood and drawers of water shall they be: they are condemned already. That is the system: we take thousands of children every year, and we condemn them to servitude—whatever genius may be lying among them. It is like throwing treasures into the sea, or burying the fruits of the earth. Waste! Waste! Yet, if the system is to be bolstered up, what help?'

Said the other Voice: 'The world must have servants. These are our servants. If they are good at their work, they will rise and become upper servants. If they are good upper servants, they may rise higher. Their children can rise higher still, and their grandchildren may join us. Service is best for them. Good service, hard service, will keep them in health and out of temptation. To lament because they are servants is foolish and sentimental.'

Standing in the doorways, sitting on the doorsteps, talking together, were women—about four times as many women as there were houses. This was because there were as many families as rooms, and there were four rooms for every house. As they stood at the end of the street and looked down, Elsie observed that nearly every woman had a baby in her arms, and that there were a great many types or kinds of women. That which does not surprise one in a drawing-room, where every woman is expected to have her individual points, is noticed in a crowd, where, one thinks, the people should be like sheep—all alike.

'A splendid place, this street, for such a student as you should be, my Scholar.' The Master looked up and down—he sniffed the air, which was stuffy, with peculiar satisfaction: he smiled upon the grubby houses. 'You should come often: you should make the acquaintance of the people: you will find them so human, so desperately human, that you will presently understand that these women are your sisters. Change dresses with one of them: let your hair fall wild: take off your bonnet'—

'Shall I then be quite like them?' asked Elsie. 'Like them, Master? Oh! not quite like them.'

'Not quite like them,' he said. 'No; you could never talk like them.'

He walked about among the people, who evi-

dently knew him, because they made way for him, nodded to him, and pretended, such was their politeness, to pay no attention to the young lady who accompanied him.

'Every one of them is a study,' he continued. 'I could preach to you on every one as a text. Here is my young friend Alice Parden, for instance'—he stopped before a pale girl of seventeen or so, tall and slender, but of drooping figure, who carried a baby in her arms. 'Look at her. Consider. Alice is foolish, like all the Alices of this street. Alice must needs marry her chap a year ago, when she was sixteen and he was eighteen. Alice should be still at her club in the evening and her work in the daytime. But she must marry, and she is a child-mother.—Is he out of work still?' Alice nodded, and hugged her baby closer. Mr Edmund Gray shook his head in admonition, but gave her a coin, and went on. 'Now, look at this good woman'—he stopped before a door where an Amazon was leaning—a woman five feet eight in height with brawny arms and broad shoulders and a fiery furnace for a face—a most terrible and fearful woman.—'How are you this evening, Mrs Moss? And how is your husband?'

Long is the arm of coincidence. Mrs Moss was just beginning to repose after a row royal; she was slowly simmering and slowly calming. There had been a row royal, a dispute, an argument, a quarrel, and a fight with her husband. All four were only just concluded. All four had been conducted on the pavement, for the sake of coolness and air and space. The residents stood around: the controversy was sharp and animated: the lady bore signs of its vehemence in a bruise, rapidly blackening, over one eye, and abrasions on her knuckles. The husband had been conducted by his friends from the spot to the public-house at the corner, where he was at present pulling himself together, and forgetting the weight of his consort's fists, and solacing his spirit with strong drink.

'How is my husband?' the lady repeated. 'Oh! I'll tell you. I'll tell you, Mr Gray, how my husband is. Oh! how is he? Go look for him in the public-house. You shall see how he is and what he looks like.' She descended two steps, still retaining the advantage of the lowest. Then, describing a semicircle with her right arm, she began an impassioned harangue. The residents fled, right and left, not knowing whether in her wrath she might not mistake the whole of them, collectively, for her husband. The men in the public-house hearing her voice, trembled, and looked apprehensively at the door. But Mr Gray stood before her without fear. He knew her better than to run away. The lady respected his courage, and rejoiced in a sympathetic listener. Presently she ran down: she paused: she gasped: she caught at her heart: she choked: she wept. She sat down on the doorstep, this great strong woman, with the brawny arms and the fiery face, and she wept. The residents crept timidly back again and gathered round her, murmuring sympathy: the men in the public-house trembled again. Mr Gray grasped her by the hand and murmured a few words of consolation; for indeed there were great wrongs, such as few wives even in this street expect, and undeniable provocations. Then he led his Scholar away.

At the next house he entered, taking Elsie with him to a room at the back where a woman sat making garments. She was a middle-aged woman, and though very poorly dressed, not in rags: the room was neat except for the garments lying about. She looked up cheerfully—her eyes were bright, her face was fine—and smiled. 'You here, Mr Gray?' she said. 'Well, I was only thinking yesterday how long it is since you came to see me last. I mustn't stop working, but you can talk.'

'This is a very special friend of mine,' said the Master. 'I have known her for ten years, ever since I began to visit the street. She is always cheerful: though she has to live on sweating work and sweating pay. She never complains. She lives like the sparrows, and eats about as much as a sparrow: she is always respectable. She goes to Church on Sundays: she is always neat in her dress. Yet she must be always hungry.'

'Ah!' said the woman, 'you'd wonder, Miss, if you knew how little a woman can live upon.'

'Oh! but,' said Elsie, 'to have always to live on that little!'

'She is the daughter of a man once thought well to do.'—'He was most respectable,' said the woman.—'He died, and left nothing but debts. The family were soon scattered, and—you see—this street contains some of those who have fallen low down as well as those who are born low down. It is Misfortune Lane as well as Poverty Lane. To the third and fourth generation, misfortune, when it begins—the reason of its beginning is the wickedness of one man—still persecutes and follows the family.'

'Thank you, Miss,' said the woman. 'And if you will come again sometimes— Oh! you needn't be afraid. No one would hurt a friend of Mr Gray.' So they went out.

On the next doorstep and the next and the next, there sat women old and young, but all of these had the same look and almost the same features—they were heavy-faced, dull-eyed, thick-lipped, unwashed, and unbrushed. 'These,' said the Master, 'are the women who know of nothing better than the life they lead here. They have no hope of rising: they would be unhappy out of this street. They bear children: they bring them up, and they die. It is womanhood at its lowest. They want warmth, food, and drink, and that is nearly all. They are the children and grandchildren of women like themselves, and they are the mothers of women like themselves. Savage lands have no such savagery as this, for the worst savages have some knowledge, and these women have none. They are mutilated by our system. We have deprived them of their souls. They are the products of our system. In a better order these people could not exist: they would not be allowed parents or birth. The boy would still be learning his trade, and the girl would be working at hers. That little woman who meets her troubles with so brave a heart has been sweated all her life—ever since her misfortunes began: she takes it as part of the thing they call life: she believes that it will be made up to her somehow in another world. I hope it will.'

'All these people,' said the other Voice, 'are what they are because of the follies and the

vices of themselves and their fathers. The boy-husband has no trade. Whose fault is that? The rickety boy and the rickety girl bring into the world a rickety baby. Whose fault is that? Let them grow worse instead of better until they learn by sharper suffering that vice and folly bring their punishment.'

'You see the children,' continued the Master, 'and the mothers. You do not see any old men because this sort mostly die before they reach the age of sixty. Those who are past work and yet continue to live go into the House. The girls you do not see because those who are not forced to work all the evening as well as all the day are out walking with their sweethearts. Nor the men because they are mostly in the public-house. They are all hand-to-mouth working men: they live by the job when they can get any. When they are out of work, they live upon each other. We hide this kind of thing away in back streets like this, and we think it isn't dangerous. But it is. Formerly, the wreckage huddled together bred plagues and pestilences, which carried off rich and poor with equal hand, and so revenged itself. In other ways, the wreckage revenges itself still.'

'This kind of people,' said the other Voice, 'may be dangerous. We have a Police on purpose to meet the danger. They would be quite as dangerous if you were to give them free dinners and house them without rent. The class represents the untamable element. They are always a danger. To cry over them is silly and useless.'

They walked down the street. Everybody knew Mr Edmund Gray. He had a word for all. It was evident that he had been a visitor in the street for a long time: he had the air of a proprietor: he entered the houses and opened doors and sat down and talked, his disciple standing beside him and looking on. He asked questions and gave advice—not of a subversive Socialistic kind, but sound advice, recognising the order that is, not the order that should be.

All the rooms in this street were tenanted, mostly a family to each. In many of them work was going on still, though it was already eight o'clock. Sometimes it would be a woman sitting alone in her room like a prisoner in a cell, stitching for dear life: sometimes three or four women or girls sitting all together, stitching for dear life: sometimes a whole family, little children and all, making matches, making canvas bags, making paper bags, making card-boxes, all making—making—making for dear life. And the fingers did not stop and the eyes were not lifted, though the visitors opened the door and came in and asked questions, to which one replied in the name of all the rest.

It is an old, old story—everybody knows the slum: people go to gaze upon it; it is one of the chief sights of Victorian London, just as a hundred and fifty years ago it was one of the sights to see the women flogged at Bridewell. Not such a very great advance in civilisation, perhaps, after all.

'It is a hive—the place is swarming with life,' said the girl, who had never before seen such a street.

'Life means Humanity. All these people are so like you, my Scholar, that you would be surprised. You would not be like them if you

were dressed in these things, but they are like you. They want the same things as you—they have the same desires—they suffer the same pains. What makes your happiness? Food—warmth, sufficiency, not too much work. These are the elements for you as well as for them. In my system they will have all these—and then perhaps they will build up, as you have done, an edifice of Knowledge, Art, and Sweet Thoughts. But they are all like you. And most in one thing. For all women of all classes, there is one thing needful. These girls, like you, want love. They all want love. Oh, child! they are so like you, so very like you—these poor women of the lowest class. So very like their proud sisters.' He paused for a moment. Elsie made no reply. 'You see,' he continued, 'they are so hard at work that they cannot even lift their eyes to look at you—not even at you, though they so seldom see a girl among them so lovely and so well dressed. One would have thought—but there is the Whip that drives—that dreadful Whip—it hangs over them and drives them all day long without rest or pause. Their work pays their rent and keeps them alive. It just keeps them alive, and that is all. No more. It must be hard to work all day long for another person—if you come to think of it. Happily, they do not think. And all this grinding poverty—this terrible work, that one family may be able to live in a great house and to do nothing.'

'They are working,' said the other Voice, 'because one man has had the wit to create a market for their work. His thrift, his enterprise, his clearness of sight, have made it possible for these girls to find the work that keeps them. If they would have the sense not to marry recklessly, there would be fewer working girls, and wages would go up. If their employer raised their wages only a penny a day, he would benefit them but little and would ruin himself. They must learn—if they can—the lesson of forethought by their own sufferings. No one can help them.'

As Mr Edmund Gray walked into the houses and out again Elsie went with him, or she waited outside while he went in. Sometimes she heard the chink of coin: sometimes she heard words of thanks. The Socialist, whatever he taught, practised the elementary form of charity possible only for those who have money. Elsie remarked this little point, but said nothing.

'What you see here,' said the Master, 'is the lowest class of all—if one ever gets to the lowest level. For my own part, I have seen men and women so wretched that you would have called them *miserrimi*—of all created beings the most wretched. Yet have I afterwards found others more wretched still. In this street are those who make the lowest things: those who can make nothing, and have no trade, and live on odd jobs: and those who can neither make nor work, but thief and lie about.'

'I see all that; but, dear Master, what will your new order do for such people? Will it make those who will not work industrious?'

'It will give every producer the fruits of his own labour: it will teach a trade to every man, and find men work. And those who cannot work, it will lock up until they die. They shall have no children. Perhaps it will kill them all. It might be better. We will have no human failures

in our midst. That street is full of lessons, all calling aloud for the destruction of Property.'

Then the other Voice spoke: 'The presence of the human failure is a lesson always before us—a warning and a lesson to rich and poor alike. As he is, so all may be. None are so rich but they may be brought to poverty: none so poor but they may be poorer. So far from hiding away the wreckage, it is always in our sight. It prowls about the streets: we can never escape it. And it fills all hearts with terror: it spurs all men to industry and invention and perseverance. The human failure inspires a never-ending hymn in praise of Property.'

TRIAL OF THE PYX.

It is one of the many privileges, so abundant in our favoured land, that we are entitled to a genuine coinage. In the first of the witty and ingenious *Drapier Letters*, written by Swift in 1724 against the copper coinage, which the English government was then introducing into Ireland, he refers to an observation by Lord Coke upon a certain act of parliament as far back as the reign of Edward I. 'By this act,' says that learned authority, 'it appears that no subject can be forced to take in buying or selling or other payment, any money made but of lawful metal, that is, of silver or gold.' From this Swift reasoned, somewhat extravagantly, that Irishmen were fully justified in refusing to take 'Mr Wood's halfpence' under any circumstances whatever. Without, however, discussing the position of the Dean of St Patrick's with regard to the ironmaster's 'filthy trash,' as he called it, the privilege of British subjects which he quotes is undoubtedly of the highest importance. The advantage of possessing a reliable medium of exchange is felt in all commercial transactions of whatever degree; and the disadvantage of its absence is experienced in a slight measure when, in spite of Lord Coke, one is hoodwinked by a 'smasher' into the acceptance of a counterfeit coin. This is happily of rare occurrence, so that the bitter feelings usually aroused on such occasions should eventually end in profound thankfulness to our ever-glorious Constitution which secures the life of the honest tradesman from a frequency of such vexations.

In this connection, it may be of interest to know that systematic precaution is taken to ensure that the coin circulating in this realm is 'made but of lawful metal,' not only for individual satisfaction but for national credit, so that English money may be, as we believe it is, 'firmamentum belli et ornamentum pacis.' The character of the coins issued from Her Majesty's Mint is examined year by year at the 'Trial of the Pyx,' as it is called. On this occasion, a jury of not less than six 'competent freemen' of the Goldsmiths' Company are empanelled at the Goldsmiths' Hall to verify the weight and fineness of the gold and silver coinages of the past twelve months. They are sworn before the Queen's Remembrancer, who points out the importance of their task. They are then handed the pyx coins, which it is their duty to weigh and assay and report upon. These coins consist of pieces that have been taken out during the year,

impartially, one from each journey weight or bag of finished work before it is delivered by the Mint to the Bank. When the coins are selected, they are placed in a packet which is sealed with the Mint seal and carefully locked in the pyx or chest (whence the phrase, 'Trial of the Pyx') until the time appointed for the trial, which generally takes place early in July.

The duties of the jurymen are very clearly defined by an Order in Council dated the 29th June 1871. They have to ascertain that the number of coins in each packet corresponds with the number represented to be there by the officers of the Mint, who are to be in attendance at the Hall. Each coin must be weighed to show whether it is within the prescribed 'remedy' or legal allowance as to weight. They are to take some of the coins and melt them into an ingot, which they must assay and compare with the standard trial plate in the custody of the Board of Trade. Some of the remaining pieces they must assay separately, in order to discover whether each coin is of the millesimal fineness specified by the Coinage Act, 1870, or its partial amendment, 1891. They are then to formulate their verdict in writing, and deliver the same to the Queen's Remembrancer, from which copies are made for the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, the Board of Trade, and the Mint, and also for publication in the *London Gazette*.

Though the verdicts since 1871, when the trial was first held annually, have been satisfactory, the imperative necessity of some such appeal to a legal standard will be recognised when it is considered that a slight deficiency on each piece becomes a serious amount in a large coinage. For instance, if the gold coined in 1890 (nearly eight millions) had been issued only one per mil. below the standard assay, that is, containing 913.6 parts of gold instead of 914.6 per 1000, the lowest legal proportion, it would mean a loss of upwards of £8500. And if every sovereign had weighed a grain too little, that is, 122.074 instead of 123.074 grains, the lowest legal weight, the total deficiency would have been nearly £65,000.

Evidently this offers a ready if not a righteous mode of replenishing the royal treasury chests. And it is a notorious historical fact that very few, if any, of our impecunious monarchs have been immaculate in respect to this temptation. Silver coins are said to have been first debased in the time of Edward I., and from his reign downwards they have varied in approximation to the normal weight and standard according to the necessities of the throne. The spendthrift Henry VIII. reduced the silver pound (in tale) from eleven oz. two dwt. of silver and eighteen dwt. of alloy, which has been the standard composition from Saxon times to the present, to four oz. of silver and eight of alloy. And this proportion was actually decreased by Edward VI. to three oz. of silver and nine of alloy in the Troy pound. After such flagrant debasements, 'Good Queen Bess's' little scheme of coining sixty-two shillings instead of sixty to the pound is scarcely worth mentioning. In the reign of Queen Anne, the guinea, which was originally issued as a twenty-shilling piece, was raised in nominal value to thirty shillings. And at the same period, W. Lowndes, in his 'Report for the Amendment of Silver Coins, London, 1695,' makes

a general complaint of 'lackage' in the weight of the currency. As an instance, he refers to 572 bags of silver money weighed at the receipt of the Exchequer. It appears from his statement that the 'medium' (mean) weight of each £100 by tale was 198 oz. 18 dwt. $\frac{1}{2}$ gr., showing a 'medium' deficiency of 188 oz. 3 dwt. $21\frac{1}{2}$ gr. from the Mint standard, or nearly one-half the correct weight. *Tempora mutantur!* What would a modern pyx jury say to this?

And this disgraceful condition of the coinage cannot be excused through want of balances to weigh closer than half a piece. For it is on record that, before this, in the reign of Charles I., the Attorney-general, Noy, on seeing the accuracy of the beam employed, exclaimed with a burst of candour, unusual in an astute lawyer, 'I should be loth that all my actions should be weighed in these scales.' If we may not conclude from this that their balances indicated the thousandth part of a grain as at present, it is only fair to the machines to suppose that they were not used to weigh the coins that got into Mr Lowndes' hands. And a very probable hypothesis of the defalcation is that wickedness existed somewhere in the high places.

Though, however, the examination of the pyx is, *ipso facto*, a means of security to the nation, it must not be supposed that it originated with the people as a check upon the king. On the contrary, it originated with the king as a check upon those who held the contract for coining his money. For until 1850 the coinages were actually executed by the Moneyers, a private firm who claimed 'the prescriptive right to coin all Her Majesty's moneys.' The Mint Master was the officer held responsible to the sovereign by written indentures, which gave him explicit directions and particulars as to the coinage. And the trial of the pyx, held at the will and pleasure of the Crown, was a formal inquiry into his integrity in fulfilling those indentures. If the pyx coins proved good in weight and fineness, the master of the Mint was released from his responsibility; but any violation of the contract was severely dealt with. Cases are on record in which moneyers convicted of counterfeiting the coins were condemned to be hanged, drawn, and quartered; and, for less flagrant offences, they had to lose the right hand.

It is not improbable, from documentary evidence, that this inquiry was first instituted in the reign of Henry II. (1154-1189). At anyrate, in the ninth or tenth year of Edward I., the king commanded the barons of the Exchequer by writ to take with them the warden of the Mint and open the boxes of the assay at London and Canterbury, and make the assay in such a manner as the 'king's council is wont to do.' But in 1345 we have an undoubted reference to the trial of the pyx; for the terms of the indenture between Edward III. and Percival de Perche are still in existence; and the mode of the 'tryall' is given in detail. As soon as the moneys were 'coyned and compleate,' one piece was to be taken from every five-pound weight of gold, and kept in a chest with two keys and sealed with two seals, the one to remain with the king's deputy, and the other with the master. The box was to be opened every three months before the council of the king, the warden and the master being present,

and the moneys to 'bee assaid before them, and being found good and convenable, the said master to have letters pattents for his discharge, and being found otherwise the master to pay the kinge or his deputy that which shall apperteyne.' This is precise enough; and in the Cotton manuscripts there is an account of an assay of gold nobles, five years later, 1352, when they were compared with some florins of Florence kept in the Treasury as standards. The Egerton papers of the time of Elizabeth contain an 'order of ratinge of thassaies of the Mynte in the realme of Englande by the Queene's Majesties most Honourable Counsell in the Star-chamber of oulde tyme.' And it is recorded by the old chroniclers that on May 9, 1611, James I. was present as usual at the trial of the pyx in the Tower of London, and that the 'English Solomon' diligently 'viewed and examined the state of his Money and Mint.'

The intervals between these trials has been of considerable variation. Edward III., as has been quoted, caused them to be made every three months; but in general they were held just when the state pleased, sometimes at the appointment of a new master, that the old one might receive his quietus, and sometimes when the coinage reached a certain amount. The trial of the pyx in 1799 was held after a period of four years, and when about seven millions had been coined. But when the actual manufacture of money was brought under direct government control in 1870, the Coinage Act of that year enacted that 'For the purpose of ascertaining that coins issued from the Mint have been coined in accordance with this act, a trial of the pyx shall be held at least once in every year in which coins have been issued from the Mint.' The superior advantage of this more frequent check upon the officers of the Mint is obvious, and should be sufficient to inspire the most widespread confidence.

THE BELLS OF LINLAVEN.

CHAPTER III.—COMING SHADOWS.

BRATHRIG BECK falls into Brathrig Mere; and there, under the shelter of the broad brown Fell lies the little village of Linlaven, with the church-tower standing forth above the trees, and the blue lake stretching out beyond, filling every creek and bend of the shore with its brimming waters.

The place is lovely in its solitude, with the great hills girdling it round and shutting it in. It might be the Happy Valley of Rasselas: for the clamour and tumult of life reach it not. It is warmed by the sunshine, and beaten upon by storms; but the sound of the great world beyond comes not anigh. Yet, alas! though these guardian hills may beat back and keep afar off the roaring tide of life as it surges through the streets of great cities and around the high places of mankind, they cannot wholly shut it out. Its ebb and flow make themselves felt here, even in this the shallowest backwater of the ocean of humanity. Its pulsations come and go amid these solitudes with as rhythmic a beat as in the lanes of London City. And how? Because the human heart is here. Which is as much as to say, that love is here, and hate; that

joy is here, and grief; that here are pain and passion and despair, sin and death and the grave.

And that old man, weary and worn and fever-stricken: what would he here amid these solitudes in the wild October storm of yestereven? Thought he that Nemesis, awful daughter of Night, knew not her way hither? Saw he not the church-tower of Linlaven rising there amid the trees?—At its feet is the green churchyard, full of the graves of men.

The storm of yesternight had died away upon the hills, but it had left mournful traces of its fury behind. High up on the broad Fell, many a tall pine has been shattered and riven, lying now with upturned roots in the wan morning light. The old elm that yestermorn shook its withered boughs, rustling dim dead leaves in the rising sun, has fallen across the village street, and the children stare with round eyes of wonder at its hollow bole, knowing not that corruption and decay had been eating into its heart for years. The great willow that hung over the deep still pool where Brathrig Beck falls into Brathrig Mere, is also stricken down; nor shall it ever again fan the air with gray leaves, and whisper dark secrets to the summer moon, of fair pale faces and floating hair, and midnight shrieks along the mere.

A very little thing moves the half-stagnant waters of life in a village community. Had the storm of last night been the only troubler of the waters, it would doubtless this morning have been the talk and wonder of every one; the old folks counting how far back it was since they had had such another storm, and how much worse that was than this one; and the young folks wondering how it was that people could remember things so far back: *they* could hardly remember yesterday's lessons.

But now, the finding of the stranger upon the moor far outdid all other subjects of human interest. Rafe the pedlar, who had discovered him with that inquisitive lantern of his—which was always glaring about with its one eye to see if it couldn't pick up a bargain—Rafe was quite a hero to-day. He had to tell the story a dozen times in the course of the forenoon; but he managed to make rather a profitable business out of it. The old women found he was not very communicative upon the subject until they had sampled and paid for a few of his wares, and then it was amazing what he could tell. The wild wind, the swaying and moaning of the trees by the Dead Water, the awful terror he experienced in passing the tree where the smugglers hanged the exciseman, and then, to crown all, the groans and strange sounds he heard when at last he reached the brow of the Fell, and saw the corpse-like thing lying before him! But further than that he would not go. He might say more than his head was worth. Who knows who the old man might be? No, no; Lawrence Dale and he had talked the matter over, and least said soonest mended. 'But maybe, kimmers, when I come round next, the sough may hae blawn past, and wha kens what I may tell ye, ance I can do it wi' safety, and just out o' pure friendship. Sae, good-day, i' noo.'

Upon the whole, the result was rather disappointing to the gossips; but Rafe knew he had

planted a little seed of curiosity and expectancy in their minds that would keep them from forgetting him till he came back again.

In the course of the forenoon the Doctor arrived at the vicarage. The patient had in the meantime, by the Vicar's orders, been removed to a room in a cottage near the mill, where Lawrence Dale and his wife had promised to see to his wants; and thither the Vicar and the Doctor bent their steps. Clara, in whose mind a strange curiosity had been stirred as to the old man, accompanied them, and looked anxiously at the Doctor's proceedings. The patient was in much the same condition as she had last seen him; and the Doctor pronounced him to be suffering from what appeared to be brain-fever, due, in view of the circumstances under which he had been found, to fatigue and exposure, and possibly privation.

Before she left the room, Clara whispered to the Vicar: 'Grandpapa, go forward and look at the poor man; do you think you could ever have seen him before?'

The Vicar did so, looking long and anxiously at the man's face. 'No,' he said, as he returned to her side. 'I am certain I never saw him before, nor am I able to see anything in his features that resembles any one I have ever known.'

Clara did not reply; but her mind was not quite at rest. She did not, however, say anything about what she had seen and heard in the early morning; and they left the house together.

No perceptible change occurred in the patient's condition during that or the following day; but in the early hours of the third morning, while Lawrence and Mrs Dale were sitting with him, some symptoms of a change made themselves manifest. The strugglings of the crazed brain within the man were subsiding; his voice had sunk almost into silence, though there was still a death-like pallor on his face. By-and-by he sank into what appeared to the sympathetic watchers to be a calm and peaceful slumber. Was it, thought they, the blessed sleep that precedes a healthful awakening, or was it the comatose languor that should end in death?

It was Sabbath morning, and Clara visited the cottage on her way to church. The village was as calm and silent as the great brown hills that looked down upon it on every side. No tinkle of hammer on anvil came from the village smithy; the six days' rumble and whirl of shaft and pinion in the old mill was at an end, and the big water-wheel stood up gaunt and idle, lazily dripping in the morning sun. Brown leaves lay thick along the margin of the lake, on the smooth steely surface of which the church and church-tower were impictured as in a mirror. The little flower-plot in front of the cottage wore a lifeless and dejected look, as if sadly conscious that its summer glory was over and gone; and from the trailing roses and creepers that still clung to the cottage wall, the yellow leaves every now and again fell with a faint shiver to the ground.

Clara entered, and was struck by the strange stillness that filled the room, and the slumberous quiet of the apparently dying man. The sunlight came slantingly in at door and window—not rich and mellow as in the golden glow of summer, but with a cold and silvery splendour,

that gave lustre but little warmth to the chill October air. The chirp and twitter of birds upon the housetops, or the slow heavy footsteps of a passing villager, was all that broke the silence; and there, beneath the eyes of the silent watchers, the sick man calmly slumbered on.

All at once the sound of the church bells broke upon the quiet air, entering with the sunlight the open door, and startling the sleeper where he lay. He moved at first uneasily, as in pain; then lay like one who sleeps, yet seems to listen in his sleep. The bells rang on, their clangour softened by distance; the rich melody filling the air and flooding the room as with the rush and rustle of angels' wings.

No one spoke. The sleeper moved once more, and looked up. The wild light had died out of his eyes, and the harsh lines of his face were softened and subdued as if an angel's hand had touched them into peace. It was life—not death. The battle had been fought, the tribulation had been endured, and the hand of the Destroyer had been stayed—for a time.

'Them beautiful bells!'

It was the sick man who spoke, his face for the moment lit up with a kind of sweet radiance. At length his eyes fell on Lawrence. 'Where be I?' he asked; 'and what beautiful bells be those?'

'Thou be among friends,' Lawrence replied; 'and the bells are the bells of Linlaven.'

'Ah,' said the man, as if the words conveyed no information to his mind. Then he lay quite still for a few minutes, apparently absorbed in his own thoughts; perhaps considering within himself the possibilities that might have occurred. And again he spoke.

'Happen that some one ha' took me up. I knowed I was out in the dark night, in the storm, well nigh a-dyin' of hunger and weariness and pain—and then I feels myself falling and falling—and knowed that this were the end o' me at last. Then all of a sudden I was far away in the old church at home, kneeling by mother's side, and the great bells in the tower were ringing out slowly and sweetly, and all the church was filled with sunshine and pleasant music, as I ha' seen it many and many's the time long ago. Mother took my hand in hers as I knelt beside her, and I could see the old look of love deep down in her eyes. "Giles, my lad, say *Our Father*." And I said it with her till we came to *Forgive us our sins*—when it all changed, quick and sudden-like, into darkness. I could not lift my eyes, and a great pain was at my heart, and all around was nothing but darkness—darkness! Then my eyes were opened, and I saw thee beside me here—and them beautiful bells, they still rang on. What may it all mean?'

'It means,' said Lawrence, 'that thou ha' been very ill, and ha' had a sore wrastle for thy life. But ask no more at present; thou will hear all when thou be stronger.'

Clara all this while had stood a little apart, strangely moved by what she saw and heard, comparing her former impressions with her present. Then she moved quietly out of the house, and took her way to the church.

'Lawrence,' said Mrs Dale to her husband apart; 'I ha' been thinkin' o' that thou told

me as to what the poor old man said up on the Fell, and I can't believe it. It were main bad of us to think ill o' him. That ain't the face of a bad man, whatever is.'

The autumn had passed into winter, and winter into spring, and the old man whom Rafe the pedlar had found on Brathrig Fell on that stormy night last October was still in Linlaven. He did not die. His recovery was slow, but, thanks greatly to the patient nursing of Mrs Dale, he did recover.

'Uncle Giles.' That was the name he was known by. He had never offered to give his full name to any one, and no one among those about him quite cared to ask him for it. He was excessively fond of children, and they of him; and one day a little girl, with that innocent temerity which sits so well on childhood, asked him what his name was. The man looked taken aback for a minute; then he replied, that the little children he had known in other places always called him Uncle Giles. And so he came to be called in Linlaven, not by the children only, but by every one.

All the same, it was a little strange, this reticence and this desire for obscurity. As you may be sure, it did not escape the attention of the villagers. It was indeed much talked of—in his absence. There must be some reason for it. Was he 'wanted?' What would it be? Theft? No, he did not look like a man who would steal. Murder? Never; he was too gentle and mild even to have given deadly injury to any one. Smuggling? Ah, that might be it. For it was observed that he was not what is called poor. After his recovery, he had himself paid the doctor's bill, and ever since he had been indebted to no one for the simple necessities of his life. That must be it: smuggling. And once the villagers arrived at this conclusion, it was rather an element in his favour than otherwise.

But this suspicion was not all; for Mrs Dale thought she saw more. She had satisfied herself that, immediately after his recovery, he desired nothing more than to get away from Linlaven as quickly as possible. He was restless, and anxious, and evidently bent upon taking his departure. And in all probability he would have been gone long ere now, but for the fact that the winter had been a singularly severe one. It was quite a month after his being carried into Linlaven before he was able to leave his bed, and yet another month before he was in a fit state to travel; by which time the winter had set in, fierce and keen. Great falls of snow had taken place, and the hills lay stretched motionless under their white shrouds like so many dead giants. The roads for weeks were blocked, and it was not possible to cross the wild Fells in any direction. Winter had in fact besieged Linlaven, shutting it up as closely as was ever beleaguered city in time of war.

This old man, therefore, who called himself Giles, was to Lawrence Dale and his wife, as also to the Vicar and Clara, not only the object of much kindly attention but also of some degree of interest. At first they had simply pitied and cherished him as a poor child of misfortune and distress, driven by the vicissitudes of fate within

the scope of their sympathies; but as they knew him better, they began at once to like and to respect him. He was a man of few words, manifesting his sense of gratitude in his looks and manner rather than by any set form of speech.

But there was one that got nearer to the old man's heart than all the rest. This was Lucy Norham, Clara's child. A merry prattling thing, with all the winning ways of a little sylph of five years, she came to know and to understand him as if by intuition, and to love him also as the very young are often seen to love the very old. She it was who had had the hardihood to look up into the old man's face and to ask him his name. She would transport into his cottage the little play-things that were dearest to her for the time, and spend hours at the old man's feet, until her nurse appeared to fetch her home. Sometimes, as she sat on his knee, her fair hair falling over her shoulders, he would stroke with gentle hand the shining locks, and gaze into the deep blue of her young eyes, as though he were about to recall in her face some vanished image of the past. And when, in the course of that fierce mid-winter—when fog and frost and snow lay everywhere, and icicles hung from windows and doorways—disease laid its hand on the little maid, not one of all the villagers waited for news of her recovery with a deeper anxiety than did this ancient castaway who loved her.

Moreover, as the spring returned, and the soft west winds were once more rippling the lake, life seemed to have grown brighter for the old man. It was found that he possessed no slight mechanical skill in various ways; and in order to encourage him to settle in the village, Lawrence Dale had the top-storey of the Old Grange fitted up with a carpenter's bench and other requisites, and Uncle Giles soon found his hands filled with such work as the united wants of the little community provided for him. Here, therefore, the old man bestowed himself in his working hours, and here, when the spring sun shone soft on the vicarage garden, scarce a day would pass in which he was not aware of a pair of little feet climbing the tall stairs, and a little voice shouting out for 'Uncle Giles.' Then would he leave his tools, and go half-way down the stairs to lift the little Lucy in his arms, and carry her up beside him, to watch him at his work, and to cheer him by her happy innocence and childish prattle.

With this improvement in the old man's physical surroundings had come also a corresponding improvement in his health and appearance. As strength returned to his tall and naturally athletic frame, and his step became firmer, and his face less pale and emaciated, the neighbours were fain to admit that he did not look quite so old as they at first had thought him. It was true his hair was gray—even white; but we know that time is not alone the producer of gray hairs. There are other snows than those of age: other frosts that whiten men's heads—ay, and blench men's hearts too—than those that fall from the chill breath of passing years.

The spring had grown into summer, and now June was almost treading on the skirts of May. The leaf had returned to the tree, and the meadows were green with the springing grass. Down the lanes the hawthorn was white with

flowers, and the scent of blossoming orchards was sweet on the air. Amid all this, the old man, with his recovered health and strength might have been as happy and contented as most of his neighbours deemed him; but he was not. This discontent, or rather restlessness, was not apparent to outsiders; but there was one whose keen yet kindly eye did not fail to discern it, and that one was Lawrence Dale's wife, Milly. With a woman's fine instinct, she saw that he was urged by the old mysterious impulse to arise and depart from among them.

When these fits were on him, he would wander for hours about the distant margin of the lake, and through sequestered lanes, shunning, and evidently desirous of shunning, the presence of his neighbours. He had come back one evening from one of those solitary wanderings, and was seated on the bench outside his cottage door, looking across the shining mere to where the great sun was glowing in the western sky. A thrush, on the topmost twig of the leafy elm that overhung the cottage roof, was making all the air musical with its rich mellow notes, only keeping silence at intervals for the reply which came back to it from that other in the clump of leafy beeches below. But the old man heeded not their music. His face wore a look of deep sadness, as he sat there, gazing at the lake with its wavy flow of golden-crested ripples. Was he thinking of the future?—or of the past? Thinking, it may be—who knows?—of both: of the time, perhaps, when, under the black sails of some withering sorrow or deed of sin, he had scoured the seas in search of that dragon which he was never to slay, and in the hope of returning under the white sails of that victory which had never been his.

At that moment a little hand was laid on his, causing him to start suddenly, like a man in fear. It was only the little maid Lucy.

'I have come to bid you good-night, Uncle Giles; and Dolly have come too. You must kiss Dolly first, 'cause she's the pincirpal baby.' And she held a very much battered little image of a doll up to him. 'Oh, Uncle Giles,' she went on, 'Dolly and I have been looking for you for hours—and hours—and hours!' And she gazed up into his face with wistful eyes.

The old man only said, 'Ah, my little Lucy!' and gathered her up into his long arms, and set her on his knee. As he kissed her, a hot drop fell upon her cheek. Just then, he looked up and saw Milly watching him from her cottage door; so, kissing the child once more, he set her down, and went hurriedly into his own house.

His confused and agitated demeanour had not escaped Milly's eye; hence, as soon as she had taken Lucy up to the vicarage, and returned, she walked straight towards his house, and entered. It was as she had half expected. The worn brown valise stood packed on the table, as if its owner were meditating an early departure.

'Surely, Uncle Giles,' Milly said, pointing to the valise, 'thou be not going to leave us?'

'Happen I may, missus,' he answered, as he lifted the tell-tale bundle and put it away. He went on: 'I shouldn't oughtn't to ha' been here so long. Only one thing ha' kept me, or I ain't nowise sure if I had been wi' thee till now.'

'What is that, Giles?'

'Well, missus, it be that bairn o' Mrs Norham's—little Lucy. There's a summat that binds that lass to me as I can't explain nohow, not even to mysen.'

'Then why should thou go? Ain't thou well here, and well liked?'

'Happen as that be so,' he replied. 'I weren't complainin' o' no one. But mine ha' been a wanderin' life; and though I be well pleased to stay within sound o' Linlaven bells, yet happen sometime I may stay a day too long. I ain't a-wishin' to go; but maybe, lass, there's a summat as shall make me.'

HEREDITARY CLERGYMEN.

It has not yet been proved, though Mr Galton has attempted to do so, that genius and ability are qualities capable of being transmitted from father to son. But it is frequently seen that for several generations families have followed one particular profession, and as they have often done so with considerable success, it is to be presumed that they inherited abilities that peculiarly adapted them for the hereditary calling. There are families that can, and do, boast of their four or five successive generations engaged in the law or medicine or trade. The clerical profession has been particularly favoured in this direction, almost every religious denomination having had families who for generations have devoted themselves to the ministerial or sacerdotal functions. A very prominent family among the Jews, the Adlers, have long held high rank in their church. In the last century flourished the Rabbi Beer Adler. He was father of Mordecai Adler, Chief Rabbi of Hanover, whose son, the Rev. Dr Nathan Adler, was for a great number of years Chief Rabbi of England. Dr Nathan Adler's son, Dr H. Adler, having been for some years Delegate Chief Rabbi of England, has now succeeded his father. Thus four generations of the Adler family have held the Rabbinate; and a passage in the will of Dr Nathan Adler points to there being still another generation in the person of the son of the present Chief Rabbi, carrying out the priestly traditions of the family.

In the Church of Rome, the celibacy of the clergy prevents the direct transmission of the priestly office; but there are numerous families—for instance, the Vaughans, to which the Archbishop of Westminster belongs—in which one or more members of several generations have become clergymen. An exception to the general rule of celibacy in the Romish Church is the case of the semi-secular Deans of Whalley, whose marriages would appear to have been considered quite legal, and who were hereditary clergymen in every sense, the Deanery going to the eldest son, just as a civil title does at the present time. This family was for eight generations connected with the Deanery of Whalley, the line ceasing in the thirteenth century.

The Church of England has had many examples of clerical families. In some cases these families, having inherited the presentation of a living, have, very naturally, brought up one of their members in holy orders to keep the benefice in the family. In others, doubtless, a strong theological bias has almost forced its members

to enter the Church; and it has even been suggested that these clerical families have inherited from their ancestors sermons, and thus having a good stock of these essentials, have chosen the preaching career merely to utilise their heirlooms.

One of the oldest of the clerical families is the Collins family of Cornwall. This was founded at the Reformation by one of the earliest of the married priests, a certain Edward Collins, who was instituted Rector of Illogan in 1533. He and his descendants were Rectors of the same place for the next one hundred and fifty-one years, a break of twelve years excepted. For five generations the clerical descent of this family runs from father to son; then for two generations from uncle to nephew; then a father and son; diverging from the main line it goes for two generations from uncle to a nephew, who is now living—thus making a total of eleven generations each represented by one or more clergymen. For a period of over three hundred and fifty years some member of the Collins family has been in holy orders. The Collins family has been connected with the Church for half a century longer than the Newcome family, to which, however, it must yield the palm as regards the distinction attained by its members.

The Newcome family was established by Stephen Newcome, who in the reign of Queen Elizabeth was Curate of Gorton. He had an only son, Stephen, who became, in 1617, Rector of Caldecot. This Stephen left several children, three of whom became clergymen. From the eldest of these sons descended Daniel Newcome, Dean of Gloucester; William Newcome, Archbishop of Armagh; and a number of rectors and vicars. From the second of the three brothers also descended clergymen of the Established Church; while from the third, Henry Newcome of Manchester, the celebrated Presbyterian minister, and ejected Vicar of Gawsorth, descended a line of clergy that even now, after a lapse of a couple of hundred years, is in a flourishing condition. Henry Newcome, though himself a staunch Nonconformist, does not appear to have had any objection to his children conforming. Of his three sons, two were clergymen, Henry, the eldest son, being Rector of Middleton, Lancashire; while the youngest, Peter, became Rector of Hackney. Peter had two clerical sons, Peter, Rector of Shenley; and Richard, Bishop of St Asaph. The Rector of Shenley was father of Henry Newcome, Vicar of Gresford, who was the father of Richard, Archdeacon of Merioneth, and of Thomas, Rector of Shenley. The Rev. Thomas Newcome was father of the present Rev. H. J. Newcome, Rector of Shenley, and of the Rev. Edward W. Newcome. The present representatives of this family are thus the eighth generation of priests of the Church of England, all, it is said, holding benefices, and all, with the exception of Henry Newcome of Gawsorth and Manchester, episcopally ordained.

The Newcomes are surpassed in interest, though not in years, by the eminent family of Wesley, the first clerical member of which was Bartholomew Wesley, Rector of Catherston and Charmouth, Dorsetshire, from both of which livings he was ejected by the Act of Uniformity in 1662. Bartholomew Wesley married a grand-

daughter of Archbishop Loftus of Dublin, and had a son, John Wesley, M.A., who was also amongst the ejected ministers in 1662. His wife was of a clerical family, being daughter of the Rev. John White, and a relation of Bishops Townson and Davenant, besides being niece of Fuller, the author of the *Worthies*. The son of John Wesley was the Rev. Samuel Wesley, who, though brought up by his widowed mother with the intention of entering the Nonconformist ministry, was ordained a clergyman of the Established Church, and held the Rectory of Epworth. Samuel Wesley married the daughter of Dr Samuel Annesley, an eminent dissenting minister. Three of the sons of this marriage were clergymen—Samuel; John, the founder of Methodism; and Charles. The next generation, instead of being clergymen, were musicians; but the family profession was resumed by a grandson of Charles Wesley—namely, Dr Wesley, Chaplain to the Queen. Dr Wesley's death in 1859 terminated the clerical career of his family, he and his ancestors having been ordained priests during a period of two hundred and fifty years, the continuity of the descent being only broken by his father, Wesley the musician.

The Dodsons of Hurstpierpoint are another example. Jeremiah Dodson was for about thirty years a London rector, holding his living during the troubled times of Charles II. and James II. His son of the same name became Rector of Hurstpierpoint, in which living he was succeeded by his son, Christopher Dodson; and he in his turn by his son, John Dodson, D.D. In the next generation, Sir John Dodson deserting the family calling, held several important judicial offices, and became a Privy-councillor. Sir John's son was a few years ago created Lord Monk Bretton.

The present Bishop of Lincoln is the representative of an important family which now records its five generations of clerical descent. The first clergyman of the family was Dr James King, Dean of Raphoe in 1775; he was father of Dr Thomas King, Prebendary of Canterbury, and of Dr Walker King, Bishop of Rochester. Two of Bishop King's sons were clergymen, the elder being Archdeacon King, who was father of Canon Walker King, and of Dr Edward King, Bishop of Lincoln. Canon King's son is also in holy orders.

The King family is by no means the only family that can boast of more than one bishop. The family of Law, of which the patriarch was a country curate, can claim three bishops. The curate's son became Bishop of Carlisle in 1768. Two of the bishop's sons also attained the episcopal bench, the one as Bishop of Clonfert, the other as Bishop of Bath and Wells. The Bishop of Bath was father of Canon Law of Chester, and grandfather of several clergymen.

The Law family, with its three bishops, is scarcely to be compared, in respect to the number of its episcopal members, with the Synges of Ireland, who were perhaps the most fortunate of all the families systematically following the Church as a profession. Two brothers, George and Edward Synge, were respectively Bishops of Cloyne and Cork during the seventeenth century. In the next generation two of the sons of Bishop Edward became, the one Dean of Kildare, the other Archbishop of Tuam. The Archbishop's

two sons became Bishop of Elphin and Bishop of Killaloe. The Bishop of Killaloe died in 1771, when the episcopal honours of the family ceased, though several later members were clergymen.

In modern times there have been in England three families who have devoted themselves to the Church, and have deservedly attained high rank in it. These families are the Wilberforces, Wordsworths, and Bickersteths. The first is quite of recent clerical origin, but already includes two bishops. The second includes a Dean of Christ Church, a Bishop of Lincoln, a Bishop of St Andrews, and a Bishop of Salisbury. To the third belong the late Bishop of Ripon, the Bishop of Exeter, the Bishop of Japan; Edward Bickersteth, an evangelical preacher of considerable eminence, and the Dean of Lichfield.

The list of clerical families is by no means exhausted. Five generations of the Bisses were clergymen, the earliest being Archdeacon of Taunton in 1580; and the latest, Bishop of Hereford in 1721; while the Bests and Carsons were for five, the Woodroffes for six, and the Haringtons and Harrisons for five generations, clergymen of the Established Church.

THE CAPTAIN'S EXPLOIT.

It was a wet dreary night in that cheerless part of the great metropolis known as Wapping. The rain which had been falling heavily for hours still fell steadily on to the sloppy pavements and roads, and joining forces in the gutter, rushed impetuously to the nearest sewer. The two or three streets which had wedged themselves in between the docks and the river, and which, as a matter of fact, really comprise the beginning and end of Wapping, were deserted, except for a belated van crashing over the granite roads, or the chance form of a dock-labourer plodding doggedly along, with head bent in distaste for the rain, and hands sunk in trouser-pockets.

'Beastly night,' said Captain Bing, as he rolled out of the private bar of the *Sailor's Friend*, and ignoring the presence of the step, took a little hurried run across the pavement. 'Not fit for a dog to be out in.'

He kicked, as he spoke, at a shivering cur which was looking in at the crack of the bar-door, with a hazy view of calling its attention to the matter, and then pulling up the collar of his rough pea-jacket, stepped boldly out into the rain. Three or four minutes' walk, or rather roll, brought him to a dark narrow passage, which ran between two houses to the water-side. By a slight tack to starboard at a critical moment, he struck the channel safely, and followed it until it ended in a flight of old stone steps, half of which were under water.

'Where for?' inquired a man, starting up from a small penthouse formed of rough pieces of board.

'Schooner in the tier, *Smiling Jane*,' said the captain gruffly, as he stumbled clumsily into a boat, and sat down in the stern. 'Why don't you have better seats in this 'ere boat?'

'They're there, if you'll look for them,' said the waterman; 'and you'll find 'em easier sitting than that bucket.'

'Why don't you put 'em where a man can see 'em?' inquired the captain, raising his voice a little.

The other opened his mouth to reply, but realising that it would only lead to a long and utterly futile argument, contented himself with asking his fare to trim the boat better, and pushing off from the steps, pulled strongly through the dark lumpy water. The tide was strong, so that they made but slow progress.

'When I was a young man,' said the fare with severity, 'I'd ha' pulled this boat across and back afore now.'

'When you was a young man,' said the man at the oars, who had a local reputation as a wit, 'there wasn't no boats; they was all Noah's arks then.'

'Stow your gab,' said the captain, after a pause of deep thought.

The other, whose besetting sin was certainly not loquacity, ejected a thin stream of tobacco-juice over the side, spat on his hands, and continued his laborious work, until a crowd of dark shapes surmounted by a network of rigging loomed up before them.

'Now, which is your little barge?' he inquired, lunging strongly to maintain his position against the fast-flowing tide.

'Smiling Jane,' said his fare.

'Ah,' said the waterman, '*Smiling Jane*, is it? You sit there, cap'en, an' I'll row round all their sterns while you strike matches and look at the names. We'll have quite a nice little evening.'

'There she is,' cried the captain, who was too muddled to notice the sarcasm; 'there's the little beauty. Steady, my lad.'

He reached out his hand as he spoke, and as the boat jarred violently against a small schooner, seized a rope which hung over the side, and swaying to and fro, fumbled in his pocket for the fare.

'Steady, old boy,' said the waterman affectionately. He had just received twopence-halfpenny and a shilling by mistake for threepence. 'Easy up the side. You ain't such a pretty figger as you was when your old woman made such a bad bargain.'

The captain paused in his climb, and poising himself on one foot, gingerly felt for his tormentor's head with the other. Not finding it, he flung his leg over the bulwark and gained the deck of the vessel as the boat swung round with the tide and disappeared in the darkness.

'All turned in,' said the captain, gazing owlshly at the deserted deck. 'Well, there's a good hour an' a half afore we start; I'll turn in too.'

He walked slowly aft, and sliding back the companion-hatch, descended into a small evil-smelling cabin, and stood feeling in the darkness for the matches. They were not to be found, and growling profanely, he felt his way to the state-room, and turned in all standing.

It was still dark when he awoke and hanging over the edge of the bunk cautiously felt for the floor with his feet, and having found it, stood thoughtfully scratching his head, which seemed to have swollen to abnormal proportions.

'Time they were getting under weigh,' he said at length, and groping his way to the foot of the steps, he opened the door of what looked

like a small pantry, but which was really the mate's boudoir.

'Jem,' said the captain gruffly.

There was no reply, and jumping to the conclusion that he was above, the captain tumbled up the steps and gained the deck, which as far as he could see was in the same deserted condition as when he left it. Anxious to get some idea of the time, he staggered to the side and looked over. The tide was almost at the turn, and the steady clank, clank of neighbouring windlasses showed that other craft were just getting under weigh. A barge, its red light turning the water to blood, with a huge wall of dark sail, passed noiselessly by, the indistinct figure of a man leaning skilfully upon the tiller.

As these various signs of life and activity obtruded themselves upon the skipper of the *Smiling Jane*, his wrath rose higher and higher as he looked around the wet deserted deck of his own little craft. Then he walked forward and thrust his head down the fore-castle hatch-way.

As he expected, there was a complete sleeping chorus below; the deep satisfied snoring of half-a-dozen seamen, who, regardless of the tide and their captain's feelings, were slumbering sweetly, in blissful ignorance of all that the *Lancet* might say upon the twin subjects of overcrowding and ventilation.

'Below there, you lazy thieves,' roared the captain; 'tumble up, tumble up.'

The snores stopped. 'Ay, ay,' said a sleepy voice. 'What's the matter, master?'

'Matter!' repeated the other, choking violently.

'Ain't you going to sail to-night?'

'To-night!' said another voice in surprise. 'Why, I thought we wasn't going to sail till Wen'sday.'

Not trusting himself to reply, so careful was he of the morals of his men, the skipper went and leaned over the side and communed with the silent water. In an incredibly short space of time five or six dusky figures pattered up on to the deck, and a minute or two later the harsh clank of the windlass echoed far and wide.

The captain took the wheel. A fat and very sleepy seaman put up the side-lights, and the little schooner, detaching itself by the aid of boat-hooks and fenders from the neighbouring craft, moved slowly down with the tide. The men, in response to the captain's fervent orders, climbed aloft, and sail after sail was spread to the gentle breeze.

'Hi! you there,' cried the captain to one of the men who stood near him coiling up some loose line.

'Sir?' said the man.

'Where is the mate?' inquired the captain.

'Man with red whiskers and pimply nose?' said the man interrogatively.

'That's him to a hair,' answered the other.

'Ain't seen him since he took me on at eleven,' said the man.

'How many new hands are there?'

'I b'leeve we're all fresh,' was the reply. 'I don't believe some of 'em have ever smelt salt water.'

'The mate's been at it again,' said the captain warmly, 'that's what he has. He's done

it afore and got left behind. Them what can't stand drink, my man, shouldn't take it, remember that.'

'He said we wasn't going to sail till Wen'sday,' remarked the man, who found the captain's attitude rather trying.

'He'll get sacked, that's what he'll get,' said the captain warmly. 'I shall report as soon as I get ashore.'

The subject exhausted, the seaman returned to his work, and the captain continued steering in moody silence.

Slowly, slowly darkness gave way to light. The different portions of the craft, instead of all being blurred into one, took upon themselves shape, and stood out wet and distinct in the cold gray of the breaking day. But the lighter it became, the harder the skipper stared and rubbed his eyes, and looked from the deck to the flat marshy shore, and from the shore back to the deck again.

'Here, come here,' he cried beckoning to one of the crew.

'Yessir,' said the man advancing.

'There's something in one of my eyes,' faltered the skipper. 'I can't see straight; everything seems mixed up.—Now, speaking deliberate and without any hurry, which side o' the ship do you say the cook's galley's on?'

'Starboard,' said the man promptly, eying him with astonishment.

'Starboard,' repeated the other softly. 'He says starboard, and that's what it seems to me.—My lad, yesterday morning it was on the port side.'

The seaman received this astounding communication with calmness, but as a slight concession to appearances, said 'Lor!'

'And the water-cask,' said the skipper; 'what colour is it?'

'Green,' said the man.

'Not white?' inquired the skipper, leaning heavily upon the wheel.

'Whitish-green,' said the man, who always believed in keeping in with his superior officers.

The captain swore at him.

By this time two or three of the crew who had overheard part of the conversation had collected aft, and now stood in a small wondering knot before their strange captain.

'My lads,' said the latter, moistening his dry lips with his tongue, 'I name no names—I don't know 'em yet—and I cast no suspicions, but somebody has been painting up and altering this 'ere craft, and twisting things about until a man 'ud hardly know her. Now, what's the little game?'

There was no answer, and the captain, who was seeing things clearer and clearer in the growing light, got paler and paler.

'I must be going crazy,' he muttered. 'Is this the *Smiling Jane*, or am I dreaming?'

'It ain't the *Smiling Jane*,' said one of the seamen; 'leastways,' he added cautiously, 'it wasn't when I came aboard.'

'Not the *Smiling Jane*!' roared the skipper; 'what is it, then?'

'Why, the *Mary Ann*,' chorused the astonished crew.

'My lads,' faltered the agonised captain after

a long pause. 'My lads.' He stopped and swallowed something in his throat. 'I've been and brought away the wrong ship,' he continued with an effort; 'that's what I've done. I must have been bewitched.'

'Well, who's having the little game now?' inquired a voice.

'Somebody else 'll be sacked as well as the mate,' said another.

'We must take her back,' said the captain, raising his voice to drown these mutterings. 'All hands stand by to shorten sail.'

The bewildered crew went to their posts, the captain gave his orders in a voice which had never been so subdued and mellow since it broke at the age of fourteen, and the *Mary Ann* took in sail, and, dropping her anchor, waited patiently for the turning of the tide.

The church bells in Wapping and Rotherhithe were just striking the hour of mid-day, though they were heard by few above the noisy din of workers on wharves and ships, as a short stout captain and a mate with red whiskers and a pimply nose stood up in a waterman's boat in the centre of the river and gazed at each other in blank astonishment.

'She's gone, clean gone,' murmured the bewildered captain.

'Clean as a whistle,' said the mate. 'The new hands must ha' run away with her.'

Then the bereaved captain raised his voice and pronounced a pathetic and beautiful eulogy upon the departed vessel, somewhat marred by an appendix in which he consigned the new hands, their heirs, and descendants, to every conceivable misery.

'Ahoy,' said the waterman, who was getting tired of the business, addressing a grimy-looking seaman hanging meditatively over the side of a schooner. 'Where's the *Mary Ann*?'

'Went away at half-past one this morning,' was the reply.

'Cos here's the cap'en an' the mate,' said the waterman, indicating the forlorn couple with a bob of his head.

'My eyes!' said the man, 'I s'pose the cook's in charge then. We were to have gone too, but our old man hasn't turned up.'

Quickly the news spread amongst the craft in the tier, and many and various were the suggestions shouted to the bewildered couple from the different decks. At last, just as the captain had ordered the waterman to return to the shore, he was startled by a loud cry from the mate.

'Look there!' he shouted.

The captain looked. Fifty or sixty yards away, a small shamefaced-looking schooner, so it appeared to his excited imagination, was slowly approaching them. A minute later a shout went up from the other craft as she took in sail and bore slowly down upon them. Then a small boat put off to the buoy, and the *Mary Ann* was slowly warped into the place she had left ten hours before.

But while all this was going on, she was boarded by her captain and mate. They were met by Captain Bing, supported by his mate, who had hastily pushed off from the *Smiling Jane* to the assistance of his chief. In the two leading features before mentioned he was not unlike the

mate of the *Mary Ann*, and much stress was laid upon this fact by the unfortunate Bing in his explanation. So much so in fact, that both the mates got restless; the skipper, who was a plain man, and given to calling a spade a spade, using the word 'pimply' with what seemed to them unnecessary iteration.

It is possible that the interview might have lasted for hours had not Bing suddenly changed his tactics and begun to throw out dark hints about standing a dinner ashore, and settling it over a friendly glass. The face of the *Mary Ann's* captain began to clear, and as Bing proceeded from generalities to details, a soft smile played over his expressive features. It was reflected in the faces of the mates, who by these means showed clearly that they understood the table was to be laid for four.

At this happy turn of affairs Bing himself smiled, and a little while later a ship's boat containing four boon companions put off from the *Mary Ann* and made for the shore. Of what afterwards ensued there is no distinct record, beyond what may be gleaned from the fact that the quartette turned up at midnight arm-in-arm, and affectionately refused to be separated—even to enter the ship's boat, which was waiting for them. The sailors were at first rather nonplussed, but by dint of much coaxing and argument broke up the party, and rowing them to their respective vessels, put them carefully to bed.

SINGULAR FREAKS OF LIGHTNING.

THE Etruscans of old believed in three kinds of lightning—one incapable of doing any injury; another more mischievous in its character, and consequently only to be issued with the consent of a quorum of twelve gods; and a third carrying mischief in its train, and for which a regular decree was required from the highest divinities in the Etruscan skies. Curiously enough, modern scientists, following the lead taken by Arago, have also decreed that the varieties of lightning are threefold. The first comprehends that in which the discharge appears like a long luminous line, bent into angles and zigzags, and varying in complexion from white to blue, purple, or red. This kind is known as forked lightning, because it sometimes divides into two or more branches before reaching the earth.

The second differs from the first in the range of surface over which the flash is diffused. From this circumstance the discharge is designated sheet-lightning; and if any real parallel can be instituted between the Etruscan and modern varieties, this may be said to correspond with the innocuous lightning which any single god of Etruria could launch at his pleasure.

The third class are not only remarkable for their eccentricities, but they have been made the subject of considerable contention. They differ so widely from the more ordinary manifestations that many meteorologists have denied their right to be treated as legitimate lightnings. They neither assume the form of long lines on the one hand, nor of sheets of flame on the other, but exhibit themselves as balls or globular lumps of fire. They are not momentary apparitions, but

meteors which take their own time, and travel at such a slow rate that one flippan't gentleman characterises them as 'the Government class of lightnings.' They last several seconds, show themselves to be more than a foot in diameter, and usually burst with a bright flash and a loud explosion, occasionally discharging flashes of lightning. More than one was seen during the heavy thunder-storms of last year; and one school-master in Liverpool, whose school was struck, declared that he saw a ball of fire strike the steeple and cause the panic which ensued.

A very singular story is told concerning the vagaries of one mass of globe lightning. A tailor in the Rue St Jacques, in the neighbourhood of the Val de Grace, was getting his dinner one day during a thunder-storm, when he heard a loud clap, and soon the chimney-board fell down, and a globe of fire as big as a child's head came out quietly and moved slowly about the room at a small height above the floor. The spectator in conversation afterwards with M. Babbinet of the Académie des Sciences, said it looked like a good-sized kitten rolled up into a ball and moving without showing its paws. It was bright and shining, yet he felt no sensation of heat. The globe came near his feet; but by moving them gently aside he avoided the contact. After trying several excursions in different directions, it rose vertically to the height of his head—which he threw back, to prevent it touching him—steered towards a hole in the chimney above the mantel-piece, and made its way into the flue. Shortly afterwards—'when he supposed it had had time to reach the top,' the tailor said—there was a dreadful explosion, which destroyed the upper part of the chimney, and threw the fragments on to the roofs of some adjoining buildings which they broke through.

This explosive power is one of the foremost qualities exhibited by the electrical discharge. When the fluid happens to meet with some obstruction in its course, it frequently evinces its dissatisfaction by shattering the non-conducting object, exercising a radiating force like a bomb-shell and bursting substances asunder as if they had been charged with gunpowder. Many years ago the south-west pinnacle of the church of Breog, in Cornwall, was demolished by a stroke of lightning, and one stone weighing three hundred-weight was hurled southwards over the roof to the distance of sixty yards; while a second was sent to the north for the space of four hundred yards; and a third was projected in a south-westerly direction.

In the forest of Nemours, a tree was once struck: two pieces were rent from its trunk; the smaller was tossed to a distance of fifty feet, and the larger, which eighteen men could not move, to a distance of twenty feet or so in an opposite tack.

In 1838 the topgallant mast of H.M.S. *Rodney* was hit by a flash, and literally cut up into chips, the sea being strewn with the fragments as if the carpenters had been sweeping their shavings overboard. Shortly before, the topmasts of H.M.S. *Hyacinth* had suffered in a similar manner; and when the *Thetis* underwent a like visitation in Rio harbour, Captain Fitzroy described the foretopmast as 'a mere collection of long splinters almost like reeds.'

These are a few examples of the mechanical effects of lightning. It works chemically as well. It has the power of developing a peculiar odour, which has been variously compared to that of phosphorus, nitrous gas, and most frequently burning sulphur. Wafer mentions a storm on the Isthmus of Darien which diffused such a sulphureous stench through the atmosphere that he and his marauding companions could scarcely draw their breath, particularly when they plunged into the wood. The British ship *Montague* was once struck by globular lightning, which left such a Satanic savour behind it that the vessel seemed nothing but sulphur, and every man was suffocating. About a year ago, the newspapers recorded a similar experience of the crew of another English ship while crossing the North Pacific from China to the States. In this case the crew had to take to the rigging to prevent being choked by the sulphur fumes.

The magnetic effects produced are often very curious. A chest containing a large assortment of knives, forks, and other cutlery, was, not many years ago, struck in the house of a Wakefield tradesman, and magnetism imparted to the whole of the articles. Arago in his *Meteorological Essays* speaks of a shoemaker in Swabia whose tools were thus treated, to his indescribable annoyance. 'He had to be constantly freeing his hammer, pincers, and knife from his nails, needles, and awls, which were constantly getting caught by them as they lay together on the bench.' The same authority knew of a Genoese ship which was wrecked near Algiers in consequence of some pranks played by lightning amongst the compasses, the captain innocently supposing that he was sailing towards the north, when as a matter of fact he was steering due south.

Many other effects have been attributed to electrical commotions; but for some of these it would be hazardous to vouch. There are wells and springs which are thrown into a state of apparent ebullition on the approach of a storm. Fountains are said to pour out copious streams even in times of drought, when Jupiter 'media nimborum in nocte, corusca fulmina malitur dextra.' Subterranean thunders have occasionally been heard preparatory to an aerial eruption. The sea has cast up volumes of water, as if volcanoes were exploding below. The ground has burst open, and floods of water have gushed forth from the sides of hills or from fissures in the rocks. Taking another class of effects, cures have been performed by lightning: gouty men have been enabled to walk freely; epileptic persons have been healed; amaurosis has been removed, and rheumatism dispelled by a flash. But one dare not look too closely into the subject of medical electricity, nor venture to recommend any one to tempt lightning in the hope of experiencing its curative powers; for its action is arbitrary and oftener than not hurtful. Three hundred persons were once struck in Charleston prison and clean robbed of their muscular strength.

There is another class of phenomena produced by lightning which is well worthy of attention, but of which little is yet known; we refer to lightning-prints. We are all acquainted with

the peculiar action of light upon papers imbued with salts of silver or other chemical preparations sensitive to its influence, by which the images of surrounding objects are permanently and elegantly fixed upon paper. Well, a lightning flash now and again produces a similar result upon the thing or person it touches. M. Poey, who has treated the subject of lightning-prints very fully in the pages of the French scientific journals, mentions twenty-four cases of impressions on the bodies of men and animals. Of these, eight were impressions of trees or parts of trees; one of a bird, and one of a cow; four of crosses; three of circles or of impressions of coins carried about the person; two of horse-shoes; one of a nail; one of a metal comb; one of a number or numeral; one of the words of a sentence; and one of the back of an arm-chair. Crosses in this connection are very old, for Gregory Nazianzen declares that in the year 360 A.D. they were imprinted upon the bodies and clothing of the workmen occupied in rebuilding the Temple of Jerusalem. At the end of the sixteenth century a similar thing occurred at Wells Cathedral. Casaubon, who derived his information from Dr Still, the Bishop, says that during divine service in the cathedral two or three claps of thunder were heard, which frightened the worshippers so much that they all threw themselves on the ground. Lightning flashed without hurting any one present; but it was afterwards found that crosses had been imprinted upon the bodies of all who were in the church.

A horseshoe was found indelibly marked on the neck of a young man of Candelaria (Cuba), who was struck dead by lightning near a house upon one of the windows of which was nailed a horseshoe.

In 1853, a little girl was standing at a window near which stood a young maple-tree; a flash of lightning struck either the girl or the tree or both, and an image of the tree was found printed on her body. In another instance, a boy climbed a tree to steal a bird's nest; a lightning flash struck the tree; the boy fell to the ground, and on his breast the image of a tree, with the bird and nest on one of the branches, appeared most conspicuously.

DISCIPLINE.

CAN it be true that you have read in vain
Life's strange, sweet parable of good and ill,
And missed the meaning? Have you felt the chill,
Hard force of winter, and the tender rain
Of sunny springtide—seen the dawn and wane
Of star on star that God had sent to fill
The darkness of your sky with light, until
The sun came forth to do his work again?
The very fields, when storm and sun have done
Their will upon them, yield one harvest vast
Of praise unto their Maker! Are there none
But wasted joys and sorrows in your past?
Shall it be said of *you*: 'Lo! this is one
Whom life hath failed to educate at last!'

KATE MELLERSH.

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A SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SKETCH.

SOME English folks have a strong prejudice against everything Australian, from tinned mutton to millionaires, and especially against Australian wine. Not without reason at first, perhaps, so far as the wine was concerned, for in starting a new industry there are bound to be mistakes, and the Australian growers had everything to learn; for rules founded on long experience in the Old World do not always hold good at the antipodes, where so many things go by the rule of contrary. Then, too, the outlay being heavy and the return slow of coming, there was a great temptation to sell the wine before it was fully matured; hence some of it was 'fortified,' and sweetened with cane-sugar, and doctored in one way or another with no very good result. This penny-wise, pound-foolish plan gave it a bad name, and spoilt the market for those who produced a better quality. The prejudice thus formed was strengthened by the fact that some wine-merchants, knowing the popular taste, sold the better Australian wines as French, and inferior French as Australian. For a while the wine-industry in South Australia flagged and many growers gave it up; but of late years it has revived: with experience and better appliances, our wine-growers now produce a more even quality, and their wine is rising in the public favour. The export of wine is yearly increasing, new vineyards are being planted, new cellars built, and wine bids fair to take its place with wheat and wool as one of our staples.

One of the features a stranger first notices on arriving in Adelaide as adding materially to the charms of that pretty little town, is the range of hills that rises behind it. You see those hills when first you land a gray semicircle, highest in the middle; you see them from Adelaide more clearly, each rock and tree showing distinctly in the clear air; and when you have left the town and its suburbs behind you, you see the vines

upon their lower slopes, for on the foothills of the Mount Lofty range are some of our oldest and best known vineyards. In spring they show as light green patches; but you can see them more clearly in autumn, when the surrounding herbage is burnt and brown. Now April is the autumn month with us, not that it makes much difference to the native trees, which pay little heed to times and seasons; the bees are busy in the blossoming gums and amongst the withered sun-baked grass; some small green blades are peeping; this, and the fact that the sunlight is a soft golden radiance instead of a blinding white glare, is all we have to remind us that summer is over at last. But in garden and orchard the English trees are flaming with yellow and red; late apples and quinces are ready for picking; the last grapes are hanging dead ripe on the vines, and the vintage begun in March is in full swing.

The vintage—what a hackneyed theme it is in song and story, and what stereotyped ideas its name calls up. Vague mental pictures of 'purple grapes' and 'laughing girls,' of 'foaming must'—whatever that may be—and a 'merry set'—it always is a merry set, somehow—who sing and dance as indefatigably as the Quaker in the song; and a general impression that the vintage is a time of merry-making, its hardest work dancing on the above-mentioned 'foaming must,' which might be rather sticky work, but sounds all right when described by Macaulay. Well, that is not the way they make wine in Australia; and if any one with such illusions should visit a South Australian wine-cellar in March or April, he would be sadly disappointed. Still, though unpoetic, our vintage may be of interest—at least we find it so, even though it has not to us the charm of novelty; for one of us cherishes golden recollections of happy holidays spent amongst the long rows of vines in a dear old vineyard—of unrestricted feasting amid acres of luscious fruit—of many a rousing romp in the old wine-cellar, daring trapeze acts on the ropes used for raising casks from the lower cellar; and awe-struck peeps

into its black depths when the trap-doors were opened—memories that rise up fresh and clear as we walk briskly towards those gold-green foothills, where the yellowing vines show up against the sombre tints of the rocky gum-clad range behind them. We are soon in a shady road, with vineyards on either hand; while before us there flaunts a red ensign, giving notice to all whom it may or may not concern that the vintage is in progress here. This looks so picturesque and gay, that, as we pass the cellar which boasts this unusual decoration, we feel inclined to hum—

On the verdant banks of Loire,
It was the vintage-time, &c.

But we soon realise that with the matter-of-fact Anglo-Saxon even a vintage is a serious not to say a solemn thing.

First we come to a gang of pickers, not laughing girls with baskets on their heads, but men in unpoetic moleskins, decidedly grubby about the knees with kneeling on the red clay; and women in shabby dresses and flapping straw hats, carrying kerosene tins with handles like buckets. Yet, in spite of prosaic surroundings, there is a look of rich profusion about the fruit waiting to be carted away—tins of grapes, boxes of grapes, piles of grapes, great mounds of fragrant muscats all golden and brown with ripeness. Following one of the grape-carts, we go through a gateway and up a road, past more vines, on which small black clusters are hiding amongst leaves touched with a purplish crimson. At last we come to a clump of buildings half-way up the rise; carts are passing across the yard with their loads of grapes; while at one side a big van is being loaded with wine for export, so that we see the first and last of the process at one and the same time. Still following the grapes that we have watched so far upon their way, we find ourselves under a veranda at the end of one of the buildings. There are two shoots to receive the grapes and conduct them to the crushers—one is for black and the other for white grapes. At this our cart takes up its stand; a strong-looking young fellow, with a much-dinted wide-awake and a merry face, steps forward, and proceeds to pitchfork our luscious muscats into the shoot with as little ceremony as if they were so many coals. A grinding, squelching sound follows; and we go on to see what becomes of them, just peeping in passing at the genius of the place, a bright, well-cared-for steam-engine, by which the work of grape-crushing is done more quickly and more effectually than by older and more poetic methods. Coming to a brick archway, we find a notice posted on it which bids folks leave behind them, neither hope nor their umbrellas, but—'books, newspapers, pamphlets, and political and religious discussions.' Perhaps it is feared that the acrimony of argument might sour the wine. Having nothing contraband about us save a sketch-book, and being assured that these rules only apply to employees, we go down one or two steps, and find ourselves in the cellar. It is not a cellar in the strict sense of the word, the floor being only a few feet below the level of the ground, and the roof high and airy, while open windows on every side let in a flood of light and warmth. Experience has proved that wine does not mature so well in a

cold cellar; so they are now discarded, many of the new wine-cellars being two-storey buildings. Passing between rows of tall dark vats, we are soon beside the crushers and in the very thick of the work. Here, wedging ourselves between two large vats, in order to be out of the way, we watch events awhile. The grinding, squelching sound continues, and the crushed grapes fall from a wooden spout into a tub before us, while the stems fly out of a shoot to the left. Men with their sleeves turned up and their canvas aprons stained a dull purple—for they have been crushing black grapes till now—dodge about with buckets; there is a great deal of lading and pumping, and a general look of stickiness—in short, it puts one in mind of jam-making and washing-day rolled into one. And this is a vintage!

Not to be too minute, the process we watch is as follows: The grapes are passed through rollers, mangled, in fact, the stalks being separated from the berries. The tub into which the crushed berries—now termed 'marc'—fall is so constructed that the juice or 'must' may drain into an outer tub in which the first is set. As the tub fills, it is run off and pumped up into a little tub on wheels, which trundles away with it on a tramway over our heads and tips it into its destined vat. The marc meanwhile is ladled into a vat, where its own weight expresses more of the juice; and lastly it is taken away to the press for a final squeeze. The presses are being opened as we pass out, and disclose what look like blocks of purplish plum-pudding—all that is left of the purple grapes crushed this morning.

So much for this part of the business. As we take a hasty backward look at the cellar we are leaving, it gives us an impression of an elaborate study of perspective done in casks. We cross the yard and enter another cellar, where we see more casks, most of them new, and being tested; for the Customs' authorities will not allow a leaky cask to be shipped away, and sometimes the soundest-looking staves prove porous. These casks are of oak, as are many of the vats; but our guide informs us that native red gum is perhaps better for vats, the wood being harder and the grain closer. Leaving this cellar, which is nearly full of this year's wine, we pass into the next, where we are shown a new vat. It is certainly a notable member of the tub family, this great oak structure that towers above us—its capacity, as we may see by a chalk-mark on its side, is ten thousand seven hundred and twenty-five gallons. Our guide looks at it with affectionate pride, and calls it 'she'—says they are going to put up two more like it shortly. 'Is it full?' we ask. 'Yes; full to the brim,' is the answer. So also, it seems, are dozens of other vats, five thousand gallons and under, the smallest of which looks big enough to drown half-a-dozen Dukes of Clarence comfortably. This is not a pleasant thought—suppose one of them were to burst! Of course they won't; still, it is dark here in the shadow of these tall vats, and the air is heavy; so that we are not sorry when we pass out of this cellar into the next, where the bottling is done. Here we watch the processes of corking, sealing, and affixing capsules, facilitated in each case by some handy labour-saving machine. The corking-machine proceeds

with a lofty disregard of the relative sizes of corks and bottle necks, and will, if required, thrust two or even three full-sized corks into the neck of a small pint bottle. It is made to do so for our benefit, and makes one think of fate remorselessly jamming unhappy mortals into unpleasant positions. With this machine, four men can, we are told, bottle fifty dozen an hour.

Our investigations must end here. We have seen all that is going on at present, though not by any means the whole process of wine-making. The colourless, sweetish fluid we saw in the first cellar has to go through a great deal more before it becomes matured wine worthy of these neat seals and labels. It has to be racked, poor thing, as soon as it has done fermenting, 'racking' being the technical term for pumping it out of one cask or vat into another, in order to get rid of the lees or mud at the bottom. New wine is racked repeatedly during its first year, in order to clear it. Next, for some years it has an uneventful life in those big vats we saw; yet even in its dark prison it does not forget the parent vine, with which it seems to have some strange sympathy, for in spring-time, when the sap rises in the vines, the mud begins to rise in the wine, till by the time the buds are bursting it is quite cloudy, however clear it may have been. The mud soon sinks again, leaving it as clear as before. What with racking, cask-cleaning, and bottling, there is plenty to do in the cellars, even when it is not vintage-time, cleaning the vats being especially disagreeable work, for the carbonic acid generated by fermentation kills instantaneously any one unlucky enough to breathe it. A lighted candle should be lowered into each vat before it is entered. If it burns, well and good; if not, it is not safe to follow. But men are careless, and will neglect even this simple precaution to their own hurt, and deaths have occurred, though not in this neighbourhood, we are glad to learn.

But it is time to be turning homewards; the sun is dipping towards the silver strip of sea that shines beyond the plain at our feet as we take leave of our guide at the cellar door, and the last grape-cart we meet, as we hurry down the vine-fringed road, is gilded into picturesqueness by the sunset light.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—THE LESSON OF THE STREET (continued).

ELSIE's guide stopped to greet a woman whom he knew. She had the usual baby on her arm. She was a sad-faced woman, with some refinement in her looks: she was wretchedly dressed, thin, pale, and dejected.

'The same story?'

'Yes, sir. It's always the same,' she sighed hopelessly. 'But he would work if he could get anything to do. Nobody will employ a man who's had a misfortune. It's hard—because such a thing may happen to anybody. It's like

measles, my husband says. He can't get drunk because there's no money. That's my only comfort.'

He gave her some money, and she passed on her way.

'Her husband was a clerk,' Mr Gray explained, 'who took to drink and robbed his employer. His father was a barrister, who died young. His grandfather was a well-known—almost a great lawyer. I know the whole family history. I learned it'— He stopped for a moment, as if his memory suddenly failed him—'somehow—a long time ago. It is a story which shows how our sins and follies fall upon our own children. This family sprang from the gutter. First, the working man: then his son, the shopkeeper: then his grandson, who became a great lawyer: then his great-grandson, not so great a lawyer. He, you see, is the first of the family who begins life as a gentleman and is brought up among gentlemen: he inherited money: he had a practice: he married in the class called gentle, and had children. But he lost all his money and in despair he killed himself. Cousinly affection is a cold thing at best. It helped the widow to a pittance, and sent her boys to a cheap school. At fifteen they had to take whatever employment they could get. Observe that this branch of the family was now going down-hill very fast. The future of a boy who has been taught no trade and has entered no profession is black indeed. One of the boys went out to New Zealand, which has little to give a friendless boy: another enlisted, served three years, and has never got any work since. I believe he carries boards about the street. Another became a tenth-rate actor, and now starves on fifteen shillings a week, paid irregularly. Another—the youngest—was put into a merchant's office. He rose to a hundred and twenty pounds a year: he married a girl of the clerical class—that woman you saw: he took to drink: he embezzled his master's money: he went to prison: he is now hopelessly ruined. He cannot get any lower in the social scale. What will his children do? They have no friends. They will grow up like the children around them: they will join the hopeless casuals: they will be hewers of wood. Property, my child, Property—has done this. He stole. In our society nobody will be tempted to steal. He drank—with us he would be kept judiciously under control until he could be trusted again. That would be the care of the State. He is another victim of Property. When his grandfather was framing Acts of Parliament for the protection of Property, he did not dream that he was making another engine for the oppression of his grandchildren.'

Said the other Voice: 'We rise by our virtues. We sink by our vices. Let these people suffer. Their sufferings should make the rest of us wiser. Teach the children to rise again as their great-grandfather rose. Do not contend against the great Law which metes out suffering in return for vice.'

'Those,' continued the Socialist Professor, 'who do most to make a few men rich are the real enemies of what they suppose themselves to be defending. Given a thousand women sweated for one man, and there presently arises indignation either among the women or among the

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bystanders. From indignation we get revolution, because the employer never gives way. He cannot. He would lose, if he did, his wealth, which is his Heaven. If you divide the thousand women into companies of ten, each company under its own sweater, and all the sweaters under other sweaters, you make a hierarchy of sweaters, culminating in one at the top. That was the old state of things. The man at the top was a Chief, a Patriarch: he knew his people: he sweated them, but kindly: he tossed them crumbs: he looked after the sick and the old. Now all this is changing. The old family tie—such as it was—is dissolved. The man at the top has disappeared: a Board of Directors has taken his place: there is nothing left but the Board and its employees. The men who work are no longer interested in the business of the firm, except so far as their pay is concerned. Their pay will go up, and the dividends will go down. And with every increase of wages so much Property is destroyed. Let everything—everything—be turned into Companies to help the destruction of Property.'

Said the other Voice: 'Property is strengthened by being diffused. Companies organise labour: they give capital its proper power: they are not easily intimidated: they interest all who can save anything. Let us turn into companies every industrial and distributive business in the country.'

'All times of change,' the Master went on 'are times of interest. We are living at a time when great changes are impending—the greatest changes possible. Before great changes there is always a period of unconscious preparation. The minds of people are being trained. Without any perception of the fact, old ideas are dying out and new ones are coming into existence. When the Revolution actually arrives, everybody is ready for it and nobody is surprised. It was so with the Reformation. For a hundred years and more the idea of the Great Revolt had been slowly growing in men's minds. When it came at last, there was no surprise and there were few regrets. For a hundred years and more the ideas of the French Revolution had been talked about by philosophers: these ideas sank down among the people. Nobody was surprised, not even the nobles themselves, when the end came. So with our Revolution. It is coming—it is coming—its ideas are no longer timidly advanced—here and there—by a fanatic here or a philosopher there: they are lying in the hearts of the people ready to spur them into action: they are helping on the cause by successive steps, every one of which means nothing less than the abolition of Property. These things are new to you, child. You were only born yesterday or the day before. I was born a hundred years ago or thereabouts. Consider again'—he leaned against a lamp-post for greater ease, and discoursed as one addressing an audience—'Consider, I say, this great question of companies and their results. Formerly, one man made things which he took to market—sold or exchanged, and went home again. He, by himself, did everything. Then one man made, and another man sold. The next improvement was for twenty men to work, for one to receive and to collect their work, and for another to sell it. In this way the twenty remained poor, and

the two became rich. So they went on, and trade flourished, and the twenty producers more and more fell into the power of the two, who were now very rich and strong. Now the merchants are forming themselves into companies, and the companies are amalgamating with each other, and the small people may contemplate ruin. For these—now merchants, shopkeepers, manufacturers, workmen—there will be nothing but service in the companies; no possibility of acquiring Property, nothing but service all their lives. Now do you see how that helps the cause? They will become accustomed to work, but not for themselves: they will grow accustomed to work for a bare living and no more: they won't like either: but they will ask why the second should go with the first: the two great obstacles to Socialism will be removed. Then, either the step I spoke of just now—the abolition of the dividends—or which is just as likely, a revolution, when the servants of the companies shall make the State take over all and work them for the good of all. Some there are who think that the workman will have hope and power for union crushed out of him. I think not; but if so—woe to the rich! The Jacquerie and the French Revolution will be spoken of as mild ebullitions of popular feeling compared with what will happen then. But I think not. I do not believe that the working man will sink again. He has got up so far. But he needs must climb higher.'

'You think it would be impossible'—by this time a small crowd had got round them, but the speaker still addressed his disciple as if no one else at all was listening—for the State to take over the great producing and distributing companies. But it has been done already. The State has the Post and the Telegraph Services. They will deal with railways, steamers, coaches, cabs, omnibuses, trams, canals, water, gas, electric light, breweries, bakeries, factories, shops, just as they have dealt with these two. The State can take it all. The State will take the management of all. But, you say, the shares of the company will become Funds. They will, and the Funds will pay interest—but the interest will become rapidly lower and lower, so that what was once five per cent. is now but two and a half, and before long shall be two—one and a half—one—and nothing at all. There will be no cry of spoliation, because the holders of stock will be forced gradually into looking more and more to their own efforts, and because widows and sick people and old people, to whom the stocks were once so useful, will be all provided for by the State as a matter of right, and without any of the old humiliation of pauperdom. Pauper? Oh, heavenly word! Child, in the world of the future—the world which you will help to mould, we shall all be paupers—every one.'

He spoke with fine enthusiasm, his face lit up, his eyes bright. The girl was almost carried away, until the other Voice began coldly and judicially:

'Nothing is so good for man as to be ruled and kept in discipline, service, and subjection. It is a foolish and a mischievous dream which supposes all men eager for advance. The mass of mankind asks for no advancement. It loves nothing and desires nothing but the gratification

of the animal. Give it plenty of animalism and it is satisfied. That condition of society which keeps the mass down and provides for the rise of the ambitious few is the only condition which is reasonable and stable. Base your social order on the inertness of the mass. Make the workman do a good day's work: pay him enough, so that he shall have some of the comforts he desires: educate the clever boy and make him foreman, head-man, manager, or artist, journalist, dramatist, novelist. Give him the taste for wealth. Let him have some. Then he, too, will be ready to fight if necessary in the army of order.'

While the other Voice was speaking, there came slouching around the corner into the street where he held the fifth—perhaps the tenth part of a room, a really excellent specimen of the common or London thief, the habitual criminal. He was a young man—the habitual criminal is generally young, because in middle and elderly life he is doing long sentences—he had a furtive look, such as that with which the jackal sallies forth on nocturnal adventures: he had a short slight figure, a stooping and slouching gait, and narrow shoulders. His eyes were bright, but too close together: his mouth was too large and his jaw too heavy: his face was pale, his hair was still short, though growing rapidly: his hands were pendulous: his round hat was too big for his little head: he wore a long loose overcoat. His face, his figure, his look proclaimed aloud what he was.

He stopped at the corner and looked at the little crowd. Everybody, for different reasons, is attracted by a crowd. Professionals sometimes find in crowds golden opportunities. This crowd, however, was already dispersing. The speaker had stopped. Perhaps they had heard other and more fervid orators on the Socialist side. Perhaps they were not in the least interested in the subject. You see, it is very difficult to get the hand-to-mouth class interested in anything except those two organs.

'This street,' said the Master, observing him with professional interest, 'is full—really full—of wealth for the observer. Here is a case now—an instructive though a common case.' The fellow was turning away disappointed, perhaps, at the melting of the crowd and any little hope he might have based upon their pockets. 'My friend?'—he heard himself called, and looked round suspiciously—'you would like, perhaps, to earn a shilling honestly, for once.'

He turned slowly: at the sight of the coin held up before him, his sharp eyes darted right and left to see what chance there might be of a grab and a bolt. Apparently, he decided against this method of earning the shilling. 'What for?' he asked.

'By answering a few questions. Where were you born?'

'I dunno.'

'Where were you brought up? Here?—In this street? Very well. You went to school with the other children: you were taught certain subjects up to a certain standard. What trade were you taught?'

'I wasn't taught no trade.'

'Your father was, I believe, a thief?'—The lad nodded.—'And your mother too?'—He nodded again, and grinned.—'And you yourself and your

brothers and sisters are all in the same line, I suppose?'—He nodded and grinned again.—'Here is your shilling.' The fellow took it, and shuffled away.

'Father—mother—the whole family, live by stealing. Where there is no Property there can be no theft. In our world, such a creature would be impossible. He could not be born: such parents as his could not exist with us: he could not be developed: there would be no surroundings that would make such a development possible. He would be what, I believe, men of science call a Sport: he would be a deformity. We should put him in a hospital and keep him there until he died.'

'In that world,' said the other Voice, 'there would be deformities of even a worse kind than this—the deformities of hypocrisy and shams. By a thousand shifts and lies and dishonesties the work of the world would be shifted on the shoulders of the weak. The strong man has always used his strength to make the weak man work for him, and he always will. The destruction of Property would be followed by the birth of Property on the very self-same day. There is the power of creation—of invention—which is also a kind of Property. Laws cannot destroy that power. Laws cannot make men industrious. Laws cannot make the strong man work for the weak. Laws cannot prevent the clever man from taking advantage of the stupid man. When all the failures—all the deformities—have been killed off, the able man will still prey upon the dull-witted. Better let the poor wretch live out his miserable life, driven from prison to prison, an example for all the world to see.'

It was at this point that Elsie discovered the loss of her purse. Her pocket had been picked by one of the intelligent listeners in the crowd. She cried out on finding what had happened, in the unphilosophic surprise and indignation with which this quite common accident is always received.

'Child,' said the Master, 'when there is no longer any Property, money will vanish: there will be no purses: even the pocket will disappear, because there will no longer be any use for a pocket.—Did the purse contain much? Suppose you had nothing to lose and nothing to gain. Think of the lightness of heart, the sunshine on all faces, which would follow. I fear you are rich, child. I have observed little signs about you which denote riches. Your gloves are neat and good: your dress seems costly. Better far if you had nothing.'

'Master, if I were like that girl on the other side, would you like me better? Could I be more useful to the cause if I dressed like her?'

The girl was of the common type—they really do seem, at first, all alike—who had on an ulster and a hat with a feather and broken boots.

'If I were like her,' Elsie went on, 'I should be ignorant—and obliged to give the whole day to work, so that I should be useless to you—and my manners would be rough and my language coarse. It is because I am not poor that I am what I am. The day for poverty is not come yet, dear Master.'

'In the future, dear child, there shall be no poverty and no riches. To have nothing will be the common lot. To have all will be the common

inheritance. Oh! there will be differences: men shall be as unlike then as now: we shall not all desire the same things. You and such as you will desire Art of every kind. You shall have what you desire. In our world, as in this, like will to like. You shall have the use for yourselves of pictures, of musical instruments, of everything that you want. The rest of the world will not want these things. If they do, more can be made. You shall have dainty food—the rest of the world will always like coarse and common fare. Think not that we shall level up or level down. All will be left to rise or to sink. Only they shall not starve, they shall not thieve, they shall not be sweated. Oh! I know they paint our society as attempts to make all equal. And they think that we expect men no longer to desire the good things in the world. They will desire them—they will hunger after them—but there will be enough for all. The man who is contented with a dinner of herbs may go to a Carthusian convent, which is his place, for we shall have no place for him in a world which recognises all good gifts and assigns to every man his share.

Then spoke the other Voice, but sadly: 'Dreams! Dreams! There are not enough of the good things to go round—good things would become less instead of more. Without the spur there is no work. Without the desire of creating Property, all that is worth anything in life will perish—all but the things that are lowest and the meanest and the commonest. Men will not work unless they must. By necessity alone can the finest work be ordered and executed. As men have been, so will men always be. The thing that hath been, that shall be again.'

'You have learned some of the lessons of Poverty Lane, Scholar,' said the Master.—'Let us now go home.'

HOW WE SAW THE BAHAMA CABLE.

BRIGHT and warm as usual, although the middle of January, was the day in those sun-loved isles, the Bahamas. Blue, as usual, was the sky above; blue, also, the waters around. A slight breeze was blowing, which, on sea, raised here and there little curling breakers; and on land stirred gently the drooping, graceful heads of the palms and cocoa-nut trees. Heedless and unconcerned were the elements as to why that strange large steamer was lying off the bar of Nassau harbour. Not so, however, were the inhabitants of the little colonial town which has the honour of being the capital of the Bahamas. Great and deep interest did they take in that boat. For did she not bear their long-looked-for and long-hoped-for Cable, that mysterious and wonderful link of connection which was at last to join them to the outside world? The *pros* and *cons* of obtaining one had been discussed and weighed for several years; but now all difficulties had been overcome—the cable was to be established. Its advent had been eagerly looked for; great hopes had been formed of the blessings it would bring to the colony: how it would improve trade and open up business connections; what a number of fresh American visitors it would probably allure for the winter months, visitors, who, though keenly enjoying the delightful, health-giving

climate during those months, do not care to be cut off from all possible outside communication except by the fortnightly mail; and, in fact, how in every way it would increase the prosperity of the place. From the moment the smoke of the steamer had appeared above the horizon, and the signal flag on the fort had proclaimed what she was, many had hurried to their seaward-looking verandas and watched her plough her way surely and steadily to Nassau. She was to stay three or four days, get her shore-end laid here, and then depart for Jupiter—not the planet, for she had neither wings nor aerial apparatus, and the islanders did not yet aspire to hold telegraphic communication with unknown beings in the stars, but were contented at present merely to be more closely connected with this prosaic earth and ordinary fellow-creatures. The Jupiter our cable boat—by name the *Westmeath*—was bound for was a little town on the coast of Florida where a permit had been granted to lay the cable.

We must go across the harbour, beyond the bar, and board the ship to see the wonderful cable. A party is arranged; the boat to take us is lying at the wharf; the different individuals stroll up by twos and threes till the number is complete, the early ones rather fuming and impatient, thereby making themselves all the hotter, for, though but the middle of January, it is indeed scorchingly hot upon the low-lying unsheltered wharf. The sun beats down on our devoted heads, and no breath of breeze comes to fan us from the calm waters of the harbour, shut in as it is and naturally formed by a long-stretching island, named, for no apparent reason, 'Hog Island.' At last we are all on board our little sailing-boat, longing to get out on the open sea. The boat we have to-day, though off duty for the present, is ordinarily a sponger; and very dangerous her decks must be to the poor spongers if sea or weather is at all rough. She has no bulwarks; the roof and walls of the cabin rising about three feet from the deck fill the centre of the boat; and round this run her narrow and utterly unprotected decks. However, it is calm enough this morning; so we seat ourselves comfortably on the aforesaid roof in the generous shade of her mainsail. There are about ten of us, one American, all the rest English. Clerics predominate. Ah! it is nice to be comfortably lolling in the shade like this, after the hurry down to the wharf. But alas! the boom against which so many are confidently reclining begins ominously to move, and threatens to clean sweep all off the cabin roof into the water, which lies so still and transparently clear below. Not desiring a ducking just now, inviting though the water appears, we get up hurriedly. Orders are given for all to go below till the sails are fixed up and the boat fairly started. Into that stuffy cabin this hot day! I linger behind, politely allowing others to pass down first; and find, when all but one or two equally lothful ones are in, that there is no room for me, so stay on deck and watch operations.

Soon the boat begins to move, carried by the tide, I suppose, for there seems scarcely a breath of wind; but 'we shall be getting a nice breeze when we are off a bit,' says the dusky sailor, and I trust him. We certainly do somehow get clear of that melting wharf and slowly

begin to cross the harbour. Oh the exquisite blueness of that sea—what a glorious colour it is! I look down through the lucid depths, clearly seeing the bottom, and watch the innumerable and many-coloured little fish dart among the flowing sea-weeds and coral-formed rocks. How clear and cool it looks down there; how nice to be a nymph or some other amphibious creature on a hot day! Suddenly, 'A shark!' calls out the sailor. In an instant I am by his side; and there, not ten yards from us, see for the first time that dreaded terror of fish and man lazily and unconcernedly paddling past our boat. 'He is near upon eighteen feet long,' says the sailor. I shudder, and feel glad, after all, I am not a nymph, &c.; for I have no desire to become part of a shark. It is more comfortable to be safe above his reach, even though seated on a blistering deck, where you can feel a superior contempt for him, which perhaps would not come so readily at closer quarters.

But now the promised breeze is filling our sails, and all are again on deck. The discomforts of heat are forgotten as we feel the delicious breath of the dear old Atlantic on our faces, as it meets us straight from the ocean beyond the bar. We soon clear the half-mile of harbour, safely cross the bar, not without a good deal of lurching on the part of our ship; for on the calmest days a swell is there; and after a few more detours reach the *Westmeath*, our goal. How massive and inaccessible her ironclad sides appear, towering so far above our humble little decks. Nothing but a break-neck-looking spiral staircase can be seen whereby to enter. But the Westmeathians soon hail us, and orders are apparently given to lower a gangway, for a safe and inviting stairway is swung down before our eyes, making an easy and comfortable ascent for ladies as well as gentlemen. How delightful it is to be on board a really big steamer once more. Although looked down on by ocean liners as 'only a tramp,' the officers inform us she is by no means small; and to us, who have been forced to brave the sea in little sailing-boats or a small interinsular steamer, she seems deliciously spacious and so strong and powerful. At first we run about her, exploring with almost childish glee, thinking for a time, I imagine, more about the boat itself than her precious freight we had come to see. Her decks seem so broad and long, and how high up we feel above the water! We lean over the bulwarks of her seaward side, looking down at the water, which seems so far below, and imagine that we have all just come on board bound for England and home. For does not the dear old country lie away out there, across that blue expanse, and is it not natural that 'our lingering hearts will turn, beloved home, to thee,' and that memories of happy moments gone again crowd freshly on us! I, who have been out but a few months, feel this; while some of these have not seen their native land for years. Our eyes wander dreamily over the restless waters and little curling white breakers to the far-distant horizon. When shall we really cross it again? What are those we love, on far-distant shores, doing now? What changes is Time working?

But we have come on board to see the cable and not to dream. The officers and electricians are most genial and kind. They have welcomed

us from the first moment with true British frankness, evidently as really glad to see us as we are to exchange greetings with fellow-countrymen from over the water; for it is delightful to meet and talk to fresh Englishmen again. They have come direct from London, have not even stopped at New York, as ordinary travellers to these indirect islands have to. They can give us the very latest news, that of a fortnight old being new to us, having at that time no telegraphic communication. They were in London on Christmas eve, the boat compelled to remain in the docks all Christmas day, a most fearful and pitiless fog harassing all movement. 'With the greatest difficulty we found our boat,' some of them murmur; 'the fog hung over the city like a death-pall.'

We shudder, and congratulate ourselves on our sunny skies and genial warmth. The whole week before they had had glorious skating. Pangs of deep envy dart through us as we think of our never-ending summer. We stand thus, high up on the bridge, some time talking, the delicious fresh breeze fanning and invigorating us, and the blue sea, blue sky, and bright sun beautifying everything. But in spite of the fascinating interest which this sort of conversation has, we leave it for a while, and descend on deck now at last, really to view the cable. We are guided through a rather dirty passage, on one side of which are penned some fine broad-shouldered sheep, which look happy and comfortable and as if sea-life agreed with them. These animals must have been a source of wonder to any native Bahamians who have not seen an English sheep, the native sheep being miserable objects of skin and bone, almost woolless, and when converted into mutton giving herculean labours to the teeth and jaws.

Soon we come to the open decks again, and there yawn the immense tanks which hold the two hundred and fifty miles of cable. We peep down. At first, in those dark depths which reach to the hold, we dimly see water surging up and down. It startles you at first, making you have the uncomfortable feeling that the ship has sprung a gigantic leak. But soon the eyes get accustomed to the light, and easily distinguish the mighty cable lying coiled up, still and lifeless, with foamy, dirty-looking water surging to and fro over it with the swing of the boat; for the cable must be kept in water. Lifeless indeed it lies, and yet we look down upon the wondrous work with almost feelings of awe; for is it not to be filled with that mysterious electrical life which will enable it in a moment of time to carry a message thousands of miles! What we are utterly unable to do, this now lifeless coil is to accomplish for us. I almost feel that it may rise from its watery couch and sweep us puny mortals from the deck.

But I want to see and examine it closer: one has not a chance of viewing a submarine cable every day, and I had not seen one before. So one of the electricians takes me down to the electrical room. Very bright, burnished, and mysterious-looking are the brass fittings, stops, and the rest of the electrical paraphernalia. Rows and rows of jars filled with chemicals line the walls, giving the place the appearance of a storeroom for jams. Pieces of cable in different stages of completion are lying about. Here is

the medium which carries the electrical fluid, a twisted rope of seven copper wires encased in a coating of gutta-percha. Here it is in its second stage, the gutta-percha core again encased in flax surrounded by steel wire. And here it is completed with a protective covering of tarred hemp. How carefully thus is the copper wire protected and insulated!

There is more to be seen yet of the wonderful inventions of man. So we go up again, examine the paying-out machinery at her bows, which has now been brought to such necessary perfection; for cables have often been injured by imperfect appliances for paying-out. Close by is the latest invention for taking soundings. I do not of course understand exactly the hieroglyphics on its dial or the lightning movements of the needle; but the engineers say it is a wonderful and beautiful piece of machinery, saving infinite trouble. It certainly looks ingenious; and if it saves trouble, must of course be all right.

Having seen all there is to be seen of the cable, we still linger a little while. The Englishmen have secured treasures and trophies of these western shores to take back with them, and are anxious to know if we think they have made good bargains. We see two large turtles which would have delighted the heart of a City alderman, lying in one corner of the deck, aimlessly wagging their heads and feebly moving their flabby fins. The happy owner is going to try to take them back to England alive. He will very probably succeed; for they keep alive for weeks if a little sea-water is dashed on their heads now and again. The proud possessor of a pink pearl shows us his treasure, yielded, he tells us, after beating down an enormous price, 'for an old coat.' The Bahamas have sometimes been called 'the land of the pink pearl.' They are obtained from the conch-shells found on these shores, and are frequently of great value and exceeding beauty. This one is very small, but quite worth the price given, I should think. Another sunburnt young Englishman has invested in sponges, which are plentiful enough in these parts. You can often buy enough for a few shillings to last a lifetime. He shows an immense one which would almost fill an ordinary bath, and when saturated with water, would require a Goliath to wield. From the stern of the boat is dangling an immense chain, baited with an enormous piece of meat, to tempt sharks. But they have up till now proved shy of the boat, probably because as soon as one was caught sight of anywhere near, he was instantly popped at with pistols; and not appreciating such a welcome to his meal, usually decamped swiftly. They did, however, manage to land one great fellow before the boat finally departed.

But now we really have to go; and much indeed have we enjoyed the visit, for the Westmeathians have been very good and hospitable to us. We, perhaps reluctantly, descend the gangway; our imaginary journey is over, and yet we are back in the same place! We again place ourselves about our insignificant little boat. Again we look up the towering sides of the big ship, seeing the pleasant sunburnt faces of the Englishmen looking down on us from her bulwarks; the breeze begins to rustle our sails; we are soon a little way from the boat; the separate

figures grow a little indistinct. But they are shouting out something to us. What is it? 'Oh, a camera on board. They want to photograph us.' Almost unconsciously, hair is smoothed, hats set straight. The cap is off; we are taken. We learnt afterwards that in the hurry and excitement they had forgotten to put a plate in, so the galaxy of beauty will not be handed down to posterity. We are receding farther and farther from the *Westmeath*. We hear the reports caused by futile attempts to 'pot' sharks getting fainter and fainter. Soon we are again tossing over the bar. Our visit to the cable is ended.

We shall never see it again. For when the *Westmeath* returns from Jupiter, for a few days, to join up and connect our shore-end, the cable we have just viewed will be paid out and uncoiled, stretching its immense length right across from the coast of Florida; resting quietly hundreds of fathoms down in the wonderful world of the deep blue sea, quietly and unobserved doing its duty. What thousands of messages will soon flash through its serious body! What secrets now will be entrusted to it! But secrets are safe with the silent cable. It will not betray them, not even to the fishes which will play about it, at first, perhaps, with a curious wonder; not even to the shellfish and other parasites which will cling and cleave to it. No difference will it make to the mighty cable whether it is to convey a message to our own most gracious Sovereign or the humblest peasant in the land; to the richest Croesus or the poorest beggar. It will carry all equally well—the greatest State secret, the simple message of love; tragic messages, flippant messages; messages of danger, death, or awful catastrophe; messages of joyful home-comings; prosaic business messages from one merchant to another; messages for evil, messages for good. It will carry them all unquestioningly, uncomplainingly, doing its duty. Will it improve, ennoble, enrich our little colony? Will it fulfil the hopes that have been formed? Time will show.

THE BELLS OF LINLAVEN.

CHAPTER IV.—ALARUM.

A FEW days before this, the Vicar's son, Captain Norham, arrived at Linlaven. He had been on sick-leave for some months. The wound which he had received at Tel-el-Kebir was quite healed, but his general health had been injuriously affected by the severities of the campaign. Clara had joined him when in February he landed at Southampton; and as he was too ill to proceed northwards at once, they had together passed the early spring months in the Isle of Wight. Nor would he have been at Linlaven now, but for the circumstance that he had been hurriedly summoned home. This was in consequence of a letter from Mr Brookes, who has been already spoken of as the family lawyer to the late Squire Norham of Brathrig Hall, and who still acted in that capacity for the Squire's widow. Mr Brookes' letter had intimated to Captain Norham and his wife that the old lady at the Hall, having heard of the gallantry which had distinguished the Captain's conduct in the Eastern campaign, had evidently relented

somewhat of her former severity and bitterness against the daughter of her lost son Arthur, and was apparently disposed to alter the will by which she had conveyed her wealth away from her natural heir and given it to an alien. But before doing anything, she wished to have an interview with her grandchild Clara and her husband; hence Mr Brookes desired that they should come north at once.

Alas for the hazards of a repentance that awakens not the conscience till the eleventh hour! The day before the arrival of the Captain and his wife, the old lady had a stroke of paralysis, from which her physicians had pronounced it impossible that she should recover. And so passed all hope of her being able to rectify the injustice she had already done.

The aged Vicar's joy at once more receiving his gallant boy under his roof was consequently not unmingled with sadness. Nor was George himself much more cheerful. It is true that the sight once more of the little girl and boy who called him father, filled his heart with pleasure and gratitude; but in the background sat black Care distilling pain. Shattered in health, and poor in estate, he could not help reflecting with ominous feelings upon what the future might have in store for his wife and children.

The conversation which we have above recorded between Uncle Giles and Mrs Dale as to the evident premeditated departure of the former took place on a Friday evening. On the following day Captain Norham, in the course of an afternoon stroll, and wearied somewhat and fatigued with the heat and glare of the summer sun, walked across the graveyard and entered the church, the doors of which stood open. It was to him a more than usually sacred place, for here was the pew in which he had sat from infancy to manhood, side by side with the mother who had long since passed into the higher sanctuary behind the veil, and side by side also with her who had been the true love of his youth and was now the mother of his children.

Inside the church, all was calm and peaceful. The sun shone bright and hot on the old stained-glass windows, but soft and cool were the purple shadows within the ancient aisles. He sat down in the vicarage pew, and gave himself up to pleasant reveries of the past. He heard the hum of bees about the windows, and saw the green branches swaying beyond the open door. Whether, lulled into restfulness by the calm and stillness of the holy place, he fell asleep, or not, he could not tell, but once more he heard the bells toll out in the church-tower, and he experienced once again all he had seen and heard in that far-away dream of his sick couch at Cairo. He saw the same shadowy figure walk down the aisle, saw the man halt before the tomb of the Norhams, heard again the accents of grief and dejection with which he uttered the words: '*He—gone; and I—unforgiven.*' Thereupon followed a sudden noise, which woke him to consciousness.

The noise was caused by the slamming of one of the church doors, as if thrown-to by a draught; but this time it was not all a dream. There was some one in the church. The tall figure of an aged man, white-haired and slightly stooping, was approaching softly down the aisle. The Captain

withdrew himself noiselessly within the shelter of a curtain at the end of the pew, whence he could see without being seen. The man walked slowly forward, looking from side to side like one who had simply come thither from a feeling of curiosity, and with no special purpose. By-and-by he reached the tomb of the Norhams, with its white marble effigies and golden emblazements. Something here seemed to attract the man's attention. It was the arms of the family cut upon a shield surmounting the tombstone. He looked at it for a few seconds in a kind of wonder, as if it recalled something to his memory. Then, putting his hand into his breast, he drew out a small leather case, from which he extracted a paper, and seemed for a moment to be comparing something on the paper with what he saw cut upon the shield.

The effect upon the man was strange—almost startling. He grew suddenly pale, as if some unexpected revelation had burst upon him; and with the cry of 'My God! what be this?' turned, and fled from the church.

Captain Norham sat for a few minutes in amazement. What did this mean? What could this repetition of his dream, followed by the appearance and attitude of this stranger, portend?

Quitting the church, he was in a few seconds at the vicarage.

'Clara,' he said to his wife, 'I thought I knew everybody in the village. But to-day I have seen a tall old man, with white hair, whom I feel sure I never saw before.'

'Why, George,' replied Clara, 'that is our little Lucy's friend, whom you have heard her speak so much about. That must have been Uncle Giles. Where did you see him?'

'In the church.'

'In the church?' she said, with a questioning and half-amused air. 'Why, your father has vainly besought him to go to church, but could never succeed with him. The man is evidently decent, and is well behaved; but he has some mysterious scruple as to going to church. He is altogether a good bit of a mystery to everybody.' And she went on to tell her husband the story of his coming among them.

George listened attentively, and then proceeded to tell of the repetition that day of the Cairo dream, and what he had afterwards seen and heard in the church.

Clara, who had at first treated the matter somewhat lightly, was now in turn much impressed by what she heard.

'Why, do you know,' she said, 'the first time I saw the man—it was when he was in a state of delirium—he took me by the hand and called me Esther. I never mentioned it before to any one.'

'Well, and what of that?' queried her husband.

'What of that?' repeated Clara. 'Esther was my mother's name.'

'Oh!' exclaimed George, in a tone between wonder and curiosity. Then, after a pause, he added: 'And does no one know who the man is?'

'Nobody, more than I have told you.'

'Then, Clara, you and I must find out. Put on your bonnet; we must seek him at once.'

They walked down the garden-path together in the direction of Lawrence Dale's house. The cottage which Giles inhabited was adjoining the garden wall, and was approached by a greenhouse, through the door of which you could see the entrance. This being Saturday afternoon, and work suspended, Lawrence Dale and a few other villagers were seated on the bench outside the door. Among these was Giles, who, on his way from the church, had been intercepted by two or three lads with a request that he would arrange some fishing-tackle for them. He was now busied with this, and at the same time listening to what Lawrence was reading aloud from a newspaper. Both the miller and his wife came originally from Yorkshire, and the paper was apparently one sent to them by old friends.

Clara drew her husband back a little. Mrs Dale was evidently one of the listeners too, for they could hear her voice inside the cottage door, as from time to time some news of particular importance would call for an exchange of opinion between her and her husband.

'Ah, Milly,' cried Lawrence, 'hark thee to this. Sarah Dobson ha' married Jem Metcalfe after all. It's here in black and white. Did thou ever hear the like?'

'Oh, indeed,' replied Milly; 'that *be* news. Why, how she did flout that young man o' hers, to be sure! "Happen," she would say, "lads shall be so scarce thou will ha' to seek them wiv a candle, ere I marry Jem Metcalfe." Yet she ha' took him at the last. Well, well!'

Lawrence scarcely heeded Milly's concluding comments, for something of apparently more engrossing interest had attracted his attention in the paper, and he read a few lines to himself as if by way of tasting its flavour before offering it to the others. 'It's put in big type, anyway,' he said at length; 'it must be something worth reading.' And without further exordium he proceeded.

'STRANGE DISCOVERY.—At the *White Horse Inn*, about three miles from this town, a somewhat singular discovery was made a few days ago. Some changes were being effected in the interior arrangements of that long-established and popular hostel, when, in the course of the operations, the workmen had occasion to lift the flooring of the Blue Room. While doing so, one of them found under the floor, close to the wall on the west side, a gold watch, which appeared, from the dust that had gathered round it, to have lain there for a long time. A piece of thin silver chain was attached to it; and on the outer case of the watch was an engraved monogram. Inside the case was a paper bearing that the watch had been cleaned and repaired by the firm of Lessing & Jobson, of this town, more than a quarter of a century ago. Upon inquiry being made of this firm, they found from their books that the watch had belonged to a gentleman of the name of Arthur Naseby, which agreed with the monogram "A. N." on the back of the watch. This discovery has excited much interest in the town, as our older readers will remember the somewhat extraordinary disappearance from our midst of the gentleman above named. A great deal of mystery surrounded the whole affair;

but it was believed by many, after his disappearance, that the name by which the owner of the watch was known here was not his real name. We refrain at present from entering into details that might be painful to some of his friends who may still be alive among us; but we may mention that there was some reason, from what transpired after his disappearance, for thinking that his real name was Norham, and that he was connected with an ancient and aristocratic family in the north of England. What gave additional mystery to the disappearance of this young gentleman, was, that he had only been about a year married, and was much respected and beloved within the circle of his acquaintance.'

When Clara and her husband had first come within sight of the group, and heard Lawrence, in his loud, slow, drawling Yorkshire voice, ponderously retailing the news of the day, it was more from a feeling of amusement than any other motive that Clara waited and listened. But as he continued to read, a deeper interest was awakened in her. From where she stood, she could see Uncle Giles seated on the bench, and was astonished at the extraordinary expression which his countenance assumed at the mention of the finding of the watch. The blood entirely deserted his face, and he let the tackle on which he was working fall from his hands as if he had been struck with paralysis. Captain Norham saw this also, and watched his wife's demeanour with something of alarm. As Lawrence read on, her eyes gradually developed a look of strained attention, as though every word he uttered went deep down into her very soul. A strange pallor overspread her face; she reached out her hands and clasped with a feverish grip at the back of a garden chair that stood near by, as if her limbs were no longer able to support her; then, as the reader concluded, she uttered a stifled shriek, and fainted away.

Her husband caught her in his arms as she was about to fall. Her cry brought Lawrence Dale and the others to her help, and she was carried back to the vicarage.

In the confusion that followed upon Clara's cry of distress, the movements of the old man Giles were unobserved. When the reading of the newspaper was ended by that sudden cry, the little group before the cottage was suddenly scattered; whereupon he immediately rose and entered his house. He was ghastly pale, and trembled like a man in an ague fever. A sharp fire burned in his eyes, and he clutched at the wall for support as he went.

'It ha' coomed at last,' he muttered. 'Be thou ever so fleet o' foot, the vengeance o' God is fleet.'

He did not sit down, or tarry for a moment; but going to where he had thrown his packed valise the evening before, he lifted it up, and taking a staff from the wall, quitted the house.

He walked off, at first slowly, but, as he regained composure, at an increasing pace, going directly towards the Old Grange. He was about to enter the familiar door, when he hesitated, and looked as if he would turn away without entering. There were voices within, and this startled him in a strange way. Yet what was there to fear? The men inside were only workmen, every one of

whom he knew, busily engaged in completing some repairs upon the old place. He might easily pass up the tall stairs to his own quarters without being seen. Yet still he hesitated. At length he said: 'It must be done, whether they see me or not. I cannot make my way with never a penny in my purse.'

He ascended the long stairs with slow and cautious foot. When he had reached the top floor, he unlocked a drawer near his bench, and took therefrom a little box which contained a few silver coins. Putting them in his pocket, he was about to leave the room, when he observed, just where the evening sun streamed warmly in through the dusky pane, the little maid Lucy lying asleep beside her playthings.

'Ah, thou here!' he said in a low voice, that had a perceptible quiver in it. He approached, and bent down over the sleeping child. 'I see it all, my little Lucy. Thou ha' been seeking Uncle Giles, and a-waiting for him till thou ha' fallen asleep.' And as he touched her fair tresses, his first impulse was to raise her up and carry her home—as at other times he would have done. But he dared not do this now. It might frustrate in some way his departure, and he *must* go. She was safe enough; her nurse was sure to seek and find her here.

Lifting a pair of scissors from the miscellaneous gathering of tools upon the bench, he raised one of the shining locks of the sleeping child, and cut off part of it; then taking from his breast that same little leather case we have before seen, he placed the tress inside, and turned to go. But once more he came back and looked at the child, with something pensive and touching in his eyes. 'God bless thee,' he said, 'and keep thee! May thou sometimes think on old Uncle Giles when he be far away.' Then he began to descend the stairs—slowly, with groping hands, and a great mist in his eyes.

He had soon left the valley behind, and was ascending the hill-road by which, only a few months before, he had first entered Linlaven. At the outset he walked quickly, as if dreading observation or interruption; but as he entered the solitude of the broad Fell, he went upward with slow and yet slower steps, turning from time to time to gaze on the village below. The place never looked to him more beautiful than now, under the splendid effulgence of the summer sunset, with the level light gleaming along the mere, and wrapping the high church-tower in a golden glory. All the hills around were bathed in the yellow light; and far beyond he could see the mountains of Westmoreland rising up dark against the kindling west, their broken and serrated ridges gleaming like massive jewels through the soft purple haze.

It could be seen that various and strong emotions had taken possession of the man's soul. 'For nigh thirty years I ha' fled from my fate, yet it dogs my footsteps as I ha' seen a bloodhound nose the track of a slave.' Yet still he passed upwards, heedless more and more of his surroundings. The wild thyme and the bright-eyed tormentil were at his feet, and around him was the sweet scent of the pines; but they had no charm, because they had no existence, for him. Once over the brow of the Fell, with village and lake and church-tower all hidden from his sight,

he sat down on the heath, and gave vent to his misery in tears. Here, among these scenes, he had for a time been tranquil—almost happy; and now, driven forth by the exigencies of his own blighted existence, he must leave them, and for ever. For thirty years, as he numbered it, had he fled before the slow foot of retribution; and yet, here, among those wilds, was not Nemesis coming up with him at last?

Sitting there—the moor-birds circling with wild screams round his head, and then darting away with a warning cry—he took no note of time. Suddenly he was aroused out of his reverie by a quick sound that struck upon his ears. It was the bells of Linlaven!

Why should these bells be ringing now? Was it the curfew? No; for they were ringing out in tones harsh and angry. Never, surely, during the three centuries since our Lady of Langleydale brought over these bells from Holland, and hung them in the gray church-tower of Linlaven—never had they given forth such clamorous and discordant music. The man started to his feet, and stood for a brief moment listening to that wild alarum, re-echoing and reverberating among the hills.

'It must be fire,' he said, as he turned and ran towards the ridge he had just crossed, and from which Linlaven could be seen. The bells sounded out with a still more angry and dissonant clangour as he came within sight of the valley. The sun had already left it; but the twilight was yet clear along the lake, and he could see a dark cloud of smoke floating ominously in the calm air.

'It *is* fire!' he exclaimed. 'And,' in a horrified whisper, as he looked again, 'it is the Old Grange! And Lucy—my little Lucy—what if they ha' not found her? Oh God,' he cried, in a voice of agony—'must yet another sin be laid to my charge?' And as he uttered these words he rushed madly down the hill towards the village, dashing onwards with all the recklessness and energy of despair.

ON MAN-EATING REPTILES.

By DR ARTHUR STRADLING, C.M.Z.S., &c.

THE popular concept of a reptile embodies the very presentment and incarnation of that which is hurtful, repulsive, and, above all, aggressive. Serpents are endowed with venom to enable them to wreak destruction on the human and every other race with which they are brought into contact, or—under the most charitable ascription—are provided with the same 'as a means of self-defence.' Crocodiles and alligators are always on the chase for man, if they do not prey exclusively upon him; and the minor members of the scaly tribe are regarded with a vague sense of disfavour, grounded, no doubt, on that involuntary antipathy which lies outside the province of reason or the will, but capable, nevertheless, of entertaining any evidence as to their misdeeds with a preconceived readiness to believe it.

Still, the vast majority of reptiles may safely be pronounced to be innocuous to human beings, poisonous snakes of course constituting one, and

much the greatest, exception. It would be foreign to the purpose of this paper to recapitulate the terrible records of death from the bite of these creatures in India; and in our consideration of reptiles likely to regard us from a dietetic point of view, we may dismiss in their entirety two of the four great orders of reptiles, the lizards and the chelonians. Of the former, there are no bigger existing representatives than the monitors of Africa, India, Malaysia, and Australia, attaining a length of seven feet, fierce in their resentment of interference, and capable of inflicting a nasty wound with their iron teeth, but credited with no more sensational feat than that of occasionally devouring young crocodiles on the Nile; while most certainly the beak of no tortoise or turtle now living on this earth could do more than exhaust its powers for evil in an awkward pinch.

In connection with the question of man-eating, habitual or casual, we have therefore left to us among reptiles of the present day only the crocodilians and pythonoid snakes; and with regard to the former, unhappily their capability admits of no dispute. From every part of the world where these creatures are found, we gather accounts, only too well authenticated, of human beings carried off and devoured by them. It is said that crocodiles kill more people annually in Africa than all the rest of the wild animals of that continent together; but then, the destruction of life by beasts of prey is not very great in Africa compared with what obtains in many other countries. Indeed, it is just possible that the homicidal propensities of alligators and crocodiles, while by no means a fiction, may have been slightly over-rated. At anyrate, I have spent a considerable part of my life in various reptile-ridden countries where the rivers, tanks, and lagoons teemed with these brutes, so potent for good and ill, and have made it my business to hunt up and inquire into cases of the sort; but I have everywhere found those in which definite evidence was forthcoming very few and far between, though in many instances persons had disappeared in such a manner as to suggest a fair inference that they had come by their death in this way. On the other hand, I have seen numerous severe injuries, obviously inflicted by huge crocodilians, limbs crushed and mangled so as even to require amputation, as well as many slighter lacerations, where yet the sufferer, in spite of being so terribly mauled, has been allowed to escape by his assailant. Such cases used to be not at all uncommon amongst the coolies on the cane-pieces in Guiana, where the whole country is intersected by 'canals,' trenches of muddy water which effectually concealed the ragged jaws lurking beneath the surface; and this is the more curious, seeing that animals once seized rarely if ever escape, even powerful cattle.

Much more difficult to answer is the query, Do snakes eat men? It is hardly necessary to say that the greater *Boidæ*, the anaconda of tropical America, the reticulated python and rock-snake of the East Indies, and the African

pythons, some half-dozen species in all, can alone be taken into account in discussing this matter, as no others are of sufficient size to admit of their swallowing a human being. No serpent masticates or in any way subdivides its prey; whatever it takes in the shape of food it must bolt whole and entire; and this peculiarity excludes from our present consideration all the venomous snakes—none of which grow to more formidable dimensions than a length of twelve or fourteen feet at most, with the girth of a man's wrist—as well as the rank and file of the colubrine snakes and smaller constrictors. The boas, which seem to be regarded popularly as synonymous with all that is biggest in the serpent world, are comparatively small reptiles, of exceedingly beautiful coloration, confined to South and Central America, where a specimen of ten feet would be considered worthy of remark.

I believe we have no evidence whatever to justify us in assuming that these snakes are man-eaters, and that there is not a single authenticated instance of the sort on record. One cannot, of course, deny that the constrictors which I have specified as the giants of their race may, and frequently do, attain such a size as would render them quite capable of the deglutition of an adult human being. The anaconda falls not far short of forty feet in the hot swamps of Brazil and the Isthmus; the West African python has been measured dead at thirty-three; while there is a reticulated python in the London Zoological Gardens the length of which is estimated at twenty-six feet. No live snake can be measured with accuracy, because, big or small, it is never seen in a straight line; curiously enough, and probably for the same reason, it always appears very much shorter than it really proves to be when the tape is applied to its dead body, or to its shed slough if cast unbroken. That such monsters as these *could* swallow men admits of no doubt whatever, any more than that they do occasionally in their wild state feed on deer and other large game. Within a few inches of my pen as I write is a royal python, the smallest species, about five feet long. Two hours ago it ate a dead chicken, half-grown, yet its neck is scarcely thicker than the penultimate joint of my thumb, and has to accommodate spine, muscles, nerves, blood-vessels, windpipe, and many other structures besides the gullet. But I am persuaded that the most gigantic of serpents does not, in its native haunts, habitually take the large prey with which it is credited, and I know that in captivity they thrive infinitely better and live longer if fed on relatively small objects. The anaconda or rock-snake, whose size would permit the constriction and deglutition of an antelope, would probably be found to feed by choice on animals corresponding to rabbits and ducks, though he might affect heavier morsels if hard pressed; small fur and feather, however, would always be the more plentiful and more readily obtained.

There are two stock anecdotes, and only two, which are invariably quoted by writers who contend for the anthropophagous habit, and one of those anecdotes is nearly a hundred years old. One is that related by M. Girondière, in his *Twenty Years in the Philippines*, concerning a murderer,

who had been apprehended by the authorities, but who had succeeded in eluding their vigilance, and, escaping, had hidden himself in a cavern, where his father supplied him with the necessities of life. On going to the cave one day with rice, he discovered a huge boa (python?) asleep, while the fugitive from justice was nowhere to be seen. He killed the serpent, and found the body of his son within it. The other is an account given in the *Bombay Courier* of August 31, 1799, to the effect that a Malay proa, making for the port of Amboyna, missed her daylight off Celebes, and anchored there for the night. One of her sailors went on shore to collect betel-nuts in the forest, and, as was afterwards surmised, lay down to sleep on the sea-shore. Cries for help were heard by the crew during the night and they at once put off to the island, where they found the Malay crushed to death by an immense snake, which was preparing to swallow him. But the shouting for assistance is a fatal bar to our accepting the story; no more inconceivably sudden death can befall man or beast than would result from the onslaught of a giant constrictor.

I was present at the post-mortem examination of the body of the unfortunate man Karoli, who was squeezed to death by a python eighteen or twenty feet long in Madrid some years ago. He was performing with the creature wound about him when he chanced to vex it in some way; the brute tightened on him, and with a gasp he fell on the stage. The audience applauded, thinking it was part of the play, but the *dompieur* was dead. And we found no fewer than eighty-seven fractures of the bones; while lungs, liver, and intestines were split across, all in that one swift, silent, terrible embrace. Squeezed, did I say? *Smashed* would more fitly convey an idea of what these great reptiles can effect by their sinews of supple steel; there could be no crying out for aid, nor could aid be of any avail in such a case. Two of my own ribs were broken by a Natal python, the 'bight' of whose body gripped my side to an extent scarcely more than I can span with my hand. It is remarkable, however, that although many of these snakes are very savage in captivity, and will inflict even serious lacerations by biting, they seem never to put forth their constrictive force as a means of defence or for any other purpose than that of feeding, unless they are held or restrained in some way. A fierce serpent will dash at a fancied aggressor open-mouthed over and over again—I have had my clothes ripped off me by an anaconda which had got loose in a small room—yet they never seem to remember the power of their lateral muscles until they feel themselves grasped.

A most circumstantial narrative of a man-eating serpent in Trinidad appeared in the *Port-of-Spain Gazette* on March 30, 1889, and was extensively copied by newspapers throughout the world, an account so free from the gross exaggeration which characterises most of these stories as to render it apparently worthy of credence. It set forth that on the previous Sunday morning the inhabitants of Arima—a district in the interior of the island—were thrown into a state of consternation by the news that three children had disappeared from the Ward of Guanapo during the past week. The names and residence of these children were given, as well as those of

every one concerned in the matter, down to the minutest corroborative details. Later in the day came the intelligence from Aripo that two more children had been lost, the one on Saturday and the other that same morning; further, that the mother had actually been the terror-stricken eyewitness of the capture of the second by a colossal snake, which had glided off with its victim into the depths of the forest.

A number of inhabitants quickly banded themselves together with the avowed object of destroying the fiend. Dogs were employed, and an attempt was made to track the serpent by scent, without success. The wildest rumours as to its dimensions and crimes began to prevail; but misrepresentation was modestly deprecated, and the length assessed at fifty feet. On the following Tuesday, frenzy was wrought to its highest pitch by a report, subsequently confirmed, that the anaconda had appeared on the heights, and that two more children had been carried off by him. A hunter had fired two charges of shot into him, the only result of which was to hasten his retreat in the direction of the Morne Bleu Mountains. The warden now thought the news so serious as to induce him to request assistance from the capital, and the Colonial Secretary accordingly despatched a sergeant and six policemen, armed with Martini-Henry rifles, by the afternoon train to Arima, as the guns which the majority of the pursuers carried did not seem to possess sufficient penetrating power to effect the slaughter of an animal endowed with more than feline plurality of lives. At six the next morning a motley cavalcade issued forth towards the Guacharo Caves in the Morne Bleu, where the monster had been 'marked down' on the previous evening; and here he was found and slain with a dramatic environment of the most picturesque horrors.

The search-party proceeded into one of the caverns as far as the light of day penetrated, walking with noiseless footsteps through a gloom and silence broken only by the sound of a distant waterfall and the mournful cry of the mountain birds. Suddenly their progress was arrested by a deep black pool of water, hardly to be discerned in the dim twilight. The dogs began to howl, and in a few moments they beheld, with vision now accustomed to the obscurity, the huge head of the snake rise above the inky surface, its eyes lighted with a diabolical gleam as it glared at the intruders. The next moment a hiss seethed forth from its jaws, as though a red-hot beam had been plunged in the water. A deafening volley rang out from the levelled guns, displacing large masses of stone overhead, which actually wounded some of the party. This, however, did not give the Minotaur his quietus, for, rearing himself twenty feet on high, and rapidly uncoiling his length from the depths of the pool, he launched himself forward, with his body bent in a great curve, on his assailants. A second discharge, however, produced the desired effect; the snake leaped out of the pool, and lashing the floor and the surface of the water, died in terrific convulsions. He was found to measure forty-seven feet, with a diameter of two and a half, the described colour accurately indicating an anaconda. Opened on the spot by the knives of some cocoa-pruners, it was found that

all traces of the children had disappeared; but the half-digested body of a deer, probably swallowed on the previous day, was disintombed, along with a number of official papers, conjecturally the relics of some unhappy overseer. The carcase of the serpent was then skinned, and the bones extracted for exhibition in the Council Hall of Port-of-Spain.

No contradiction of this extraordinary story seems to have reached any of the European or American papers which had quoted it; but my friend Dr Knox, of San Fernando, sent me the sequel. A couple of days after the publication of the narrative, crowds of people from far and near came flocking in to the Council Hall to view the hide and skeleton of this Brobdingnagian reptile, that being the date fixed for its arrival—only to find that the whole affair was a hoax, and to be reminded that the day was the first of April!

Quite recently a well-known venomous snake, the hamadryad (*Ophiophagus elaps*), has been amplified into a man-eater in certain forests of Ganjam, where, it is declared by the Khonds and Uriyas, who hold it in such dread that nothing will induce them to enter some of the woods, to attain a length of thirty feet, and to add not only human beings—which it is said to pursue with relentless activity—but jackals, wolves, leopards, and sambur to its normal diet of snakes.

In conclusion, let me give two possible instances as they were given to me of serpents devouring very young children. A friend of mine, whose *bona fides* I could not for one moment doubt, a man well known in the world of science, though not a zoologist, assured me that he had seen the tiny dead body of a newborn baby seized by a snake as it lay exposed on the steps of a church in a remote village of Southern Italy. He had passed the spot but a few minutes before, when the screams of a boy caused him to retrace his steps, and then he perceived a large striped serpent, which had plunged its widely distended jaws over the naked shoulder of the child. Sticks and stones caused it to loosen its hold, and it flashed away into the bushes. The biggest of the European snakes, the beautiful four-rayed *Elaphis*, is certainly found in that locality, but it grows to no more than six feet, and is of slender habit. My friend did not profess to have noted the appearance of the reptile sufficiently to enable him to describe it.

The other story comes from Manila. When I was there, many years ago, there was a poor crazy *mestiza*, or half-breed, who was quite a noted character in the island. She lived in one of the Tagal huts outside the city on the muddy Pasig River, but was not unfrequently to be met in the canopied side-walks of the streets, or wandering along the *calzada* in the evening, when that beautiful drive and promenade is thronged with carriages and pedestrians, enjoying the strains of the military band and the sea-breeze. This woman was a withered, shrivelled creature, who might have been sixty, seventy, or a hundred years old; but it was currently reported—and I can well believe it—that she was little more than thirty. Her wants were sufficiently provided for, and a certain amount of supervision was exercised over her movements; but every

now and then she escaped from a not very stringent control, and roamed through the length and breadth of Luzon, usually returning of her own accord after an absence of weeks, or even months, though occasionally rescued and brought back by those who encountered her and knew her.

Her one passion in life and the object of her wanderings was to catch snakes. These she would seize upon unhesitatingly wherever she met with them—and probably few knew their haunts better than she—and would keep them twisted about her, tied with plaited grass to her wrists or around her neck, or folded in the hem of her scanty *saya*, where she would talk to them, scold them, beat them, caress them, according to her mood, all day long, until they succeeded in regaining their freedom. On more than one occasion she had returned thus decorated to the Indian quarter, causing no little consternation; and it was even said that she had been responsible for a general stampede from the great Chinese store in the Calle Escolto, the Regent Street of Manila, by appearing at one of the doorways chattering to a huge poisonous snake. I was conducted to her hut by a Dominican friar who had described to me a serpent which he had recently seen in her hands, and which seemed to me to be a specimen of the rare and deadly *Ophiophagus*. Our tedious journey up the bewildering maze of fetid creeks which extend away to the base of the mountains was, however, fruitless, for neither *mestiza* nor snake was to be found in the nipa-thatched tenement. I learned from the friar that one of her arms, one leg, and her jaw had been broken by falls in the course of her snake-hunting rambles, and had remained permanently deformed from the want of surgical treatment; but that she was not known to have been bitten by any of the ill-omened protégés she handled so unceremoniously.

Concerning this woman I was told a tale of horror. True or false, no one in Manila appeared to question its accuracy. At the age of fifteen, when she was an exceedingly beautiful girl, she married a Spaniard high in office in the port, a member of one of the old 'Peninsular' families, who found it hard to forgive such a *mésalliance*. (This, I may remark, would possibly account for her position at the time of my visit, watched and cared for to a certain extent by an ample provision of money, but a pariah none the less.) A few weeks after the birth of her first child, she was taken, for the sake of her health, to a *quinta* or villa in the mountains, to escape the excessive heat and noisome smells of the city and low-lying foreshore, her husband's official duties compelling him to remain at their residence in the town. One afternoon she was sitting in a low rocking-chair, placed in a shady corner of the veranda which ran round two sides of the *quinta*, commanding an extensive view of the glorious bay far below; her Indian maid lay asleep on the floor, and she, with the baby, now a month old, in her lap, presently succumbed to the heat of the day, and slept too—slept long and heavily. She heard no sound; she was disturbed by no movement; but she woke suddenly, to find her baby gone, and an enormous python lying *gorged* at her feet. As she sprang from the chair, the snake struck her on the breast, inflicting a jagged

wound, the scar of which I saw, then sped off down the hill-side. With a wild cry, the poor creature fell to the ground, mercifully bereft of reason from that moment.

HOW THE ACREAGE RETURNS ARE OBTAINED.

IN September 1889 a Board of Agriculture was established in England for the first time. It took over the powers formerly exercised by the Agricultural Department of the Privy-council, and those of the Land Commission relating to tithes, commons, and the enclosure of lands. Its duties include the following matters: Contagious cattle diseases, injurious insects, the collection and preparation of statistics on agriculture and forestry, and the promotion of lectures and instruction on such subjects. The Board consists of the President, or Minister of Agriculture; the Lord President of the Council; the Secretaries of State for the Foreign, War, Home, and Colonial Departments; the First Lord of the Treasury; the Chancellor of the Exchequer; the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; the Secretary for Scotland, and such other persons as the Queen may from time to time appoint. One of the principal, if not the principal, duties of the Board is the preparation of the yearly 'blue-book'—it is, however, sometimes slate-coloured—containing the Agricultural Returns of Great Britain. These Returns have now been furnished for twenty-six years, and £15,300 was annually voted for their cost. The collection of the statistics has always been entrusted to the officers of the Excise branch of the Inland Revenue Department, who have until this year been paid for the extra work thus devolving on them, about ten thousand pounds being divided among the various officials concerned. The remuneration has now been withdrawn.

The particulars of the acreage of the land under cultivation for crops; the quantity of meadow, fallow, and moorland; the number of cattle, sheep, pigs, and horses of various kinds, poultry, and silos, are ascertained in the following manner. About the end of May each year, a form containing headed columns for all the items of information desired is sent by post by the local revenue officer to all persons whose names appear in the parish ratebooks as occupiers of land above a quarter of an acre in extent. These schedules are stamped, and addressed for return. After a few days, the officers proceed to write to or call upon such occupiers as have failed to make the required Returns, and endeavour to persuade them to fill up their papers or give verbally the necessary details. In the event of non-compliance, the particulars are obtained roughly from some friendly resident in the parish; or, in the absence of such assistance, the officer himself makes an estimate of the crops and live-stock on the farm or holding.

The difficulties of the collection have always been great, and have not much diminished as the

years have progressed; indeed, the inaccuracies are as great and as many as ever. In the Returns for 1889 the number estimated was stated to be 18,832 out of a total of 574,840 Returns; but there is no doubt that a much larger number—probably sixty per cent.—have to be amended, and partially, if not wholly, estimated, owing to various causes. The forms issued are of a very complicated nature, and well calculated to puzzle the agricultural mind, which, as John Bright once observed, is not very enlightened. Parish overseers sometimes put obstacles in the way of the collecting officials, to delay and prevent them revising their list of land occupants by the rate-books. It is entirely optional whether farmers and others fill up their Returns—there is no compulsion—only solicitation at present, though there is some talk of making the next Returns compulsory. In cases where the Returns are made, the forms are frequently so carelessly filled up that it is necessary for the officers to make additions or deductions in order to make the total average agree with that of the previous year. This operation is known as 'cooking' the Returns.

Another serious fact which retards the officials is that they have no right to go upon the land of a farmer to determine his crops and stock, and irate agriculturists have been known to threaten to set their dogs on too persistent officers. The thousands of prosecutions that take place all over the country for keeping dogs and carriages, killing game, carrying or using guns, &c., without licenses, and other violations of the revenue laws, render the officers unpopular with the very persons whose Returns they are requesting. An occupier of land after he has been fined will refuse to fill up an optional Return. The Returns were at first regarded, and still are by some, as preliminary to some dark scheme for future taxation, and by many as a partial check upon their income-tax declarations.

It is a matter of difficulty to the occupant of a large farm to give, even approximately, the number of acres under each crop, if he honestly desired to do so; it is therefore evident that it is impossible for officers with no special knowledge of agricultural matters, and frequently fresh from cities, to arrive at a reliable conclusion as to the crops and stock on a farm upon which they are not permitted to go, and of the boundaries of which they are ignorant. These Returns are required at a busy portion of the year, and are in addition to and unconnected with the other multifarious duties of revenue officials. Even if they were authorised to make personal inspection of the holdings of non-returning occupiers, it is doubtful whether many officers would have time to do so. The large number of Returns that require 'correction,' and holdings that have to be guessed at or estimates manufactured, are included in the totals with the Returns that profess to be correct, making the whole inaccurate, and thus of less value as a basis for the arguments, conclusions, and calculations regarding them which appear every year in the leading journals. The Board of Inland Revenue and the Board of Agriculture are aware of these defects in the Returns, and number among their advisers officials who have been through every grade of their service, to whom the difficulties

referred to are matters of actual knowledge. Moreover, year after year, in the columns of the Civil Service papers, have appeared letters from the collecting officers showing how impossible it is under the present conditions to obtain trustworthy Returns. It is apparent, too, under the circumstances mentioned, how hard it is for those concerned in their collection to obtain entirely correct Returns; and in order to get the work completed in the few weeks allowed much 'revision' of the schedules is inevitable.

In their anxiety, under the official pressure put upon them, to show as few 'estimates' as possible, the officers sometimes overstep the mark, and resort to expedients which bring down upon them punishment in the shape of dismissal, reduction in rank, and censures. This has, unfortunately for them, been especially the case over the last Returns, the punishments being exceptionally numerous and severe. The schedules sent out are often treated with scant respect by the recipients, being regarded as an objectionable inquisition, for which the Prime Minister who may be in power is responsible. Some contemptuously tear up the forms sent them, the fragments being found scattered about adjoining lanes, blown by every wandering wind. In other cases, instead of the information requested, ridiculous answers and satirical queries are freely scrawled on the forms. Instead of the extent of the land planted, '10,000 cabbages' will be returned. 'How is the G.O.M.?' one will humorously inquire. Another will ask, 'What is the price of jam?'—'If you want to know the number of my chucks, come and count them,' was endorsed on one form. A farmer's wife offered an officer chalk to mark the hens and chicks, as she could not tell their number 'to a hundred one way or the other.' The little pig that ran about so that he could not be counted has numerous parallels. Occasionally, some hitherto 'mute inglorious Milton' will 'drop,' like Silas Wegg, 'into poetry.' Here is a specimen of a rhyming Return, actually sent to one of the officers by a rural intellect of more than ordinary brightness and waggyry:

Ten acres of wheat; no barley or bere;
Eight acres of oats; rye (corn)? none here.
Of beans, peas, and 'taters,' I grow just a score,
And of turnips and mangolds about six or more,
Though of swedes I must tell you I have not a pole,
As the wireworms have paid their 'devours' to the whole.

Of carrots? let's see—I think there is one.
Cabbage? Not planted. Kohl-rabi not sown.
Rape? Well, not guilty. Beetroot enter nil.
Chicory—vetches or tares—no true bill.
To lucerne I'm a stranger; I sing not its praise;
But green crops such as rhubarb just one rood I raise.

Of flax not a yard; of hops not a pole;
Of fallow ploughed acres, I've four on the whole.
Of hay-crop—I've just got a score in the park,
Though of other grass land I could not sod a lark.
Working horses there's four, of cattle eleven,
Sheep I have none, but of gruntings I've seven.
Of silos? What nonsense to come to that pass,
The man who stacks ensilage I think him an ass.
The last-mentioned quadruped, sometimes call'd a moke,

I'm not to return, so forgive me the joke;
I know of a pair, sir, the compliment's double,
You for your patience, I for my trouble.

To the non-agricultural reader it may be explained that 'bere' is a light sort of Scotch

barley; 'kohl-rabi' and 'rape' are a species of green crop, and 'lucerne' an artificial grass for cattle.

Their employment in the collection of agricultural Returns is termed by the officers being 'on the acreage;' and in the days when there was a duty on malt instead of beer, it was a pleasurable duty roaming among villages and farmhouses on horseback or cycle, in dogcarts, or on that 'fiery and untamed steed' known as 'shanks' pony.' In the bright and pleasant summer-time the malthouses were always 'silent'—that is, closed, and the revenue officials had little to do in the rare June days. Now, however, all is changed, and the collection is regarded as an undesirable addition to their already heavy work. Various propositions for an alteration in the method of collection have been made. All agree that the Returns should be compulsory, with a fine for non-compliance or incorrect Returns. A simpler form of schedule, more suited to the understanding of Hodge, is also deemed necessary. It has been proposed, too, that the work of collection should be undertaken by the parish overseers, the police, or the postmen. A reform of the system prevailing is manifestly urgently required, and cannot come too soon, in the interests alike of agriculturists, revenue officials, and the public.

BALLADE OF ROSES AND THORNS.

THE month that brings the Summer heat
Unfolds the buds that filled in May;
The red flow of the morn is sweet,
And sweeter is the ebb of day.
So fair the pleasant land's array,
So deep the joy on every side,
That men forget this ancient lay,
'The roses pass, the thorns abide.'

Though hidden in a sure retreat,
The roses' blushes soon betray
Their secret, and the thorns that meet
Around them cannot once affray
The plunderer who seeks such prey,
For he will pluck them, and in pride
Upon his breast will wear the spray
Where roses pass, but thorns abide.

Alas! the hours have flying feet,
And Pleasure will not deign to stay
For anything that maids entreat,
For anything that men can say.
To sigh and prayer she answers 'Nay.'
All for her going must provide,
Or they will find to their dismay
That roses pass, but thorns abide.

ENVOY.

Princes, pluck roses on your way,
Though under thorns the roses hide;
Yet think ye on my rhyme, I pray—
'The roses pass, the thorns abide.'

J. T. LEVENS.

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THOMAS THE RHYMER.

WHAT Merlin the Prophet is to the Welsh, that Thomas the Rhymer is to the Scots. He is the *sacer vates* of Scotch tradition and history. His name, and the predictions associated with his name, are known and repeated in every district of Scotland. Though to Berwickshire is assigned the place of his birth, he is equally well known throughout all the Borders, from east to west. He is known in Strathclyde and Galloway, in the Highlands and Western Islands, along the north-eastern seaboard of Banff and Aberdeen, and among the peasantry of the Mearns, of Fife, and of the Lothians. There are few families of any antiquity or eminence, few castles or houses of distinction, but have attached to them some jingling rhyme or other, bearing upon their destiny, and attributed to the Rhymer. Some of these rhymes have the ring of antiquity about them, and are undoubtedly ancient; others smack of the modern method, and may be referred to the cunning or waggery of some local poetaster. But each and all of them serve to keep in memory a name that was long a name to conjure with in Scotland, and scarcely any great battle took place, or any striking crisis in the country's history occurred, but there was produceable some vague oracular prediction of the Rhymer's, pointing to what had happened or was about to happen. That these predictions were in many instances manufactured to serve the purpose of the hour, goes without saying.

While Thomas the Rhymer, or 'True Thomas,' has his parallel in Merlin the Prophet, yet an important distinction must be drawn between them. The one comes down to us on the wave of tradition only; the other is distinctly an historical personage. We have no fact of history to which we can point as evidence that Merlin ever actually lived; he may have simply been rendered the living channel and embodiment of Cymric legends and traditions—the creation of the Cymric imagination. But of the existence of Thomas the Rhymer we have reasonable historical

proof; his place of residence is moreover linked with a definite locality, and this not by tradition, but by an existing title-deed to the property dating as far back as the close of the thirteenth century, and containing his own name and the name of his son and heir.

The name of the Rhymer's residence was Ercildoune, now Earlston, on the banks of the Leader, in Berwickshire. The vale of Leader is of singular beauty, and embraces within it many places whose names have been made memorable in Scottish song and story. The Leader takes its rise in the Lanmermoor Hills, and flows southward in devious and wilful wanderings till it merges itself in the Tweed. Here we have the St Leonard's Banks and Leader Haughs of the seventeenth-century minstrel Burn, who gave to Wordsworth the measure and rhythm of his three Yarrow ballads. This stanza might not have done discredit to Wordsworth himself, in the grace and fervour of its lyrical melody:

Sing Ercildoune and Cowdenknowes,
Where Humes had ance commanding,
And Drygrange, with its milk-white ewes,
'Twixt Tweed and Leader standing;
The bird that flees through Redpath trees
And Gladswood's banks each morrow,
May sing and sigh sweet Leader Haughs,
And bonny holms of Yarrow.

It is to a district so hallowed about with song and tradition that Thomas the Rhymer belongs. He 'flourished'—to adopt a time-honoured locution—in the later half of the thirteenth century, or, more specifically, from perhaps 1220 to about 1290. The first fact as to his existence which has been ascertained is in connection with the witnessing of a charter which was granted to the Abbot and Convent of Melrose by Thomas's near neighbour, Petrus de Haga of Bemersyde, an ancestor of the ancient family regarding whom the Rhymer is said to have predicted that

Tyde what may betide,
Haig shall be Haig of Bemersyde.

And the prediction still holds good after the lapse

of six hundred years. The deed referred to, and which we have seen and handled, is now the property of the Duke of Buccleuch. It is a little bit of yellow parchment, nine inches by six, with the writing as clear and distinct as at the day on which it was penned, and has the remains of two seals attached to it by little separate tags of parchment. The one seal is that of the grantor of the charter, Haig; the other is that of Abbot Oliver of Dryburgh, who heads the list of witnesses. Deeds of this nature were not witnessed then as such deeds are now—that is, by each witness subscribing his signature beneath the document. In those days, writing was not so common an accomplishment as now, and probably to avoid invidious distinctions among men of hot and aristocratic tempers, with swords by their side, the clerk who engrossed the deed simply wrote therein a list of the men who were then present, and who had witnessed the transaction entered upon and completed. The last name mentioned of those who stood around the table on this occasion is *Thomas Rimor de Ercildun*.

Here, then, we have one solid historical fact upon which to base the actual corporeal existence of 'True Thomas.' The charter in question is not dated; but as it is ascertainable through other historical channels that the above Oliver was Abbot of Dryburgh in 1262, and was still Abbot in 1268, we are able to approach very near to the actual date when the Rhymer witnessed the charter—say, between 1260 and 1270.

The next transaction which brings the Rhymer upon the page of actual history belongs to the year 1286, and in this instance we have him in his traditional character of prophet. Walter Bower, who was Abbot of the Monastery of Inchcolm—an island in the Firth of Forth—wrote, in the first half of the fifteenth century, a history of Scotland, in which he tells us how Thomas of Ercildoune foretold the calamitous death of King Alexander III. The Earl of Dunbar of those days had a great castle which stood about a mile to the east of Ercildoune, and under the protecting shadow of whose walls a village would naturally spring up; the name of which village—Earl's-town—has gradually supplanted the older and more poetical Ercildoune. Thomas, paying a visit to the Earl one day, was asked by him half-jocularly what was to happen on the morrow. The Rhymer, sighing deeply, said: 'Alas for the morrow, a day of calamity and misery! Before the twelfth hour shall be heard a blast so vehement as shall exceed all that have yet been heard in Scotland.' The alarming nature of this prediction led the Earl and his associates to watch the atmosphere closely next morning; but the sky gave no sign of any impending storm, and by the ninth hour they were becoming disposed to regard Thomas and his prediction with something like contempt. The Earl, however, had scarcely sat down to dinner, and the hand of the dial pointed the hour of noon, when a messenger arrived at the gate, bringing with him the tidings of the king's death, who in the darkness of the previous night had been killed by a fall from his horse while galloping along the sea-

shore near Kinghorn. 'This,' said Thomas, 'is the wind that shall blow to you the great calamity and trouble of all Scotland.' And so of a surety it did; for it led to the disputed succession in the sovereignty of the kingdom, to the interference of Edward I. of England, to the long wars of Wallace and Bruce, the storm ending only in the victory of Bannockburn. 'This Thomas,' says a later chronicler, 'was a man of great admiration to the people, and showed sundry things as they fell. Howbeit,' he quaintly adds, 'they were aye hid under obscure words.'

The Rhymer is next referred to in an authentic document of the date 1294, in which his son, who styles himself 'Thomas of Ercildoun, son and heir of Thomas Rymour of Ercildoun,' conveys to a neighbouring charity all the lands which he held by inheritance in the village of Ercildoune. What the object of the younger Thomas was in thus divesting himself of his inheritance is not stated in the deed. But the natural inference is, that before this time, and before the son had entered on his inheritance, his father, True Thomas, was dead. Blind Harry, in his rhymed life of Wallace, represents the Rhymer as still alive in 1296 or 1297; but no one who knows the blind poetaster's method of writing history would give the slightest weight to his authority, as against a document which, on the face of it, presupposes that the Rhymer was dead previous to November 1294.

But while history has thus substantiated for us the actual existence and personality of Thomas the Rhymer, it has not informed us either as to the precise year of his death or as to the manner of it. But here tradition steps in and tells the story in a way more picturesquely and poetically than we should have had it from history. In view, moreover, of the methods of tradition, it is not quite consistent to speak of the Rhymer's 'death;' for, according to this type of legend, men like Merlin and Arthur and True Thomas do not die—they only pass from the sight of men for a time. Hence we have 'The passing of Arthur'—not his death—as he goes 'a long way' to the island valley of Avilion,

Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly.

And tradition expected that he should once more return; as it, too, expected Merlin's release from the fatal spell woven round him by the wily Vivien.

And as tradition dealt with those, so it dealt with Thomas the Rhymer. The manner of his 'passing' was thus. At an early age he had been carried off to Fairy Land as the lover of the Fairy Queen, and while there had acquired his miraculous gifts of knowledge and of prophecy. At the end of seven years he was warned that it was time for him to return to earth; but his mistress made it a condition that he should come back to her when it pleased her to recall him from earth. One day, therefore, while Thomas sat in his house of Ercildoune, feasting and making merry with his friends, a person entered, and in a state of wonder and fear, informed him that a hart and hind from the neighbouring forest were 'composedly and slowly parading the street of the village. The prophet instantly rose, left his

habitation, and followed the wonderful animals to the forest, whence he was never seen to return. According to the popular belief, he still "drees his weird" in Fairy Land, and is one day expected to revisit earth.'

How far the actual sayings and doings of the Rhymer when on earth justified the extraordinary reputation which he obtained for his mingled gifts as a prophet and a poet, it is impossible now to say; but that that reputation was well established before his death is proved by the fact that a manuscript exists containing a prophecy said to be uttered by him, and which manuscript must have been written before 1320, probably before 1314, or within thirty years after his death. There are still extant two poems which have been ascribed to him. His authorship of one of these, called *Sir Tristram*, is more than doubtful; but the first portion of the other poem claimed for him—and which tells how he saw the Fairy Queen riding down by the Eildon tree, how he had kissed her lips, and how he wended his way with her to Fairy Land—may not improperly be regarded as his. The antique language in which it is couched will debar many readers from enjoying it; but, as poetry, it is of high quality, instinct with the colour and movement of life, with strong imaginative effects, and in places fervid with passion. The popular version of it which Scott received from a lady who resided near Ercildoune, and which he collated with another version in Mrs Brown's possession, may be regarded as a good paraphrase of the original poem composed by one who was familiar with that original.

True Thomas lay on Huntlie Bank;
A ferlie he spied wi' his e'e;
And there he saw a ladye bright,
Come riding down by the Eildon tree.

Her skirt was o' the grass-green silk,
Her mantle o' the velvet fyne;
At ilka tett of her horse's mane
Hung fifty siller bells and nine.

True Thomas hailed the fair lady with all a poet's gallantry. She told him she was the 'Queen of fair Elfland;' and he, in spite of her warning as to the consequences to himself, 'kissed her rosy lips, all underneath the Eildon tree.'

'Now, ye maun go wi' me,' she said;
'True Thomas, ye maun go wi' me;
And ye maun serve me seven years,
Through weal or woe as may chance to be.'

She mounted on her milk-white steed;
She's ta'en true Thomas up behind;
And aye, whenever her bridle rung,
The steed flew swifter than the wind. . . .

O they rade on, and farther on,
And they waded through rivers aboon the knee,
And they saw neither sun nor moon,
But they heard the roaring of the sea.

It was mirk mirk night, and there was nae sterner light,
And they waded through red blood to the knee;
For a' the blood that is shed on earth
Rins through the springs o' that countrie.

At the end of Thomas's services in Elfland, the Queen once more guides him back to earth, and offers him, as wages, the gift of 'the tongue that can never lie.' 'A goodly gift ye would gie to me,' replied Thomas, not having quite forgotten after his long absence what manner of place the

earth is. What use to a man among men would be 'the tongue that can never lie?'

'I neither dought to buy nor sell,
At fair or tryst where I may be.'

The situation is a little confused in the popular version, but is clear enough in the original poem. Scott himself has put in verse the Rhymer's final departure with the hart and hind:

Some said to hill, and some to glen,
Their wondrous course had been;
But ne'er in haunts of living men
Again was Thomas seen.

J. R.

THE IVORY GATE.*

BY WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XXIX.—'I KNOW THE MAN.'

'ANOTHER evening of mystery, Elsie?' said Athelstan.

'Yes. Another, and perhaps another. But we are getting to an end. I shall be able to tell you all to-day or to-morrow. The thing is becoming too great for me alone.'

'You shall tell us when you please. Meantime, nothing new has been found out, I believe. Checkley still glares, George tells me. But the opinion of the clerks seems on the whole more favourable, he believes, than it was. Of that, however, he is not perhaps a good judge.'

'They shall all be turned out,' cried Elsie. 'How dare they so much as to discuss'—

'My sister, it is a very remarkable thing, and a thing little understood, but it is a true thing. People, people—clerks and *le Service* generally—are distinctly a branch of the great human tribe. They are anthropoid. Therefore, they are curious and prying and suspicious. They have our own faults, my dear.'

All day Elsie felt drawn as with ropes to Mr Dering's office. Was it possible that after that long evening among the lessons of *Poverty Lane* he should remember nothing? How was she to get at him—how was she to make him understand or believe what he had done? Could she make the sane man remember the actions and words of the insane man? Could she make the insane man do something which would absolutely identify him with the sane man? She could always array her witnesses: but she wanted more: she wanted to bring Mr Dering himself to understand that he was Mr Edmund Gray.

She made an excuse for calling upon him. It was in the afternoon, about four, that she called. She found him looking aged, his face lined, his cheek pale, his eyes anxious.

'This business worries me,' he said. 'Day and night it is with me. I am persecuted and haunted with this Edmund Gray. His tracts are put into my pockets; his papers into my safe: he laughs at me: he defies me to find him. And they do nothing. They only accuse each other. They find nothing.'

'Patience,' said Elsie softly. 'Only a few

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days—a day or two—then—with your help—we will unravel all this trouble. You shall lose nothing.'

'Shall I escape this mocking devil—this Edmund Gray?'

'I cannot promise. Perhaps.—Now, my dear guardian, I am to be married next Wednesday. I want you to be present at my wedding.'

'Why not?'

'Because things have been said about George: and because your presence will effectually prove that you do not believe them.'

'Oh! Believe them? I believe nothing. It is, however, my experience that there is no act, however base, that any man may not be tempted to do.'

'Happily, it is my experience,' said the girl of twenty-one, 'that there is no act of baseness, however small, that certain men could possibly commit. You will come to my wedding, then. Athelstan will give me away.'

'Athelstan? Yes; I remember. We found those notes, didn't we? I wonder who put them into the safe? Athelstan! Yes. He has been living in low company, I heard—Camberwell.—Rags and tatters.'

'Oh!' Elsie stamped impatiently. 'You will believe anything—anything, and you a lawyer! Athelstan is in the service of a great American journal.—Rags and tatters!'

'American? Oh! yes.' Mr Dering sat up and looked interested. 'Why, of course. How could I forget it. Had it been yesterday evening, I should have forgot. But it is four years ago. He wrote to me from somewhere in America. Where was it? I've got the letter. It is in the safe. Bring me the bottom right-hand drawer. It is there, I know.' He took the drawer which Elsie brought him, and turned over the papers. 'Here it is among the papers of that forgery. Here is the letter.' He gave it to Elsie. 'Read it. He writes from America, you see. He was in the States four years ago—and—and— What is it?'

'Oh!' cried Elsie, suddenly springing from her chair—'Oh! Do you know what you have given me? Oh! do you know what you have told me? It is the secret—the secret—of my fortune. Oh! Athelstan gave it to me—Athelstan—my brother!'

Mr Dering took the letter from her and glanced at the contents. 'I ought not to have shown you the letter,' he said. 'I have violated confidence. I forgot. I was thinking of the trouble—I forgot. I forget everything now—the things of yesterday as well as the things of today. Yes; it is true, child: your little fortune came to you from your brother. But it was a secret that he alone had the right to reveal.'

'And now I know it—I know it. Oh! what shall I say to him?' The tears came in her eyes. 'He gave me all he had—all he had—because—oh! for such a simple thing—because I would not believe him to be a villain. Oh! my brother—my poor brother! He went back into poverty again. He gave me all—because—oh! for such a little thing!—Mr Dering!' She turned almost fiercely upon him. 'After such a letter, could you believe that man to be a villain? Could you? Tell me! After such a deed and such a letter!'

'I believe nothing. My experience, however,

tells me that any man, whoever he is, may be led to commit'—

'NO! I won't have it said again.—Now, listen, Mr Dering. These suspicions must cease. There must be an end. Athelstan returned six weeks ago—or thereabouts. That can be proved. Before that time, he was working in San Francisco on the journal. That can be proved. While these forgeries, with which he is now so freely charged, were carried on here, he was abroad. I don't ask you to believe or to disbelieve or to bring up your experience—oh! such experience—one would think you had been a police magistrate all your life.'

'No, Elsie,' Mr Dering smiled grimly. 'There was no need to sit upon the bench; the police magistrate does not hear so much as the family solicitor. My dear, prove your brother's innocence by finding out who did the thing. That is, after all, the only thing. It matters nothing what I believe—he is not proved innocent—all the world may be suspected of it—until the criminal is found. Remove the suspicions which have gathered about your lover by finding the criminal. There is no other way.'

'Very well, then. I will find the criminal, since no one else can.'

Mr Dering went on without heeding her words.

'They want to get out a warrant against Edmund Gray. I think, for my own part, that the man Edmund Gray has nothing to do with the business. He is said to be an elderly man and a respectable man—a gentleman—who has held his chambers for ten years.'

'They need not worry about a warrant,' Elsie replied. 'Tell your brother, Mr Dering, that it will be perfectly useless. Meantime—I doubt if it is any good asking you—but—if we want your help, will you give me all the help you can?'

'Assuredly. All the help I can. Why not? I am the principal person concerned.'

'You are, indeed,' said Elsie gravely—'the principal person concerned. Very well, Mr Dering—now I will tell you more. I know the—the criminal. I can put my hand upon him at any moment. It is one man who has done the whole, beginning with the cheque for which Athelstan was suspected—one man alone.'

'Why, child, what can you know about it? What can you do?'

'You were never in love, Mr Dering—else you would understand that a girl will do a great deal—oh! a great deal more than you would think—for her lover. It is not much to think for him and to watch for him—and for her brother—the brother who has stripped himself of everything to give his sister!' She was fain to pause, for the tears which rose again and choked her voice.

'But, Elsie—what does this mean? How can you know what no one else has been able to find out?'

'That is my affair, Mr Dering. Perhaps I dreamed it.'

'Do you mean that you will get back all the papers—all the transfers—the dividends that have been diverted—everything?'

'Everything is safe. Everything shall be restored.—My dear guardian, it is a long and

a sad story. I cannot tell you now. Presently, perhaps. Or to-morrow. I do not know how I shall be able to tell you. But for your property, rest easy. Everything will come back to you—everything—except that which cannot be stored in the vaults of the Bank.'

The last words he heard not, or understood not.

'I shall get back everything!' The eyes of the Individualist lit up and his pale cheek glowed—old age has still some pleasures. 'It is not until one loses Property that one finds out how precious it has become. Elsie, you remember what I told you, a day or two ago. Ah! I don't forget quite everything—a man is not the shivering naked soul only, but the complete figure, equipped and clothed, armed and decorated, bearing with him his skill, his wit, his ingenuity, his learning, his past, and his present, his memories and his rejoicings, his sorrows and his trials, his successes and his failures, and his Property—yes—his Property. Take away from any of these things, and he is mutilated: he is not the perfect soul. Why, you tell me that my Property is coming back—I awake again. I feel stronger already; the shadows are flying before me: even the terror of that strange forgetfulness recedes: and the haunting of Edmund Gray. I can bear all, if I get my Property back again. As for this forger—this miscreant—this criminal—you will hale him before the judge!'

'Yes—yes. We will see about the miscreant afterwards. The first thing is to find the man and recover your Property, and to dispel the suspicions resting on innocent persons. If I do the former, you must aid me in the latter.'

'Assuredly. I shall not shrink from that duty.'

'Very well.—Now tell me about yourself. Sometimes it does good to talk about our own troubles. Tell me more about these forgetful fits. Do they trouble you still?' Her eyes and her voice were soft and winning. One must be of granite to resist such a voice and such eyes.

'My dear'—Mr Dering softened. 'You are good to interest yourself in an old man's ailments. It is Anno Domini that is the matter with me. The forgetful fits are only symptoms—and the disease is incurable. Ask the oak why the leaves are yellow.—It is the hand of winter. That is my complaint. First the hand of winter, then the hand of Death. Meantime, the voice of the grasshopper sings loud and shrill.' In presence of the simple things of age and death, even a hard old lawyer grows poetic.

'Tell me the symptoms, then. Do you still forget things?'

'Constantly. More and more. I forget everything.'

'Where were you yesterday evening, for instance?'

'I don't know. I cannot remember. I have left off even trying to remember. At one time I racked my brains for hours, to find out, and failed. Now I remember nothing. I never know when this forgetfulness may fall upon me. At any hour.—For instance—you ask me about yesterday evening. I ordered dinner at home. My housekeeper this morning reminded me that I did not get home last night till eleven. Where was I? Where did I spend the evening?'

'At the Club?'

'No—I took a cab this morning and drove there under pretence of asking for letters. I asked if I was there last night. The hall porter stared. But I was not there. I thought that I might have fallen asleep here. I have done so before. Checkley tells me that I went away before him. Where was I?—Child!—he leaned forward and whispered, with white cheeks—'I have read of men going about with disordered brains doing what they afterwards forget. Am I one of these unfortunates? Do I go about with my wits wandering? Oh! horrible! I picture to myself an old man—such as myself—of unblemished reputation and blameless life—wandering about the streets demented—without conscience—without dignity—without self-respect—committing follies—things disgraceful—even things which bring men before the law'—He shuddered. He turned pale.

'No—no,' murmured Elsie. 'You could not. You could never'—

'Such things are on record. They have happened. They may happen again. I have read of such cases. There was a man once—he was like myself—a Solicitor—who would go out and buy things, not knowing what he did. He bought new hats—every day twenty new hats—cricket bats, though he was long past the game of cricket: once he bought six grand pianos—six—though he knew not the use of any instrument. Then they gave him a companion, and he found out what he had done. The shame and the shock of it killed him. I have thought of that man of late. Good Heavens! Think, if you can, of any worse disaster. Let me die—let me die, I say, rather than suffer such a fate—such an affliction. I see myself brought before the magistrate—me—myself—at my age, charged with this and with that. What defence? None, save that I did not remember.'

'That could never be,' said Elsie confidently, because she knew the facts. 'If such a thing were to befall, your character would never be changed. You might talk and think differently, but you could never be otherwise than a good man. You to haunt low company? Oh! you could not even in a waking dream. People who dream, I am sure, always remain themselves, however strangely they may act. How could you—you—after such a life as yours, become a hunter of low company? One might perhaps suppose that Athelstan had been living among profligates because he is young and untried—but you?—you? Oh! no. If you had these waking dreams—perhaps you have them—you would become—you would become—I really think you would become'—she watched his face—'such—such a man as—as—Mr Edmund Gray, who is so like yourself, and yet so different.'

He started. 'Edmund Gray again? Good Heavens! It is always Edmund Gray!'

'He is now a friend of mine. I have only known him for a week or two. He does not think quite as you do. But he is a good man. Since, in dreams, we do strange things, you might act and speak and think as Edmund Gray.'

'I speak and think as— But—am I dreaming? Am I forgetting again? Am I awake? Edmund Gray is the man whom we want to find.'

'I have found him,' said Elsie quietly.

'The forger—if he is the forger'—

'No—no. Do not make more mistakes. You shall have the truth in a day or two. Would you like to see Edmund Gray? Will you come with me to his Chambers? Whenever you call, you—you, I say—will find him at home.'

'No—no. I know his doctrines—futile doctrines—mischievous doctrines. I do not wish to meet him. What do you mean by mistakes? There are the letters—there are the forgeries. Are there two Edmund Grays?'

'No—only one. He is the man they cannot find. I will show you, if you like, what manner of man he is.'

'No. I do not want to see a Socialist. I should insult him.—You are mysterious, Elsie. You know this man, this mischievous doctrinaire—this leveller—this spoliator. You tell me that he is a good man—you want me to see him. What, I ask, do these things mean?'

'They mean many things, my dear guardian. Chiefly they mean that you shall get back your Property, and that suspicion shall be removed from innocent persons—and all this, I hope before next Wednesday, when I am to be married. We must all be happy on my wedding day.'

'Will—will Mr Edmund Gray be there as well?'

'He has promised.—And now, my dear guardian, if you will come round to Gray's Inn with me, I will show you the Chambers of Mr Edmund Gray.'

'No—no. Thank you, Elsie—I do not wish to make the personal acquaintance of a Socialist.'

'He has Chambers on the second floor. The principal room is large and well furnished. It is a wainscoted room with two windows looking on the Square. It is not a very pretty Square, because they have not made a garden or laid down grass in the middle—and the houses are rather dingy. He sits there in the evening. He writes and meditates. Sometimes he teaches me, but that is a new thing. In the morning he is sometimes there between nine o'clock and twelve. He has an old laundress, who pretends to keep his rooms clean.'

She murmured these words softly, thinking to turn his memory back and make him understand what had happened.

'They are pleasant rooms, are they not?' He made no reply—his eyes betrayed trouble. She thought it was the trouble of struggling memory.—'He sits here alone and works. He thinks he is working for the advancement of the world. There is no one so good, I think, as Edmund Gray.'

He suddenly pushed back the chair and sprang to his feet.

'My Scholar! You speak of me?'

It was so sudden that Elsie cried out and fell backwards in her chair. She had brought on the thing by her own words, by conjuring up a vision of the Chambers. But—the trouble was not the struggle of the memory getting hold of evasive facts.

'Why, child,' he remonstrated, 'you look pale. Is it the heat? Come, it is cooler outside. Let us go to the Chambers in Gray's Inn. This old fellow—this Dering—here he sits all day long.

It is Tom Tiddler's ground. It is paved with gold, which he picks up. The place—let us whisper—because he must be in the outer office—it reeks of Property—reeks of Property.'

He took his hat and gloves. 'My Scholar, let us go.' With the force of habit, he shut and locked the safe and dropped the bunch of keys in his pocket.

(To be continued.)

A PENNY IN THE SLOT.

THE latest automatic novelty is a contrivance by which gas is supplied to small consumers on putting 'a Penny in the Slot.' We are all familiar with the bewildering development which has of late taken place in this system of retailing various commodities. At most railway stations and other public places there are automatic machines, which, if set agoing by the deposit of the essential coin, will show your height or weight, test your pulling strength, give you an electric shock, tell your fortune, or supply you on demand with a box of matches, packets of chocolate, confectionery, cigarettes, cigars, sheets of note-paper, postcards, postage stamps, or other articles of more or less utility. The same principle is now being applied to save householders of modest means from the recurrence of quarterly gas bills. In many towns the tenants of small houses have hitherto been deterred from using gas on account of the first cost and the periodical mode of payment. That difficulty is overcome by the prepayment meters, of which various types are being largely furnished in different towns by rival patentees and manufacturers. Their mechanism is said to be extremely simple, and such as can be readily attached to the top of any existing meter. All the consumer has to do is to turn a small handle, drop a penny in the slot, and the equivalent value in gas immediately has access to the meter. But the purchase need not be so limited. More than one penny can be deposited for larger supplies. Each meter, besides the automatic arrangement, comprises an ordinary register for every foot of gas consumed, the dial and pointer showing the quantity in reserve and how much has been expended. In Liverpool alone, more than four thousand of these new prepayment meters are now in successful daily use; indeed, there is some difficulty in supplying enough of them to meet the growing demand from that city, as well as from London, Manchester, Birmingham, Bolton, Blackburn, and other places.

Noteworthy as some of these automatic novelties are, they were equalled in cleverness and ingenuity by those of olden time. There is, however, one material difference. Nowadays they are being more and more applied to useful purposes, whereas during the boyhood of our grandfathers they were mainly designed to mystify or amuse. One of the most perfect of the machines which used to puzzle and entertain our ancestors was constructed by M. Vaucanson, and exhibited at Paris in 1738. It represented a flute-player, which placed its lips against the instrument, and produced the notes of twelve different tunes with its fingers, in the same manner as any human player. In 1741 he made a flageolet-player, which with one hand beat a

tambourine, playing twenty country-dances; and in the same year he produced a wonderful automatic duck. It was made to conduct itself on the water in every respect like its animated pattern. It swam, dived, ate, drank, dressed its wings, &c., as naturally as its live companions. Most wonderful of all, by means of a solution in the stomach it actually appeared to digest its food! This illusion was, however, exposed by Robert Houdin, the celebrated conjurer, into whose hands Vaucanson's duck was placed for repair. He found out that the so-called digestive process was brought about by a vulgar trick unworthy of its inventor, who was beyond doubt a clever mechanician.

A Swiss named Droz made for the king of Spain a sheep that bleated, and a dog which guarded a basket of fruit. If any of the fruit was taken away, the dog barked incessantly until it was replaced. He also made a singing bird; but it was quite eclipsed by another made by Mailardet.

Nothing is more difficult than to construct any mechanism to imitate the human voice. Attempts have, however, been made with some measure of success. A certain Abbé—Mical by name—is said to have made two large heads of brass which could clearly pronounce two or three complete sentences; but this is nothing to what Edison's phonographic dolls can now accomplish. Mical wanted the French Government to buy his speaking heads. The Government, however, declined to do so; and the unfortunate artist, burdened with debts, smashed them in a moment of despair, and died in a destitute state in 1786. Some years previously he had presented to the Science Academy at Paris two other heads which articulated syllables. They had an ingenious imitation of the human throat and vocal organs. Descartes constructed a clever automaton which represented the figure of a girl. He called it his daughter Francine. During a voyage the captain had the curiosity to open the box in which Francine was enclosed. His interference set the works going. This so alarmed him that he threw her into the sea, fearing she was an instrument of magic, or inspired by the devil.

The first automata actually authenticated do not date farther back than the beginning of the last century. But there are some traditions of marvels of the kind at a much earlier period. It is said, for instance, that an artificial eagle was constructed which flew before the Emperor Maximilian when he was entering Nuremberg. Roger Bacon is reported to have forged a brazen head which could speak some words, and acted in fact as a doorkeeper. It was broken to pieces by Aquinas. Knauss exhibited at Vienna an automaton which could write; but it was not equal to a long letter, and there was no variety in its composition. Two inventors named Kauffman and Maelzel made a couple of automatic trumpeters which could play several marches. One of the ancients is said to have made an iron fly, which could flutter round the room and return to his hand.

Returning to the more reliable records of modern times, some of our readers may remember the piping bullfinch which was first shown at the London Exhibition in 1851. It was a perfect example of those automata, now more numerous,

which imitate the movement and song of birds. It was contained in a box not much bigger than a snuff-box. When the spring was touched, a tiny bird sprang out, fluttered its wings, and trilled the true pipe of the bullfinch. The sound in reality came from the box, not from the bird itself. It was indeed an elaborate adaptation of the same principle as is applied to the mechanical cuckoo in the well-known Swiss clocks.

Of late years all previous efforts in the making of automata have been surpassed by Mr J. N. Maskelyne, who may be truly said to have commenced a new era in these marvels. His first one, Psycho, was introduced to public notice in January 1875. It was a seated figure of light construction, which moved its head, and from a rack in front of it chose the cards necessary for a hand at whist, which it played in a masterly manner. It also worked out calculations up to 100,000,000, showing the total in a box by opening a sliding door. It acted without any mechanical connection with anything outside of it, and yet was so much under control that it carried out orders, as if with intelligence. How it worked was a profound secret, even to Mr Maskelyne's assistants. In 1877 the same gentleman produced Zoe, another wonderful automaton. During the performance there was placed in front of it a sheet of drawing-paper upon which it traced the likeness of any public character chosen by the spectators from a list of two hundred names. Mr Maskelyne has constructed some automata which play upon musical instruments. Automatic chess-players have also been made. A remarkably clever one was exhibited some years ago at the Crystal Palace. Elaborate automata of the old style were very expensive, and the curiosity of the public was not sufficiently long sustained to repay the outlay. We have now reached a time when simpler and less complex mechanism is commonly applied in a practical way to more utilitarian purposes than in bygone times.

THE BELLS OF LINLAVEN.

CHAPTER V.—THE SACRIFICE.

EVENTS had moved rapidly that afternoon in Linlaven. Within the vicarage all was confusion and distress. When Clara recovered sufficiently to remember what had happened—the reading of the paper—the finding of the watch, which, she felt convinced, must have been her father's—the terror-stricken face of Uncle Giles as the report was read out—all came back to her vividly, and the first use which she made of her returning consciousness was to ask her husband to go and find that old man at once. She felt that she had read her fate in his face.

Captain Norham had left the house on this errand, when his attention was arrested by a rider coming rapidly down the drive from Brathrig Hall. It was Mr Brookes. He had been summoned to the death-bed of Dame Norham that morning, and now he had ridden down to the vicarage to say that all was over.

'What is to be done?' asked the Captain.

'Nothing can be done, so far as I can see,' replied the lawyer. 'Linley will have taken

possession by Monday, and the estates will go to a man who has scarcely any reasonable claim to them, except that he was remotely connected with the Norhams by the female line, and that the old lady has made a will in his favour.'

'But might not the will be disputed?—Look here.' And he took from his pocket the paper which Lawrence Dale had been reading from. He opened it, pointed to the paragraph, 'Remarkable Discovery,' and passed it to the lawyer.

Mr Brookes read the paragraph twice over carefully, and not without some expressions of astonishment. 'Extraordinary—startling—watch belonged to one Arthur Naseby—real name Arthur Norham—the first clue we have got to all this mystery.—But, George,' he said, turning to the Captain, 'this may all come to nothing. We cannot tell whether Arthur Norham is dead or alive—or, if dead, when he died. Then where are we?'

Captain Norham narrated to him what he and his wife had seen that afternoon as the paper was being read—the agitation of the old man who was a stranger in the place—also what he himself had seen in the church, as well as the fact that this man, when in his delirium, had called Clara by her mother's name.

'There is something strange, certainly, in all this.—Go, George, and find this man, and bring him to the vicarage. We must at least speak with him on the matter.'

Uncle Giles was not to be found. His cottage was empty. No one had seen him since afternoon. 'But, Captain,' said Mrs Dale, 'he often walks of an evening round the head of the lake to Langley Bridge, and he may ha' gone there now.'

The Captain walked off in the direction indicated; but he saw no one. He reached the bridge, and stood for a little upon it, meditating on the distracting events of the day. The sun had now set, and twilight was rapidly deepening. The silence was for a time unbroken save for the rushing sound of the brook as it swept beneath the bridge; then there came the sounds of hurrying footsteps. In a few minutes a man appeared, shouting something which in the distance the Captain was unable to catch. The man, however, instead of coming on straight towards him, turned up by the road that led to the church; and shortly thereafter the bells rang out from the tower with unwonted violence and clamour.

It at once occurred to Captain Norham that fire had broken out somewhere. Little did he know how terrible to his own heart and Clara's the result of that fire might be.

When he entered the village, all was turmoil, commotion, and alarm. The Old Grange was on fire. A woman was flying towards Lawrence Dale's cottage. It was Lucy Norham's nurse.

'Oh, Lawrence,' she cried, 'have you seen our Lucy? I have been out at tea at Millridge Farm, and when I came home she was not to be found.'

'I ha' not seen her, lass,' replied Lawrence, as he walked off towards the fire; 'but thou may keep thy mind easy. She be safe enough somewhere with old Giles.'

Captain Norham also hurried on towards the burning edifice, in front of which every living creature in the village had now congregated, the

women uttering loud exclamations of distress and alarm, and the men hurrying hither and thither, vainly suggesting expedients for checking the fire. When they saw Captain Norham approach, they waited for his directing hand.

'We cannot save the old building,' he said, after a quick survey of the situation; 'but its connection with the mill must be cut off.' And under his orders, some wooden and other temporary structures that had been erected between the Grange and the mill were forthwith torn down and removed by willing hands. Upon the Old Grange itself the fire had already got a firm hold; the ancient time-dried woodwork of its floors, with the various combustible materials stored in it, fed the fire with fierce rapidity, and in an almost incredibly short space of time the flames had burst forth from the lower range of windows, threatening the whole building with immediate destruction.

In this crisis Captain Norham felt a hand on his arm. It was Clara, with anxious eyes, asking if no one had seen Lucy.

'Miss Lucy?' said a bystander. 'She will be wi' Uncle Giles. I saw her a-seeking for him i' the afternoon.'

'No, ma'am,' said a lad who had overheard the conversation; 'Miss Lucy be not with Uncle Giles, for I saw him a-goin' up the Fell more 'n an hour ago, and there was no one wi' him.'

'Oh, my child, my child,' cried Clara, 'where can she be?' And she looked at the door of the burning building, as if she even dared go into the jaws of death itself in quest of her child. Captain Norham stepped forward in order to draw his wife back from the crowd. At that moment, a tall man, with uncovered head, and white hair streaming in the wind, dashed in amongst them.

It was Uncle Giles.

Clara was at his side in an instant. 'Oh, Giles,' she cried, with wild eagerness, 'have you seen our Lucy?'

'Yes,' he replied, and there was a kind of preternatural calmness in his demeanour, like that of a man who has strung himself up to the doing of a great action—'yes, I ha' seen her; and wi' God's help I shall see her again.'

And before the onlookers had time to take in the full significance of his words, he had made a dash forward into the red-illuminated space, and disappeared within the doorway of the burning edifice.

Clara, with lightning rapidity of perception, gathered from his words and his mad action that her child was there—within these blazing walls. The knowledge was too much for her already overstrained powers, and she sank back in her husband's arms, like one dead.

Meanwhile, the crowd looked on with breathless anxiety. They had seen the man enter the red doorway, to struggle upwards through the fiery furnace: should they ever see him return? 'The stairs must be burning,' said one. 'It is the foolhardiness of a madman,' said another. And as yet there had been no sign from within the building. From moment to moment the flames belched forth in their red fury, and at other times the whole building seemed to be covered with a cloud of smoke and fire. A few moments more elapsed, and there was heard the crashing of glass in the upper storey, and through

a gap in the curling smoke the white hair of the brave old man was seen at the open window. A half-suppressed cheer burst from the crowd; but the event was too greatly fraught with peril and anxiety for any long indulgence in exultation.

They heard his voice up there at the window. 'The child is here,' he cried; 'but the stair is burning, and I cannot return that way. Send me up a rope.—There!' And he flung a ball of cord from the window out amongst the crowd, retaining the loose end of the ball in his hand. 'Fasten a rope to it,' he shouted again; 'and for the bairn's sake be quick.'

Almost in shorter time than we can tell it, a rope was made fast to the cord, and Giles was drawing it up towards him. The people awaited with breathless suspense till he reappeared at the window. At last—he is there! The child is in his arms, wrapped up in some large covering for its better protection. He leans forward for a moment to watch when the lower windows are clear of flame, and then the child is seen to be descending through the air. Quickly, but yet cautiously, does the old man pay out the rope upon which depends the life of this little burden, so precious to his heart. A score of hands are held up to receive it; and as Lucy is safely rescued and placed in her mother's arms, tears might have been seen on many a sunburned face.

Before this had been more than done, it was observed that the man who had saved the child, high up in that place of danger and death, was attaching the rope to something within the building, and was himself preparing to descend. The first part of the descent on the rope was made, hand over hand, quickly and skilfully, 'as if he had been a sailor all his life.' So said an onlooker. But just when he had reached the windows of the second floor, the fall of some portion of the interior sent a fierce volume of flame with a suffocating rush from the shattered windows, half enveloping the descending man. He was seen to make an unsteady clutch at the rope, but missed it; and, to the horror of the spectators, in another second he had fallen heavily, with a dull thud, to the ground.

'He saved others'—came from amidst the crowd in deep, tremulous tones. It was the Vicar who had spoken, standing there with white uncovered head.

There was mounting and riding in Linlaven that night. A doctor had to be brought from a distance, as also a Justice of the Peace; for Mr Brookes, with lawyer-like instinct, having been informed of all that was known and suspected about the old man now lying once more unconscious on his bed, thought it well to be prepared for any emergency that might arise. If this man, as would appear from what had been seen by Clara and her husband that day, knew 'Arthur Naseby,' a clue might be found to some of the hidden mystery of the lost Arthur Norham's life.

Two hours elapsed before the doctor and the magistrate arrived. The former immediately proceeded to examine into the injured man's condition, and after a time pronounced his injuries fatal. He might possibly live till morning, but could not live long.

Clara stood by the bedside, watching with more than womanly solicitude. This man, whoever he was, and whatever he may have been, had saved the life of her child at the cost of his own; and as she thought of this, and all his tender ways aforetime towards the little Lucy, her heart went out to him in deep love and compassion.

Slowly the hours moved on, one by one, and still the sufferer gave no sign of returning consciousness. The night passed, and the gray dawn began to show itself at the window; whereupon Lawrence Dale raised the blind, extinguished the lamp, and allowed the soft fresh light to enter the room. Gradually a flush of rosy brightness kindled in the eastern sky, and then the sun himself came up over the hills, shedding a golden halo through the curtained window on the pale face resting there before them—so calm, yet so death-like in its rigid lines. Clara thought of that morning when she first looked upon it—not more death-like now than it was then; and a faint hope quivered in her breast for a moment, as she thought it possible that he might yet live. Before she was aware, she found that he had opened his eyes, and that they were resting full upon her.

'Ah, Esther,' he said, in faint tones, 'it be thee. I knowed thou would find me at last.'

Then the eyes again closed, and he lay thus for some time. When he once more looked up, he seemed to recognise his surroundings, and asked in an anxious voice: 'Where be little Lucy? Ha' thou found her?'

'Yes,' replied Clara. 'Thanks to you, Giles, she is sleeping safe and sound in her little crib.'

'Thank Heaven, and not me, missus. It were me as left her in danger; and her death would ha' been another burden on my soul. God knows I ha' enough.'

A look from Mr Brookes to Clara indicated that the time had come when she might now speak.

She went forward to the bedside and said softly: 'Giles, you have twice called me Esther, and I am wondering why.'

A strange look passed over the man's face, as if he were suddenly brought into touch with some great sorrow; but he remained silent. He lay thus for a little; then, as if communing with himself, he said: 'It were true as the preacher said: "Be thou ever so fleet o' foot, the vengeance o' God is fleetier." It ha' come up wi' me now, and I cannot die with the burden on my soul.'

His eyes moved slowly round the room until they rested on Lawrence Dale, and he said to him: 'Thou remembers what was in the paper thou read from, about the *White Horse*, and the finding o' the watch?'

Lawrence nodded, but did not speak.

'Then my time ha' come, and I must tell it all.'

While this was proceeding, Mr Brookes had got paper and ink in readiness; and, although the story was told by the dying man in slow words, and after long intervals, it was to the following effect:

In that year of Revolutions, 1848, this man, who now gave his name as Giles Barton, had

become a member of a society which, although its aims were to benefit the social condition of working men, was in reality a secret and somewhat dangerous combination. The members were enrolled under feigned names; and one of these members was Arthur Naseby. On one occasion, two or three years later, a riot broke out in the street, and Giles was seized among others by the police; whereupon Naseby had headed a rescue party, and carried the prisoners off while on their way to the police office.

It was a time when Government was very severe upon such offences; and Giles and Arthur Naseby fled. Grateful for the liberty which had thus been secured to him, the former advised Naseby to go to Stockborough, in Yorkshire, where he would find refuge with Giles's aunt, Mrs Hales. He himself would take passage in a vessel as a marine engineer, and leave the country for some years. He gave Naseby a letter to his aunt, also a message to his cousin Esther, his aunt's only child. Esther he had loved from his boyhood, though he had never spoken of it to her, for she was well educated, and he but indifferently so; yet he imagined there was a sort of understanding between them, and fondly hoped that, by industry and success, he might some time be in a position to ask Esther Hales to be his wife. The winning of her love had been the dream and the ambition of his life.

He remained abroad for nearly two years, returning to England towards the end of 1853, when he wrote to Arthur Naseby, saying that he was most anxious to visit his aunt and cousin, and asking if it was safe for him yet to do so. He was afraid the police had not forgotten him. In reply he received a letter stating that inquiries had quite recently been made in the town regarding him, and not in the meantime to come nearer Stockborough than the village of Bromley, a few miles to the south. Here he received a second letter from Arthur Naseby, stating that the writer, after an absence of two days, was returning home to Stockborough, and would meet with him on the following evening, after dark, at a place indicated, between Stockborough and the *White Horse Inn*.

'He came,' said the old man, addressing Clara; 'and how can I tell thee what took place between us? All these years, and all the way home, I had been thinking of Esther Hales; I had done well, and my heart was set upon winning her—more'n tongue can tell. And when I met him, and found as how he had married her—the man who had carried my last message to her—I think I mun ha' gone stark mad. I mun ha' threatened him; for he throwed his arms around me to keep me from striking him; but in my madness I shook him off, dashing him to the ground. We were on the road by the river-bank; and when he staggered from me, and fell, he rolled down the bank into the river. The night was dark, and I could not see him, and the river was in high flood. I only heard the splash in the water, and his wild cry.—This brought me summ't to mysen, and I saw the terrible thing I had done. I had been the death of the man who had been my friend till this wild love o' mine for Esther Hales came between us.

'I ran wildly along the water's edge; but nowt o' my old mate could I see. I called

for help, but no one came. I said, "I am a murderer!" A great fear came upon me, and I turned and ran off through the darkness, I knowed not where. At last I saw lights. It was the *White Horse*, and I went in. There were voices loud in the bar-room; but no one mun ha' seen me, and I went into the Blue Room. In the light of the fire, what was my horror to find a watch dangling at the end of a bit of chain that had fixed itself to a button of my coat? It was the watch o' the man whose death I had been! I could scarce handle it, for it looked in my eyes as if red wi' blood, and I a'most sickened at the sight of it. I tore it from its fastening, and looked about to see where I could hide it. There was a broken part in the wainscoting, and I dropped it down there, and rushed from the house.

'Ah, that runnin' away was the one great mistake o' my life! But I could not go back to Stockborough, and look on Esther Hales, and know that I had been the death o' the man who loved her—the man, too, as was my friend. I fled; and summer and winter, from year to year, I ha' been trying to fly from mysen ever since. How I wished to die that night in the storm on the Fell! Yet here, in Linlaven, I ha' been a'most happy—happier than I ha' been for all these thirty years; for I found folks as were kind to me; and I loved thee—and thy bairn. But the coat-of-arms on the tombstone in the church gave me a great scare; for they were the same as was on the last letter Arthur Naseby wrote me. And when the story was read from the paper o' the finding o' the watch, I said to mysen: "I will fly from my fate no longer," and was agoin' to tramp to Stockborough, to give mysen up, when the bells called me back. I knowed where thy little Lucy was, and I could not leave her to perish.'

Clara asked him if he had still Arthur Naseby's letters.

He put his hand into his breast and drew out the little leather case. There first fell out the tress of fair hair he had shorn from Lucy's head, which he held out his hand to receive back, and pressed to his lips; and then two letters. Both, the Vicar saw at once, were in the handwriting of Arthur Norham. The latest one, in which he had named the final and fatal place of meeting, was, curiously enough, written on the back of the last letter which the Vicar had written to Arthur before his disappearance, and which had the Norham arms stamped upon it. Arthur's letter was dated, 'Christmas Eve, 1853.'

'That is sufficient,' whispered Mr Brookes to the Captain; 'it forms indisputable proof that Arthur Norham was alive after the time of his father's death. Consequently, he was the heir of the Brathrig estates according to his father's will. We can beat off Linley now, and the estates are safe.'

But Clara heard nothing of this. She was intent upon every word that fell from the lips of the dying man.

'Thou knows now,' he said, 'the story o' my miserable life; and I feel easier in my heart that I ha' told thee of it.'

Clara went close up to him, and took his hand. 'Giles,' she said, 'Esther Hales was my mother.'

'Thy mother?—Ah!' And he looked as if a great light had burst in upon him. 'Thou be Esther Hales's child?—and Lucy be thine?—little Lucy?'

He lay silent for a while, and then said: 'Yes, that be it. I knowed there was summat about thy little Lucy as went beyond me. I see it all now. She ha' Esther Hales's eyes—my Esther's. —And yet,' he added, looking at Clara as if in fear, 'I were the death o' thy father.'

'And you have atoned for it,' said Clara, stooping and kissing the brow of the dying man, 'for you have saved my child—and hers.'

Some hours after, as they stood by the bedside, watching his last moments, there stole along upon the sunbright air the sound of Linlaven bells—not harsh and dissonant, as on yestereven, but soft and melodious, like the winged messengers of peace and forgiveness. Once more, as on that other Sabbath morn, came the clear melody of the bells, filling all the room with their sweet jargon; and the eyes of the dying man opened, and his lips were seen to move. He was saying '*Our Father!*' Was he once more in the old church at home by his mother's knee, with his hand in hers, the sunshine and the pleasant music filling all the place? Again the penitential words are on his lips: '*Forgive us our sins!*'— And again a great change has come, 'quick and sudden-like.' But not surely this time into Darkness. Rather, let us hope, into the Day that knows no evening, into the Light that has no eclipse.

'UNCLE GILES.' That was the name by which they had known and loved him; it is the name you may still see carved upon the little headstone above his grave; and that grave is in the place which of all places was most pleasant to him—within the sound of 'them beautiful bells,' the Bells of Linlaven.

THE END.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A VERY interesting paper was recently read before the Institute of Naval Architects by Mr Yarrow, describing a series of experiments which he has lately conducted with a view to trace the causes of vibration in screw steamers. These experiments were made on a fast torpedo boat, the engines of which revolved at the rate of two hundred and forty-eight times per minute. These experiments clearly showed that the vibration, so familiar to all travellers by sea, is not due to the action of the propeller in the water, but is caused by the machinery itself, and by the want of due balancing of the various cranks, piston rods, &c. To prove this, the vessel was deprived of its propeller while held fast by cables in still water, when it was found that the vibration of the hull was communicated to the surrounding water, and the ripple commotion caused thereon was conspicuous enough to be photographed. Mr Yarrow pointed out that by the use of weights and other devices the vibration of the machinery could be greatly reduced.

For a long time the locomotives on our trunk

railway lines have been so constructed that they are able to take up water from tanks placed between the rails even while going at full speed. A method of taking up coal without stopping has been invented in the United States, and the apparatus is to be tried upon one of the main American railroads. A working model has been made, but the details of the mechanism have not yet been published.

A great deal of attention has lately been directed to the question of carrying a life-line ashore from a vessel in distress. It was recently proved on the occasion of a wreck on our southern coast that the rocket apparatus is limited in its range, and this limitation is, of course, increased when the projectile has to force its way against a strong wind. Some successful experiments have been made near New York City with a large kite, which can be folded up when not in use, and will pack into a very small space. The kite is attached to a buoy, and will quickly convey that buoy across the roughest water. By this means it is possible to carry to the shore a very much heavier line than it is feasible to carry from the shore by means of a rocket; and it will readily be seen that the strong wind which forms such an obstruction to the passage of the latter, is a great help in carrying the kite to land.

The reindeer has been introduced into Alaska by the Government Agent of Education there, Dr Sheldon Jackson. It is believed that as this useful animal flourishes so well in Siberia it will soon become acclimatised in Alaska, where the conditions of vegetation, temperature, &c., are much the same. The experiment is most important from an economic point of view, for there are few animals which are more generally useful than the reindeer. Besides being valuable for drawing sledges, it is also greatly esteemed for its meat, its milk, and also for the value of its skin.

The manufacture of an artificial india-rubber has lately been protected by patent. The component parts of this composition are manila gum, benzine, bitumen, and resin oil. It is said that the product obtained from careful admixture and special treatment of these materials gives a substance which possesses all the elasticity, solidity, and suppleness of the finest india-rubber. It can, moreover, like the valuable product which it imitates, be vulcanised in the usual way. It is probable that the new compound will be found valuable to the electrician as an insulator, but we have not heard whether it has yet been tried in that capacity.

Mr H. A. Fleuss, whose life-saving apparatus formed the subject of an article in our columns some years ago, has produced a hand ice-making machine, which was described in a paper read by him at a recent technical meeting of one of the Societies. This machine embodies the principle of the Carré ice-making machine, particulars of which can be found in all the physical text-books. But in Mr Fleuss's machine the mechanism has been simplified and much improved, so that it is possible to procure a small quantity of ice at a few minutes' notice and with very little expenditure of labour. The machine will be invaluable on small yachts and other sailing-vessels which find their way to warm

latitudes. On larger vessels, where steam is available, ice, as is well known, is readily produced by the compression and expansion of air.

From a consular Report we learn that the paper-manufacture is one of the chief industries in Corea. The paper is made in the most primitive manner from the bark of a tree which is indigenous to the country and which is closely allied to the mulberry. The bark is gathered in the spring, and is boiled for a long time in water to which wood-ashes have been added, until it is reduced to pulp. This liquid pulp is placed in vats, and flowed over bamboo screens, which may be taken to represent the wire-work moulds used for hand paper-making in our own country. The web of paper thus formed is placed on a hot floor and ironed by hand. The Corean paper serves a great many useful purposes, for beyond its common use for books and writing, it is made into hats and boxes, is used for covering walls and ceilings, and also finds its way to China and Japan for the manufacture of umbrellas.

One of the New York theatres is employing the incandescent electric lamp in a novel manner, namely, to give the effect of sunrise on the stage. The apparatus consists of a curved screen partly made of gauze, behind which are arranged a number of incandescent lamps, which are so controlled by switches that the light given by them can be made to gradually increase in power. The electric current is also used in the same theatre to give the effect of a bursting shell, the shell itself being made of paper containing just enough powder to give a flash and to destroy it, while a current is simultaneously sent to a gun behind the scenes, which makes the necessary noise for the explosion.

General readers very seldom trouble themselves about the contents of those volumes constantly issued by government authority under the name of Blue-books. A blue-book is indeed looked upon as the synonym of something very dry and uninteresting. Yet these volumes occasionally give details which are worth attention even by the ordinary reader, and particulars of important proceedings are found here which cannot be readily gleaned from any other source. As a case in point, we may turn to the blue-book containing an account of the mines and minerals raised in Britain during the past year. From this we learn that the value of the gold smelted amounted to nearly £14,000, while the silver was valued at upwards of £2000. Iron stands first among the remaining metals, for its produce, after smelting, amounted to nearly £12,000,000. This unfortunately represents a falling-off of £3,000,000 when compared with the amount smelted in the previous year. Next in order comes tin, the value of which is put at £800,000; while the lead raised amounted to £400,000, and the zinc to about half that amount. The figures we have given represent the amounts in round numbers, and they all show a decrease on previous returns, except in the case of gold.

A new kind of miner's pick has been introduced by Messrs Camm, Bagshaw, & Co., of Lead Mill Steel Works, Sheffield. The chief feature of the new tool is that it is not made in one piece like the ordinary pick, but consists essentially of a steel casting which fits upon the shaft, hollowed out at end for the reception of the points or

blades of the instrument. By a clever device these points are perfectly tight when fixed, and they can be instantly released by a small wedge, which the miner can carry in his waistcoat pocket. It is possible to make the points or blades of better steel than when the pick is all in one piece, and these points can be replaced instantaneously when worn out, at small cost. One great advantage in using this new tool is that only one pick need be taken down the pit, while the points for renewal only need to be carried about. It is said that the new pick, weighing two pounds, will do better work than the older kinds, which weigh fifty per cent. more. The cost is about the same as the old pattern pick.

A fresh terror seems to be in store for the unfortunate inmates of the Russian prisons. It is proposed that the cells should be fitted with concealed microphones, so that any conversation can be automatically conveyed by wire to a distant telephone. There is no doubt that this idea could be carried out by means of a sensitive form of microphone. When this wonderful little instrument was first produced by Professor Hughes about fifteen years ago, it was jokingly said that it would be a convenient instrument to hide in the rooms occupied by a Cabinet Council, so that state secrets might be made known to outside ears. We presume that in Russia the use of the instrument will be confined to those prisons which are devoted to the reception of political offenders.

Modern aerial navigation was the subject of a paper recently read at the Royal United Service Institution by Captain J. D. Fullerton. In this paper the question of aerial navigation was divided under two distinct categories—(1) Ballooning, or the use of machines lighter than air; and (2) aëration, or navigation by means of machines heavier than the air. In describing the qualities required in a war balloon the lecturer said that it should be capable of carrying, besides one or two passengers, a supply of explosive shells and a machine gun, and that it ought to be able to travel by mechanical means at such a rate that it would be able to keep up with any war-ship afloat. The great difficulty in ballooning, and also in the construction of any flying-machine, was to obtain a sufficiently light motor. The lecturer concluded his remarks by quoting a statement which has been attributed to Mr Maxim, who is now engaged in constructing a flying-machine on a very large scale, upon which he has already expended about £10,000. 'If I can rise from the coast of France, sail through the air across the Channel, and drop half a ton of nitro-glycerine upon an English city, I can revolutionise the world. I believe I can do it if I live long enough; if I die, some one will come after me who will be successful if I fail.'

In the recent Report of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Explosives for the past year, two samples of gun-cotton were referred to, one of which had been under water for sixteen years, while the other had been buried under ground for twenty years. Both these samples were in fine condition, and as ready for the work of destruction as they were on the day of their manufacture. This shows that gun-cotton prepared with care is one of the safest explosive agents which can be employed. The fact alone that it can be

kept in a wet condition, and can, by special appliances, be exploded while wet, but is explosive unless those particular means be adopted, is sufficient to show that it can be stored with the greatest safety.

Some wonderful results with regard to potato culture have been obtained by a gentleman-farmer in France. This farmer, who is also a distinguished chemist, has been, according to a recent Consular Report from Nantes, for some time past conducting experiments with potatoes, with the remarkable result that he has succeeded in securing the enormous return of forty-two tons per acre. The plan he adopts is to carefully select the seed and to use only the best and soundest tubers. The ground is dug or ploughed to a great depth and is well manured. Before planting the seed potatoes, they are soaked for about twenty-four hours in a mixture composed of saltpetre and sulphate of ammonia, six pounds of each salt to twenty-five gallons of water. After this soaking, the tubers are allowed to drain, and they then stand for twenty-four hours longer, in order that the germs may have time to swell.

The same Report tells us that last year's potato crop in France was, owing to the unusual dryness of the season, below the average. Whenever disease showed itself, a dressing was used, consisting of two pounds of blue vitriol and four pounds of lime to twenty-five gallons of water. For preserving potatoes during the winter, it is recommended, after picking out the diseased tubers, to store the sound ones in a dry building or cellar in a heap about three feet deep. The place should be well ventilated; but in cold weather the doors must be kept closed, and the potatoes must occasionally be stirred about.

In the course of a discussion which took place recently after the reading of a paper at the Society of Arts, Mr J. Hughes referred to the composition of Nile mud, the fertilising value of which has always been regarded as being so great. Samples of this mud he had, some years ago, had occasion to analyse, and he found two special points about it which were not generally known: one of these was that the water was remarkably soft, and the other that it contained a considerable amount of nitric acid. The mud, in fact, was a complete manure, containing all the essentials for the food of plants in a very fine form, which alone was a great advantage.

Some good practice has recently been made with the new magazine rifle, about which weapon such unsatisfactory reports were circulated a few years ago. The gun was employed experimentally at the Hythe School of Musketry, and it was fired with smokeless powder, at a body of dummy figures, at a distance of eight hundred yards. The number of hits was eighteen per cent., which speaks well for the new arm, when it is remembered that it is a well-ascertained fact that in warfare not more than one per cent. of the bullets fired do any damage whatever. In testing the new rifle against the old one fired with black gunpowder, the value of the new explosive was seen to great advantage; the smoke emitted from each rifle being only about as much as would proceed from the end of a cigar. A distinct advantage would accrue to troops under such conditions, as their place would not be readily

discernible by a distant enemy, and, therefore, practically they would remain for a long time undiscovered.

Among the most interesting things shown at the recent successful Naval Exhibition in London was the very beautiful model of Nelson's celebrated flagship, the *Victory*. This model, although full size, was not a complete representation of the old vessel, the original of which is preserved at Portsmouth Harbour: it was, indeed, but the hulk of the ship, and so far was very completely carried out. It has now been determined that this same model shall be completed by adding to it every detail of the spars and rigging of the old ship, and in this restored state it is to be exhibited at the World's Fair at Chicago.

Another vessel of far different kind is being modelled for the same Exhibition at Cadiz, under the auspices of the Spanish government. This is to be a full-sized model of Columbus's ship, the *Santa Maria*, which carried the famous explorer to the western world. A gigantic statue of Columbus is also to be shown at Chicago, and this monument will furnish a design for souvenirs of the exhibition.

Dr Colin, a French army surgeon, has been studying the effect of regular marching upon soldiers, and he asserts that the regularity of the step causes a shock to the brain and the bones, which will often break down the strongest men. This shock is repeated forty thousand times in a fair day's march, and, therefore, it is productive of far more wear and tear to the brain and body than the irregular step usually adopted in taking mere walking exercise. The use of a rubber heel for military boots is found to give partial relief.

The beds of onyx in Arizona are of such vast extent that several car-loads are shipped daily from one mine. This mine is said to represent an almost solid body of the beautiful stone, measuring one mile by a mile and a half in area. A piece of onyx, the largest ever dug, was recently removed from the mine, which measured twenty-three feet by ten feet, and twenty-six inches thick. The Arizona onyx is finer than the Mexican, and will take a very high polish. It is shipped to Chicago, New York, and other cities, where it is used for table-tops and all kinds of other ornamental purposes.

It is announced from Tunis that excavations are now being made in the famous two-headed hill mentioned by Virgil, which hill is situated about eight miles from Tunis. Many interesting remains have already been unearthed, and it is confidently hoped that better will follow. A temple of Baal Saturn, which has been almost entirely laid bare, is attracting particularly the attention of the French archaeologists, because of its peculiarly interesting statues and bas-reliefs. The building is situated at an elevation of over sixteen hundred feet; and this is another proof that the Carthaginians practised their religious ceremonies on hills. On all the statues of the gods to which the temple is dedicated the names Baal and Saturn are found together, which would seem to indicate that to flatter their Roman conquerors the Carthaginians had added to the name of their chief god that of the highest Roman deity. Unfortunately, the statues found are only

torsos. Urns and small lamps bearing Christian emblems, and small coins of the third and fourth centuries, have been found. The excavations will be continued under the direction of the French archaeologist, Monsieur Toutain.

A WINTER'S TALE.

WE were watering the oxen at the well—Douglas and I—smoking and talking as we watched the cattle drinking and sniffing between each bucketful with a lazy satisfaction peculiar to their kind, and then carefully knocking over the pails with their noses after every drink. When I reflect on the number of pails Brandy and Soda broke in a year by these and other means, it is a wonder to me now that we made out as well as we did at first with our farming operations.

Douglas was a Scotch Canadian, up from the Portage on a visit to some friends, but an old-timer who knew the North-western prairies from Winnipeg to the Rockies, and from Prince Albert to the Moose Mountains, as well as the Red Men themselves.

We were sorry to hear from him that the Indians had prophesied an open winter, for we knew that they seldom blundered as to weather. Open winters, he continued, were a nuisance and hard on axles, for they meant severe frosts and little snow, with frequent heavy thaws—a state of affairs that would not admit of running sleighs successfully, and knocked wagons to splinters. Still the Indians had foretold it, and—at that time—I agreed with him that it was hopeless *our* trying to learn anything that *they* did not know about the weather; about hunting, fishing, and trapping; the operations of nature; the habits of bird, beast, and fish, and such-like occult arts and sciences.

But when spring came and the clang of the geese echoed on river, lake, and slough (Canadian pronunciation 'Sleugh'), and the long-drawn caw of the crow as he loafed across country resounded down the valley; and the young poplars and the willows, the saskatoon and all wild fruit-trees seemed to vie with one another in the race of growth, I began to wonder to myself what a hard winter was like, if the last six months represented an open one.

About the middle of October 1887 the 'Colonel' and I left our temporary winter-quarters a short distance from Castle Avery, to go down with the oxen and wagon to Birtle to enter for our land, and lay in stores and clothing for the winter. We started one day after dinner, travelling the twelve miles to Shellmouth before supper, and staying there till morning, covered the fifty miles thence to our destination in the course of the next two days.

We entered for our homesteads, and having attended to other necessary business, made all haste to get back, for the weather was wild and threatening, and the hard state of the trails and frequent snow-showers made our mode of progression unpleasant in the extreme; though on other matters we had no anxiety, as we had left everything at the ranch in care of our good friend Leslie.

We did well to hasten, for on the night of the 22d there was a heavy snowstorm, and the

mercury suddenly fell to fifteen below zero. The next day, Will Jameson, Jim Burt, and I broke the ice at the North Crossing of the Assiniboine, and made our way over the river in the boat, because we were afraid that the comparatively thin crust of ice would not bear us. I remember the occasion well, for Jameson and I stood on the south bank for about twenty minutes, shouting in the teeth of a bitter wind, to attract the attention of Burt's folks on the other side; and had not Burt come out by chance, we might have been standing there yet, for all the good our shouting did. After spending another quarter of an hour breaking the ice, Burt finally succeeded in getting across and taking us aboard the old second-hand and leaky egg-box that did duty for a boat; but there was so much water in it that I quite spoiled a brand-new pair of Indian moccasins I was wearing for the first time.

I don't think I shall ever forget Burt's crossing of the Assiniboine. I was telling him only the other day I intended making it figure in the first story I tried to write; and here it is. I have never yet crossed at this spot, owing to the wretched means of transit, without getting wet. As a general rule, of the two making the passage in the boat the passenger has to bale for dear life; and the ferryman for the time being has to pull like a Trojan to get across without egg-box and all going under; and when the river is high and running like a mill-race, it would be almost exciting if it were not so confoundingly damp. Well, the ice is getting pretty thin now, being early spring, and last night when I was taking Jimmy's mail to him, I suddenly landed up to my waist in a hole against the north bank, where the sun strikes at noonday. Luckily, the house is not more than two hundred yards away: so I soon obtained a change of clothing, and, not altogether relishing the idea of another bath in ice-cold water and after dark, I stayed at Burt's all night; but before I go over there again I shall insure my life. But this is all by the way—I must get back to my 'Winter's Tale.' A few days after our crossing in the boat, the ice was strong enough to bear a team, and remained in a state of rock-like solidity till the middle of April 1888, when the Martins, on the way back to their homesteads in the West, after wintering in the valley, found it strong enough to sustain the weight of the fifty head of cattle they took with them. It was indeed a long and weary winter.

Snow fell pretty often during November and December, and on and off in that time the Colonel and I were busy getting home the cattle and 'fixing-up' our houses and stables.

Before Christmas we registered fifty-seven degrees of frost; but on one occasion the wind blew from the west with a warmth that strongly resembled the Chinook (the name applied to the westerly wind that frequently springs up in that section of the North-west that lies near the Rocky Mountains, where it has its origin, and has the peculiar effect of raising the temperature from often below zero to above freezing-point in a few hours, melting the snow, and inducing an almost spring-like warmth), that so often prevails at this season of the year nearer the Rocky Mountains. On Christmas Eve and Christmas Day the snowfall was incessant; and then the fierce

Manitoba winter shut down with a snap, and for nearly four months blizzards, forty below zero, and snowstorms, followed one another with a regularity and pertinacity that became monotonous; while up to the end of May we did not experience more than three weeks of pleasant weather.

Christmas Day was the jolliest I had spent in the country since I left home. The Colonel's plum-pudding was a triumph of culinary art; while my beef-steak pie was as dismal a failure. I shall always believe it was his fault for leaving the oven door open while I went up to the post-office for our letters.

Leslie and Bickford came up to help us to eat the good things—at least the roast pork and pudding, for I had to devour every scrap of that steak pie myself. I had made enough for four men with appetites in proportion to the time of year; so I was quite a while performing the feat, and the number of times that pie appeared on the scene during the rest of the winter was wearisome in the extreme. The only drawback to the glory of the feast was the want of flavouring with the pudding—that kind of flavouring that goes very well with a pudding, and is not wholly unappreciated without.

After dinner or supper—it came off at five p.m.—we had a little music and singing, *Nancy Lee*, and the like, accompanied by Leslie's concertina. About half-past ten Bickford decided to go home, in spite of our urging him to stay till morning; and the last I saw of him that night was being pitched out of the saddle over blind Poll's head; but the snow was so deep that he sustained no damage. In some respects, indeed, it was rather an elevating end to a pleasant evening, but I myself prefer alighting from the saddle in a more deliberate and less energetic manner.

Two or three days after Christmas, I was helping Leslie to thresh; but what with ice and barley beards, my spectacles became so misty that about all I could see was the way to the house, whither I retired and thawed the glasses out. It was wonderful the number of times I had to do this in the course of the day.

During the rest of that week I helped the Colonel to get in supplies of wood and hay; and on the last day of the year went down to Shellmouth with the Castle Avery mail. The trails were bad; but with a good hand at the reins the ponies had to get there, and in spite of the drifts we hardly broke the trot the whole twelve miles. Arrived at Shellmouth, I met the 'Skipper,' and together we went out to his place (Trincomalee), where I stayed ten days; but as there was not employment for more than one, I was not overworked, and in fact grew restless for want of something to do, and longed to be out of doors to do it. But the time was near at hand when I was only too glad to remain in the house. On the 10th of January the Skipper drove me home, and never shall I forget that drive.

The thermometer registered twenty-five below zero when we started at noon, with a biting north-westerly wind; but the day was fairly bright and clear. We went a mile and a half out of the way to pick up Blanc, and then pulled out for Castle Avery and home; and though we were behind as good a team as there was at the time in this section of the country, it took us nearly five hours to travel the thirteen miles.

Nor were we exactly prepared for what was in store, for with the exception of some straw at the bottom of the wagon-box, which was mounted on sleighs, the horse-blankets, and Blanc's ox-hide, we had no suitable covering to protect us from such intense cold. As it was, the trail was hardly ever visible between Blanc's Bluff and Castle Avery. For a few minutes the horses would find it below the drift; the next instant, in their endeavour to follow it, they would mount miniature walls of snow, caked hard enough to bear the weight of the 'whole outfit' for a few yards successfully; suddenly, the treacherous crust would crack, and, slipping and plunging, now on the trail and now off, with one runner cutting nearly to the ground, and we ourselves in danger of being pitched out over the side, they toiled painfully and gallantly forward, the Skipper giving them their heads and constantly cheering them to further efforts—and they responded to the call. All the time, the wind, as if delighting in our helplessness, swept down and smote us with an icy keenness that made us curl up and shiver and chilled us to the marrow.

Once clear of Hamilton's Lake, the worst was over; and as we neared Castle Avery and the more wooded country, the edge was somewhat taken off the blast, and we felt cheered at the prospect of getting through in safety. But our destination was two miles beyond the Castle, and though we were sure of a kindly welcome and thaw-out within its hospitable walls, we, as we passed, merely dropped Blanc, who was bound thither, and never drew rein till we reached home. Fortunately, none of us were frozen, but stiff and weary from the exposure, the Skipper and I were able to eat but a morsel of supper. After seeing that his team and the cattle were comfortable for the night and taking a few whiffs, we turned in under all the blankets we could find, and awoke none the worse next morning for all we had gone through.

During the night the wind shifted to the opposite quarter, and when I bade the Skipper and the Colonel—whose turn it was now to go visiting—good-bye, there was a raging snow-storm from the south-east, that increased in intensity and vigour all day, continuing till about midnight, when the snow ceased, and the wind veered round again to the north-west, ushering in the direful blizzard of Thursday, January 12, 1888, disastrous alike to the lives of man and beast from the Mackenzie to Southern Iowa, while it was felt, more or less, right down to the Gulf of Mexico.

And yet the tale of frozen human corpses to be found during the next few days in this little understood and much abused province of the Great Lone Land might have been counted on one's fingers—a fact which will compare favourably with the havoc and distress wrought by the same tempest in the United States.

While it lasted, the maximum temperature for forty-eight hours was twenty-eight below zero, and the minimum at night-time forty-two below. The cattle and I kept warm and snug; but on the first day the pipe of the heating-stove in my bedroom was burned out and rendered useless; and for ten days I was obliged to live in the kitchen, where for a time I was a little crowded,

since Bickford, who lived only half a mile away on the river-bank, found his shanty too cold to remain in, and therefore came and stayed with me, bringing a friend or two with him. Indeed, the most serious matter was the hay running short. I did get a small 'jag' on the Friday from Bickford's nearest stack, and on my way back 'dumped' it, sleighs and all, in a gully near the house. But with the help of ropes and logging-chains, and a good steady pull, and no jerking, from Brandy and Soda, I succeeded in righting and getting the load home with no worse result than a frozen nose for myself. But alas! for the next two nights I had so many four-footed visitors as well, in the shape of a neighbour's horses I was temporarily accommodating, that soon there was but little of the jag left. However, Sunday falling quite calm, enabled me to fetch a good load, and from that time till the end of winter the supply of hay was well maintained.

The blizzard fairly over, we entered upon a short spell of steady cold, but delightfully fine and crisp weather, such as, I believe, is only to be found in these latitudes. From the instant when the night began to wane before the softly stealing dawn, when the first light touch that told of the nearing of the sun rifted out over the land in gleams of faintly roseate hue, all through the short day till the last of the afterglow, reflected in the eastern sky, slowly died away, the hours were full of sunshine and brightness, unflecked by cloud and unruddled by the slightest breeze. And the daylight had scarce left us, ere, night after night, the Northern Lights, like giant torches pointing the path to heaven, flashed forth and glinted weirdly, with a radiance that rivalled the glory of the winter's moon, till wooded crest and fertile valley, ice-chained river and glistening lake, homestead and hamlet, were illumined with a more than earthly splendour; and the wolves, as if angered by the flaming brilliancy, howled in dismal and tuneless chorus.

But all too soon we were to experience another series of snowstorms and heavy winds, that lasted till well on to the end of February, though, of course, the temperature became warmer and outdoor work less irksome. But as I continued to 'run the show' single-handed till the Colonel's return, I performed only the most necessary duties, such as tending the cattle, keeping up the stock of wood and fodder—as a substitute for water we melted snow, and the beasts went down every day to the water-hole cut in the river ice—and those odd jobs that always crop up on a Manitoba farm, as elsewhere.

Still I was far from feeling lonesome. Our shanty was on the trail to the lumber camp forty miles north, to the various hayricks in the valley, and to the bush for cutting both logs and firewood, so that friends used constantly to give me a call on their way past with their teams, sometimes remaining long enough to warm and have their meals with me, or perchance staying all night.

When the worst of the weather was over, the Colonel returned, and was shortly followed by Boffin and Rumbles, who, coming up from the timberless country some miles to the south of Castle Avery, elected to live with us while cutting a set of stable logs. We were a jolly party.

Besides the Colonel—whom I was glad to welcome back—and our two friends, there was Leslie, who came over day by day to hew the logs as they were cut, and a pretty regular stream of the wayfarers before mentioned. So that when the day's work was done, the dishes washed, and the cattle fixed up for the night, we had plenty of fun before we turned in. We went to bed early, for the work was more trying than even in mid-winter. The very warmth of the days caused us to get wet through from the knees downward in the melting snow, and this was followed by a sudden chill that came as soon as the sun began to sink, with the result that our trousers and felt boots were frozen as stiff as boards, which made us glad enough to come in to supper and the welcome warmth of the stove.

With the departure of Rumbles and Boffin after a fortnight's visit, and the completion of our own work in the bush, the Colonel and I began throwing down Benson's house, which we had bought, preparatory to hauling the logs it was built of to our homesteads, only leaving the work to help our neighbours with their house-raising, which came off as soon as the softened state of the snow permitted of turning up the earth sufficiently to lay the corner stones. These house-raising frequently gave us heavy, but by no means unpleasant work, when we all pitched in with a will—contented in the knowledge that we were helping our friends, and could count on their assistance at some future time for any like work that we might wish to undertake for ourselves.

We attended the first of these bees about the middle of April. Bickford was putting up a new stable, and I remember what a task it was to lift the heavy twenty-five feet ridge-pole into its place.

It was very warm in the sun, though the snow was still quite deep, with hard frosts at night, and we were looking forward to the advent of spring, for though on April 5th we experienced a fearful snowstorm, during the continuance of which I had to dig away the drifts from the stable doors three times, the geese had returned on the 7th, and their welcome cry was a sure forerunner of that grand summer weather which came at last, though slowly and reluctantly.

M O R N I N G.

THE tide of human life ebbs to and fro,

For night and sleep's forgetfulness are past,

And toiling men awake to come and go,

Upon the turmoil of a city cast.

Afar from ways that breathe of sordid care,

Of aching hearts, and many a life forlorn

In weary want, I turn my sleepless eyes

To where the maiden Morning's smiles are fair,

By rippling streams beneath unsullied skies,

Where winds come murmuring through the balmy air

With sound of angels' wings in Paradise;

And still beyond, where blossoms have no thorn,

And souls no striving; shades of grief and woe

Lost in the glory of Eternal Morn.

MARY CROSS.

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A GLIMPSE OF CYPRUS.

'Six o'clock, sir; just rounding Cape Gatta; Limasol in sight;' so said the steward, rousing me out on a fine shining morning to have my first peep at Cyprus.

In five minutes I was on deck, glass in hand, eagerly examining the shore. In the foreground was Cape Gatta, a bold headland, running far out into the waters of the blue Mediterranean; next, the salt marshes, so little above the sea as to be hardly distinguishable from it; farther round the bend of the bay, a few white dots; two or three minarets pointing their slender black tops to the sky; some firs, olives, and one or two straight palms, marking the position of Limasol; while far in the background, shimmering in the heat, rise the blue masses of Mount Troödos and its attendant hills, towering towards the clouds. Behind and on each side of the town the country looks brown and yellow; undulating, thickly dotted, especially near the sea, with small trees, and continually rising in height; broken and cut up in all directions by precipices and ravines, till at length it gradually merges into the blue hills in the far distance.

No sooner had the anchor been dropped than the ship was surrounded by boats with fruit for sale. Enormous bunches of purple grapes made our mouths water; but nothing could be done till the arrival of that most important official, the Health officer. At last we got *pratique*; then came the struggle to buy fruit, get breakfast, and rush on shore. Just inside the ship were lying a good many small Mediterranean craft, two of which were sponge-fishers, with very queer rigs, ornamented by strings of sponges hanging up to dry. Landing on a good pier, which has been built since the occupation, we managed to get a guide, and starting up the main street, soon found ourselves surrounded by a varied crowd of all nationalities—Greeks, Italians, Arabs, Cypriots, Nubians, and Turks, all seemed to have representatives here. The streets are for the most part paved with slabs of stone, but are

very dirty and narrow in parts. In the main street, at the back of the new custom-house, there was a kind of market going on. The pavement was lined on the shady side by women selling silks, neckerchiefs, and cotton stuffs made in Cyprus. Some of these materials were really very pretty; one, in particular, was a silk and cotton stripe, costing there about eightpence per yard; but sold at very much higher prices in London, by firms who buy up large quantities that are made in Nicosia, the capital of the island. There were also bright red, yellow, and purple handkerchiefs, roughly printed with designs round the edges that seemed to please the natives. Right under the wall was a man selling by weight some kind of pastry, simply floating in syrup—the weights used being simply bits of stone, supposed to be one oak—equal to two and three-quarter pounds English. We heard that a law had lately been passed, and was gradually coming into use, making the employment of proper weights compulsory. In one of the sweet-shops where we bought *Rahatlikom* (Turkish Delight), the weights were simply pieces of iron with bits of wire and stone tied on.

The dress of the peasant men consists of a Turkish fez bound with a turban, loose, very often striped red and white; blouse tucked inside a coloured cumberbund; and very baggy trousers, sometimes of a fine peacock blue colour; finishing up with thick half-knee boots. The women had much the same dress, with the addition of a petticoat or two. This kind of dress was worn chiefly by the country-people, the town-people being partly dressed in European costumes.

The queerest things of all in the dress were the half-knee boots. These were worn almost exclusively by every peasant, man and woman, in the place. Made of rough thick leather, all in creases, worn quite brown on the edges, the boots appeared as though they had not been cleaned or oiled for years. The soles were about one inch thick, studded all round with enormous iron nails, which are beaten up on the side of the sole so as to form a sort of side-plate. The reasons

for wearing such enormous footgear are twofold—firstly, as a protection from the snakes, which abound during harvest-time; and secondly, to keep the sand from their feet as much as possible. The 'yarn' is, that the boots are seldom taken off, people even sleeping in them.

After walking the streets for some time, we went to see the Greek church. This was a very barn-like building in a courtyard, with a high wall and gate next the street, so that no one could find it unaided. In front of the door of the church were a few marble slabs in memory of Greek priests; and on the interior walls were a few frescoes, very badly drawn and coloured. The chancel was divided from the church by a splendid carved wooden reredos, with panels gilt and painted with figures of saints, giving a very rich effect to the whole church. One of the priests came in, dressed in his robes, a high black circular hat, with the top edge turned outwards, and a long black cassock. As he could not speak a word of English, and we as little Greek, there was not much conversation; but we admired his altar, and remembering the Greek word for 'beautiful,' parted with beaming smiles.

There is a very nice club in Limasol, kept up for the benefit of the army and some civilians. The rooms seemed very cool after our morning's tramp in the hot sun, and a long drink of wine and soda was most inviting. The wine was very like good Sicilian claret, rather more fruity and dry, but not doctored with potato spirit, as much of that is. This wine is brought into the town in sheep-skins with the legs tied up, and the liquid poured out through the neck. In one of the streets we saw a courtyard full of wine-skins, some full, some empty, all lying about on the ground, stained blood-red with wine, and looking exactly as though it was a slaughter-house.

On Mount Troödos, about thirty-five miles from Limasol, is the summer camp of our troops. This is a very pretty spot, surrounded by trees, and about six thousand feet above sea-level, making it quite cool, so much so, that, in the camp, soldiers were sleeping with four blankets, and then hardly warm, when people down at Limasol were gasping and trying hard to keep cool. The road to the camp is in many places very rough, often running along the side of precipices, where one false step would mean death; so that, although only thirty-five miles, the ride often takes six hours, or, by using a change of ponies, four hours. The ambulance bringing down women and children takes some fourteen hours to do the same distance; but then of course they do not move beyond a walk. There are two more camps used in the winter—one at Polymedia, about three miles from Limasol; and the other at Perapedia, at the foot of Mount Troödos.

There used to be plenty of shooting when the occupation first took place; but since the English have shown the natives that birds can be hit on the wing, every man who can manage it gets a gun and goes shooting every thing that flies, except snipe, as they cannot manage to hit these yet. The consequence is that if you want shooting now you must work hard, and be thankful for what you can get.

The majority of the houses in Limasol are built of sun-dried bricks, made from mud mixed with

seaweed, and built together with mud for mortar. The door-openings have often stone angles and arches, the doors themselves being made in two leaves, studded with large nails, and with a carved post in the centre. Small images are often fixed in the sides of the doorway.

The blacksmiths use a peculiar kind of bellows for their forges, made in two parts, with handles at the end of each, and worked by a man sitting in the centre and alternately pushing each part. These seemed to give an almost continuous blast with little trouble.

In one house was a man carding wool in quite a novel way. Squatting on the floor, he held in front of him a bamboo bow about six feet long, strung with thick catgut. This gut he kept on pulling out just sufficiently to touch a heap of rough wool, a small quantity of which was torn out and thrown on a heap of fine carded wool by the rebound, the jerk being sufficient to card it beautifully. Shoemakers and mule-saddlers were greatly in the majority amongst the trades, dozens of them everywhere. Well-made baskets of white bamboo are of native manufacture and very cheap.

On our way to the landing-place we passed a gang of prisoners guarded by 'zaptiehs,' uniformed in white, with a red fez, and armed with rifles and bayonets. The prisoners were dressed in light blue, not unlike our own convicts. On turning the corner we saw the prison, originally an old castle, looking very solid and strong, with high stone walls, and embrasures on top. We decided that it would be interesting to see the inside; but how? was the question, as an order was wanted, and we had none. We will try, was the decision; and going up a short flight of steps, we came to a small heavily-barred and studded door, at which, by luck, a native had just knocked and was now waiting to go in. As soon as it was opened, we walked in, waiving the jailer to one side, as though we had a dozen orders, went right round the prison, followed all the time by the jailer, saw all the prisoners on the ground-floor, and were starting to come out again, when cries of 'order' were hurled from a top gallery on the head of our poor jailer, making him try to tell us, by gestures, that we must clear out if we had no order; so out we went.

The prison was one large vaulted hall, with a gallery half-way up, and cells on the ground-floor and gallery. These were simply vaulted holes with an open barred grating in front, and from one to three men in each, with their names and sentences on a board hanging outside. The furniture was simply one or two wooden table-beds and a rough blanket, but everything very clean.

Our time was getting short; so back to the boats was the order, passing on the way through some of the busiest streets of the town, full of small shops and traders—here a Soudanese, black and shining as a well-polished boot; there a Cypriot sitting cross-legged on a board; farther on, rows of tinnmen, all finding the greater amount of their material in paraffin tins; mule-saddlers, boot-shops, and all the one-hundred-and-one small trades that exist in an Eastern town.

Oh those paraffin tins! what would the East-erns do without them? Pots, kettles, ovens,

boxes, lamps, flower-pots, and a dozen other things besides, are all made from them. A short time after leaving Cyprus, I saw some standards captured from the Mahdi at the battle of Toski; even these had pointed tops to their staffs made from paraffin tins, and bearing the stamp, 'Safe from fire.' Rather a parody on the adventures of the wretched flag.

Now back on board again, very glad to get a good wash and change, to free ourselves from some of the Cyprus sand. Then sitting on the deck and watching Cyprus fade away into the dim blue distance, we felt that at least we had not wasted our time.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XXX.—ATHELSTAN'S DISCOVERY.

ON the evening of that same day the same discovery was made by another of the persons chiefly concerned.

You have seen that Athelstan on his return made haste to find out the commissionaire who had presented the forged cheque. Happily, the man remembered not only the circumstance itself but also his employer on that occasion. A generosity far above what is commonly found among those who employ the services of that corps endeared and preserved the memory of the day. He had received, in fact, half a sovereign for an eighteenpenny job: and the commissionaire is not like the cabby, to whom such wind-falls are common. Not at all. With the former we observe the letter of the law.

After eight years this man's memory was rewarded. This thrice blessed job produced yet more golden fruit. Heard one ever of a more prolific job?

After breakfast, Athelstan was informed that a commissionaire desired to speak with him. It was his one-armed friend.

'Beg your pardon, sir,' he said, saluting after the military manner—'you said I was to come and tell you, first thing, if I found your man for you.'

'Certainly. I told you also that I would give you a five-pound reward for finding my man, as you call him. Well—I will be as good as my word if you have found him.'

'I saw him yesterday. The very same old gentleman that sent me to the Bank that day. He's older, and he doesn't look so jolly, and he walks slower; but I knew him at once.'

'Oh! are you quite sure? Because a resemblance, you know?'

'Well, sir, I can swear to him. I remember him as well as I remember anybody. He sat in the chair, and he laughed, and he said: "You've been quick over the job, my man. There's something extra, because you might have dropped the money down a grating, or run away with it, or something," he says. "Here's half a sovereign for you, my man," says he; "and I daresay you can do with it." "I can so, sir," I says, "and with as many more like them as I can pick up."

Then he laughed, and I laughed, and we both laughed.—And that's the same man that I saw yesterday evening.'

'Oh! this is very curious. Are you quite sure?'

'I'd swear to him anywhere. A man can't say fairer.'

'No—as you say—a man can hardly say fairer, can he? Now, then, when did you see him?'

'It was between six and seven. I'd been doing a message for a gentleman in the Strand—a gentleman in the dining-room line to a gentleman in Holborn in the sausage and tripe line, and I was going back with a letter, and going through Lincoln's Inn for a short cut. Just as I was getting near the gate to the Fields, I saw coming out of the door at No. 12 the very man you want to find. I wasn't thinking about him, not a bit—I was thinking of nothing at all, when he come out of the door and walked down the steps. Then I knew him. Lord! I knew him at once. "You're the man," I says to myself, "as give me the half-sov. instead of eighteenpence." Well, I stood at the corner and waited to see if he would remember me. Not a bit of it. He stared at me hard, but he never recollected me a bit—I could see that. Why should he? Nobody remembers the servant any more than they remember the private in the ranks. The very same old gentleman; but he's grown older, and he didn't look jolly any more. 'Praps he's lost his money.'

'Come out of No. 12, did he? Why, Dering & Son's office is there. What does this mean?'

'I thought I'd like to find out something more about him; and I thought that a five-pound note was better worth looking after than eighteenpence—so I let the letter from the tripe and sausage man lay a bit, and I followed my old gentleman at a good distance.'

'Oh! you followed him. Very good. Did you find out where he lived? I can tell you that. He went to No. 22 South Square, Gray's Inn.'

'No; he didn't, sir.—But you are not very far wrong. He went through Great Turnstile; then he crossed Holborn and turned into Featherstone Buildings, which is all lodging-houses. But he doesn't live there. He walked through the Buildings, and so into Bedford Row, and he stopped at a house there'—

'What! In Bedford Row?'

'Yes; in Bedford Row—and he pulls out a latch-key and lets himself in. That's where he lives. No. 49 Bedford Row, on the west side, very near the bottom. He lives in Bedford Row.—Well, sir, I like to do things proper, and so, to make the job complete, I went to the *Salutation*, Holborn, where they keep a Directory, and I looked out his name. The gentleman that lives at No. 49 Bedford Row is named Edward Dering—and among the names of No. 12 New Square, Lincoln's Inn, is the name of Dering & Son.—So, sir, I don't think it is too much to say that your man is Mr Dering, who belongs both to Bedford Row and Lincoln's Inn. He's the man who sent me to the Bank eight years ago.'

Athelstan stared at him. 'He the man?' he cried. 'You are talking impossibilities. He can't be the man.'

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'Nobody else, sir. If that was Mr Dering that I saw yesterday walking home from New Square to Bedford Row—he's the man who sent me for the money.'

To this statement the man stuck firm. Nor could he be moved by any assertion that his position was impossible. 'For, my friend,' said Athelstan, 'the man who sent you with the cheque was the man who robbed Mr Dering.'

'Can't help that, sir. If the gentleman I saw yesterday walking from Lincoln's Inn to Bedford Row was Mr Dering—then he robbed himself.'

'That's foolishness. Oh! there must be some explanation. Look here! Mr Edward Dering leaves his office every evening between six and seven. I will be in New Square on the west side this evening at six. You be there, as well. Try not to seem as if you were watching for anybody. Stand about at your ease.'

'I'll make it sentry-go, sir,' said the old soldier. 'I'll walk up and down in front of the door same as some of our chaps got to do in front of shops. You trust me, sir, and I won't take no notice of you.'

This little plot, in fact, was faithfully carried out. At six o'clock Athelstan began to walk up and down outside the gate which opens upon Lincoln's Inn Fields—the commissionaire at the same time was doing sentry-go in front of No. 12 in New Square. When the clock struck six there was a rush and a tramp of hurrying feet: these were the clerks set free for the day. There are not many solicitors' offices in New Square, and these once gone, the place becomes perfectly quiet. At half-past six there was the footfall as of one man on the stairs, and he descended slowly. He came out of the door presently, an old bent figure with white hair and shrivelled face. Paying no heed to the sentry, he walked away with feeble step in the direction of Chancery Lane. Checkley this was, on his way to look after his tenants and his property.

Athelstan looked after him, through the gate. Then he called his old soldier. 'See that man?' he asked. 'That's the man who sent you to the Bank.'

'No—he isn't.' The man was stout on that point. 'Not a bit like him. That old man's a servant, not a gentleman. See the way he holds his hands. Never a gentleman yet carried his hands that way. You can always tell 'em by their hands. The other day I met an old pal—seemed to forget me, he did. Wanted to make out that he'd never been in the army at all. So I lay by for a bit. Then I gets up—and he gets up too. "Tention," says I, and he stood to 'tention like a good old Tommy Atkins. You watch their hands whatever they say. Always tell 'em by their hands. That old man he's a servant. He isn't a gentleman. He can't sit among the swells and order about the waiters. He hasn't learned that way. He'd get up himself, if you asked him, and put the napkin under his arm and bring you a glass of sherry wine. He's not my man. You wait a bit.'

At a quarter to seven another footstep was heard echoing up and down the empty building. Then an old man, erect, thin, tightly buttoned, wearing neat gloves and carrying an umbrella, came out of the door. His face was hard, even austere. His walk was firm. The Sentry, as this person

walked out of the gate, followed at a distance. When he was beside Athelstan, he whispered: 'That's the man. I'd swear to him anywhere. That's the man that sent me to the Bank.'

Athelstan heard in unbounded astonishment. That the man? Why—it was Mr Dering himself!

'Let us follow him,' he whispered. 'Not together. On opposite sides of the road. Good Heavens! this is most wonderful. Do not lose sight of him.'

To follow him was perfectly easy, because Mr Dering turned neither to the right nor to the left, but marched straight on through Great Turnstile, across Holborn, through Featherstone Buildings, and into Bedford Row. At No. 49, his own house. Where else should he stop?

Athelstan took out his purse and gave the man the five pounds. 'I don't know what it means,' he said. 'I can't understand a word. But I suppose you have told me the truth. I don't know why you should make up a lie'—

'It's Gauspel Truth,' said the man.

'And therefore again—I don't understand it. Well—I've got your name and your number. If I want you again I will send for you.'

The man saluted and walked away. Half a sovereign for an eighteenpenny job, and eight years afterwards five pounds on account of the same job. Robbery, was it? Robbery—and the old man pretending to rob himself. Now what did that mean? Laying it on to some poor harmless innocent cove, the soldier guessed: laying it on to some one as he had a spite against—the old villain—very likely this young governor—most likely—Donations on account of that same job, very likely—the old villain!

As for Athelstan, he returned to Lincoln's Inn Fields, where, the evening being fine and the sun warm and the place quiet except for the children at play, he walked up and down the east or sunny side for half an hour turning the thing over in his mind.

For, you see, if Mr Dering went through the form of robbing himself and finding out the robbery and coldly suffering the blame to fall upon himself—then Mr Dering must be one of the most phenomenally wicked of living men. Or, if Mr Dering robbed himself, and did not know it—then Mr Dering must be mad.

Again, if such a thing could be done on a small scale, it might be done on a larger scale with the same result—namely, suspicion to fall upon a blameless person; obloquy to gather round his name—for in some cases simply to be charged is almost as fatal as to be convicted: and perfect impunity for himself. 'This is not my own writing, but a forgery,' said the man who had been robbed. Then, who is the forger? You—you. None but you. The bare suspicion becomes a certainty in the minds of those who were once that man's friends.—And his life is cankered at the outset. He thought of his own life; the bitterness of alienation and exile. Never any time for eight years when he could explain the reasons of his exile. Debt, the cultivation of wild oats, failure to pass examinations—anything would do for such a reason except suspicion of forgery. Athelstan was a cheerful young man. He seldom allowed himself to be cast down by the blows of fate. Nevertheless, during his whole time of exile, the drop of bitter-

ness that poisoned his cup was that he could not tell the whole story because the world would believe no more than half—that half, namely, which contained the accusation. When one walks about thinking, there comes a time when it seems no good to think any longer. The mind can only get a certain amount out of a case at one sitting. That amount absorbed, the best thing is to go on to something else. Athelstan went on to dinner. He left his sister to the care of her young man, and dined by himself. He took a steak at a Holborn restaurant with an evening paper, which he considered professionally. After dinner he returned to his subject. Perhaps he should get a step farther. No—perhaps on account of the sweet influence of dinner he got no farther at all. Here was an astonishing fact. How to account for it? You have seen—by one of two ways—malignity unspeakable: or madness—madness of a very curious kind—the madness of a man whose calm cold judgment had made him appear to his friends as one with an intellect far above any ordinary weaknesses of humanity. Mr Dering mad? Then the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Speaker of the House of Commons, the President of the Royal Society, the President of the Institute of Civil Engineers, the Cambridge Professors of Mathematics—all these men might be mad as well. And nobody to know it or to suspect it. Mr Dering mad! and yet, if not, what was he?

There was one way. He had tried it already once. He left the restaurant and turned eastwards. He was going to try South Square, Gray's Inn, again. Perhaps Mr Edmund Gray would be in his rooms.

He was not. The door was shut. But the opposite door stood open, that of Freddy Carstone. Athelstan knocked, and was admitted with eloquence almost tumultuous.

'Just in time,' said the coach. 'I've got a new brand of whisky, straight from Glasgow. You shall sample it. Have you had dinner yet? So have I. Sit down. Let us talk and smoke tobacco and drink whisky and soda.'

'I will do the talking and the tobacco at any rate.'

'I love Virtue,' said Freddy. 'She is a lovely goddess—for if Virtue feeble were, Heaven itself would stoop to her. She has only one fault. There is reproach in her voice, reproach in her eye, and reproach in her attitude. She is an uncomfortable goddess. Fortunately, she dwells not in this venerable foundation. Do not imitate Virtue, old boy. Let me—That's right. We shall then start fair upon the primrose path—the broad and flowery way—though I may get farther down than you. Athelstan the Wanderer—Melnoth the Wanderer—Childe Harold the Pilgrim—drink and be human.' He set the example. 'Good whisky—very good whisky. Athelstan, there's a poor devil up-stairs, starving for the most part—let's have him down. It's a charity.' He ran up-stairs, and immediately returned with the decayed Advocate, who looked less hungry than usual, and a shade less shabby—you have seen how he borrowed of Mr Edmund Gray through Elsie.

'Now,' said the host, 'I call this comfortable: a warm August evening: the window open: a

suspicion of fresh air from the gardens: soda and whisky: and two men for talk. Most evenings one has to sit alone. Then there's a temptation to—to close the evening too quickly.'

'Freddy, I want to hear more about your neighbour. You told me something, if you remember, a week or two ago.'

'Very odd thing. Old Checkley at the *Salutation* is always pestering about Mr Edmund Gray. What has he to do with Mr Edmund Gray? Wanted me to answer his questions.'

'And me,' said Mr Langhorne. 'I did answer them.'

'Well—Mr Edmund Gray is—What is he? An old gentleman, of cheerful aspect, who is apparently a Socialist. We must all be allowed our little weaknesses. All I ask for is'—He reached his hand for the whisky. 'This old gentleman carries his hobbies so far as to believe in them seriously. I've talked to him about them.'

'I have heard him lecture at Camden Town,' said the Barrister. 'I go there sometimes on Sunday evening. They have a tea-feast with ham and cake and toast. It is a pleasant gathering. It reminds one of the Early Church.'

'Well, Athelstan, what else can I tell you? Hark!' There was a step heard ascending the stairs. 'I believe that is the old man himself. If it is, you shall see him. I will bring him in.'

He went out to meet the unknown footstep on the landing. He greeted the owner of that footstep: he stopped him: he persuaded him to step into the opposite room. 'You must be lonely, Mr Gray, sitting by yourself. Come in and have an hour's talk. Come in. This way. The room is rather dark. Here is Mr Langhorne, your overhead neighbour, whom you know; and here is Mr Athelstan Arundel, whom you don't know. Those who do know him like him, except for his Virtue, which is ostentatious in one so young.'

It was now nearly nine o'clock. The lamp was not lit, and the room lay in twilight. It is the favourite shade for ghosts. A ghost stood before Athelstan, and shook hands with him—the ghost of Mr Dering.

'I am happy,' the ghost held out his hand, 'to make your acquaintance, Mr Arundel. An old man, like myself, makes acquaintances, but not friends. His time for new friendships is gone. Still, the world may be full of pleasant acquaintances.'

He sat down, taking a chair in the window: the shade of the curtain fell upon his face so that nothing could be seen but a white circle.

'Let us have candles, Freddy,' said Athelstan.

'By all means.' Freddy lit a lamp on the table and two candles on the mantel-shelf. By their light the lineaments and figure of the ghost came out more distinctly. Athelstan gazed on it with bewilderment: his head went round: he closed his eyes: he tried to pull himself together.

He sat up: he drank half a glass of whisky and soda, he stared steadily at the figure he had not seen for eight years, since—Good Heavens! and this man had done it himself! And he was as mad as a hatter.

Mr Edmund Gray looked serenely cheerful. He lay back in the long chair, his feet extended and crossed: his elbows on the arms of the chair,

his finger-tips touching; his face was wreathed with smiles; he looked as if he had always found the world the best of all possible worlds.

Athelstan heard nothing of what was said. His old friend Freddy Carstone was talking in his light and airy way, as if nothing at all mattered. He was not expected to say anything. Freddy liked to do all the talking for himself—therefore he sat watching a man under an illusion so extraordinary that it made him another man. Nothing was changed in him—neither features nor voice nor dress—yet he was another man. 'Why,' asked Athelstan, 'why did he write that cheque for seven hundred and twenty pounds?'

Presently Freddy stopped talking, and Mr Edmund Gray took up the conversation. What he said—the doctrines which he advanced, we know already. 'And these things,' said Athelstan to himself, 'from those lips! Is it possible?'

At ten o'clock Mr Edmund Gray rose. He had to write a letter; he prayed to be excused. He offered his hand again to Athelstan. 'Good-night, sir,' he said. 'To the pleasure of seeing you again.'

'Have we never met before, Mr Gray?' Athelstan asked.

'I think not. I should remember you, Mr Arundel, I am sure,' Mr Gray replied, politely. 'Besides, I never forget a face. And yours is new to me.—Good-night, sir.'

A VISIT TO THE POST-OFFICE.

STUDYING the statistics of the last Post-office Report kindled a desire in the writer of this article to see something of the working of this vast and huge machine, for without a personal visit it is perhaps difficult to gain any correct impression of its immensity, or of the perfect discipline and order which pervade the buildings devoted to postal and telegraphic work. I think it is a visit which should be made by every Londoner, if possible. They would then marvel that we get our letters and papers in the short time we do, if they were to see the thousands upon thousands that are poured into St Martin's-le-Grand day by day. As the authority who piloted me through the mazes of the building told me, the General Post-office never sleeps with the exception of Sunday between twelve and half-past one. The work is never at a standstill.

I began my visit inspecting what is known as the 'blind' department, where letters with indistinct, incomplete, and wrongly spelt addresses are puzzled out by those specially trained in solving such mysteries. Scrap-books are kept in this department, into which the curious and amusing addresses originally inscribed on the face of letters transmitted through the Post-office are copied and preserved. Whilst looking at these a post-card was handed in to one of the officials merely addressed Jackson. Whether the sender thought it would go around to the various Jacksons in London, I know not, but anyway it was decided to take the trouble to return it to the sender, advising him that it was insufficiently addressed. The trouble careless individuals give the Post-office is inconceivable, and the way some

try to cheat in the manner of registering letters needs to be seen to be believed.

From the 'blind' department I was conducted to the 'hospital,' where letters and parcels badly done up which have come to grief are doctored and made sufficiently secure to reach their destination. When it is recollected that our letter and parcel post is so cheap, the outside public might at least take the trouble to do them up properly without putting the Post-office to the enormous trouble it does, and which is done without a murmur and without extra charge. Some are put into fresh envelopes, others are sealing-waxed where slits have occurred, and others are properly tied up with string. All this trouble might be saved by a little forethought on the part of the senders.

The number of samples that different firms send through the post each day is astonishing. Mother Seigel's Syrup has reached 35,000 a day. Innumerable samples of tea go through the post daily, as well as patterns of new materials. The Prudential Insurance Company is quite a small post-office in itself, sending 11,000 despatches of one kind and another every day. It is said that 1,504,000 pattern and sample packets are posted annually in the metropolis. In addition to those just mentioned, alpaca, corduroy, gloves, ribbons, plush, whalebone, muslin, linen, biscuits, oilcakes, pepper, yeast, toilet soap, sperm candles, mustard, raisins, &c., are sent by sample post. One firm alone posted 125,418 packets containing spice.

The time to visit the sorting process at the Post-office is between half-past five and eight o'clock in the evening. At closing time the letters are simply poured by thousands into the baskets waiting to receive them, and each one as soon as full is wheeled off in an instant to the sorters and other officials waiting to deal with them. Deposited on the innumerable tables, the first process is to face the letters—not so easy a task when the shapes and sizes of the letters are so varied. As soon as the facing process is over, they are passed as quick as lightning on to the stampers, who proceed to deface the Queen's head. The noise whilst this process is being gone through is deafening. Some stampers have a hand-machine, whilst others are making a trial of a treadle stamping-machine recently introduced, and which stamps some four hundred letters per minute. From the stampers the letters pass on to the sorters. Whilst all this is proceeding, the visitor should step up into the gallery for a minute or two and look down on the busy scene below. It is a sight well worth seeing and not likely to be forgotten—the thousands of letters heaped on the tables, and the hundreds of workers as hard at work as it is possible for them to be. The envelopes are separated and placed in the several pigeon-holes which indicate the various directions they are to travel. Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Edinburgh, and Glasgow have special receptacles for themselves, as the first three cities have on an average fifteen thousand letters a day despatched to each; and further, there are eight despatches a day to these places, eleven thousand per day go to Glasgow, and between eight and nine thousand to Edinburgh. All official letters—that is, 'On Her Majesty's Service'—have a special table to themselves.

Some eighty-nine thousand Savings-bank books pass through St Martin's-le-Grand daily. Some sorters get through between forty and fifty letters a minute, whilst a new-comer will not be able to manage more than twenty or thirty.

The nights on which various mails go out are extra busy ones, especially Friday evening, when the Indian, Chinese, and Australian mails are sent. The reduction of the postage has made an enormous difference in the contents of the mail-bags to these parts of the world. One would have thought, as every post-office notifies the reductions by placards, and the press also directed attention to the alteration, that it would have been known by all those interested in sending letters abroad; but letters with fivepenny and sixpenny stamps have been noticed months afterwards. It may be interesting here to note how the mails are dealt with at Brindisi. Van after van conveys the mail-bags from the train to the ship, where two gangways are put off from the shore to the ship's side. Lascars run up one and down the other with the bags. Each lascar has a smooth flat stick like a ruler, and as he deposits his mail-bag on a long bench over the hold he gives up his stick to a man standing by. When five lascars have arrived, the sticks go into one compartment of a small wooden box; and when the box is full—that is, when a hundred have been put in—the box is carried off and another brought forward. Three hundred and ninety-two bags is a good average, and they take just under forty minutes to put on board. The French and Italian mails are included in these; but no other European mails go by the Peninsular and Oriental Company. At Aden, two sorters come on board and spend their days in some postal cabins sorting the mails for the different parts of India, &c. The bags in which these mails are enclosed are only used once. They are made in one of our convict prisons, and fresh ones are distributed each week both outward and homeward.

Amusing incidents—so 'Mr Tombs, the Controller, tells us—occur sometimes even in the dull business of sorting and despatching letters. One of the clerks of olden times, in accordance with the practice of 'calling out' when the circulation of a letter was not known, amused his fellow-workers by vociferating 'Barbadoes without a county.'

Some of the latest specimens of curiously addressed letters are given in Mr Tombs' *Postal Service of To-day*; amongst these are: 'E. C. CHAMBERS seaman H.M.S. *Dana* Sarlaryhon Cape Carst Carcel or elcewhere. [Sierra Leone, Cape Coast Castle].—HERAN & SON Obanvidok [Holborn Viaduct].—RICHARD ROGAN Ship in Hunger [Chipping Ongar] Essex.—SUR GENARELL PANSELEE our Queens Privet Pus Keeper Bucom Palus.'

Turning from the General Post-office South, which is now exclusively utilised for letters and papers, I proceed to the General Post-office North, which is devoted solely to the telegraph department, and for the time being the administrative offices are housed here until the new building in course of erection close by is ready for their reception. Alterations in the Post-office buildings are always being made every year to make more room for the ever-increasing work. Cold-

bath Fields Prison has been rapidly converted into a home for the Parcel Post, and this building will be kept exclusively for parcels. The Savings-bank department was originally in the same building as the telegraph, but owing to the rapid increase in both departments, the Savings-bank has been removed to Queen Victoria Street. Some three thousand male and female clerks are employed in the telegraph department alone. The top floor of the building is devoted to the metropolitan districts. A telegram sent from one suburb of London to another is bound to pass through St Martin's-le-Grand; it cannot be sent direct. The second floor deals with the provinces. The pneumatic tube is used a great deal now, by means of which some fifty telegrams can be sent on at once, and not singly, as would be the case if the telegraphic instrument was the only instrument in use. The tube is mostly used at the branch offices. It was tried by the General Post-office to carry the mail-bags to Euston Station by means of the tube; but it was not very successful, and consequently had to be abandoned.

The press is a great user both of the postal and telegraphic department. In the postal department the representatives can call for their letters at any hour, provided they are enclosed in a distinctive-coloured envelope, such as bright red or orange. Of course this privilege has to be paid for. In the telegraph department the press can obtain their 'private wires' after six in the evening, as the wires are no longer required for commercial purposes. The plan adopted in sending the same message to every provincial town which has a daily journal is the following: all along the route the operators are advised of the fact, and whilst the message is only actually delivered at its final destination, the words are caught as they pass each town by means of the 'sounder.' By this ingenious arrangement, dozens of towns are placed in direct communication with the central office whence the message is despatched. To carry on our telegraphic arrangements three miles of shelves, on which are deposited forty thousand batteries, are requisite.

Such are some of the interesting features of this marvellous machine, which is ever in motion, and assisting in no small degree to realise the dream of 'universal brotherhood.'

THE MAYOR OF SAWMILL FLAT.

By WILLIAM ATKINSON.

IN TWO CHAPTERS—CHAP. I.

It was the 1st day of September 1888. In far-away New York City good citizens were either in bed and asleep, or were preparing to retire; in more remote London, the milkmen and market-gardeners had already opened up the business of a new day; but in South-western Arizona it was the hour of sunset.

Seated upon a camp-stool, in front of a frame-shanty that boasted two small apartments, was a man, handsome in spite of his rough dress and weather-tanned countenance, but prematurely gray and careworn. His white locks betokened threescore years at least; but if the register of

a certain parish in the North Riding of Yorkshire tells the tale truly, John Lee was born in the year of grace 1850, and was therefore just thirty-eight years old. A shingle protruded from the entrance of the rude cabin, upon which some apprentice hand had printed the legend—'DR JOHN LEE, Physician and Surgeon.'

Now, although Dr Lee was the only medical man within forty miles in every direction, he was not overburdened with patients, and had long since arrived at the conclusion that, viewed from a professional standpoint, Sawmill Flat was altogether too healthy a locality. Indeed, on this especial September evening he had been calculating the length of time since his services were last in requisition. He found that it was exactly eight weeks since he extracted a bullet from Tombstone Hank's hip—placed there by Hank's bosom friend, upon the occasion of a slight difference over a friendly game of Seven-up—for which the grateful Hank had paid him six dollars—nominally as a ten per cent. deposit, but in reality as payment in full. It will be readily conceded, even though Arizona doctors are not compelled to purchase dress suits, attend receptions, and make their professional calls in broughams, that six dollars is, to say the least, a thin income for two months; so it is scarcely surprising that John Lee was about resolved to

Fold his tent, like the Arabs,
And silently steal away;

or, in the more concise language of Saw Mill Flat, to 'dig out.'

For a man who had spent his boyhood's days in one of the most picturesque of the North Yorkshire dales, the prospect from John Lee's shanty door was not particularly inspiring. Immediately before him was the Santa Fé Trail—that great South-western emigrant road along whose thirteen-hundred-mile course hundreds of scalpless corpses have been left to rot in the summer sun and bleach in the autumn winds. Half a mile down the trail could be seen the score of low shanties occupied by the workers—who were also shareholders—in the Big Bug Silver Mine, whose location was betrayed by the huge derrick and pulley-wheel rising high above the cabins. Beyond the mine—south, east, and west—was an endless expanse of waste sandy soil, which sustained no life save that of the deadly rattlesnake.

To the north the view was not quite so dismal, although it was dull enough. More than a mile away, surrounded by a clump of dwarfed cottonwood trees and sickly oaks, was the sawmill which gave the name to the settlement; while stretching away as far as the eye could reach rose tier above tier of low sandhills, that finally merged into the desert mountain range which crosses Central Arizona. Before the setting sun reached the horizon, John Lee was so disgusted that, as he had done many times before, he took refuge in a pipe of tobacco and shut out the view with thick clouds of smoke.

Now, because Tombstone Hank had settled with

the Doctor upon 'the instalment plan,' it must not for a moment be supposed that Sawmill Flat was the home of a poverty-stricken community. Lacking it may have been (and was) in fine scenery and other natural advantages as well as in good society, schools, churches, and other refining influences; but in gold and silver—especially silver—by no means. For two years the output of the Big Bug Silver Mine had been enormous, and had made rich men of at least a dozen of the citizens of Sawmill Flat; while Jim Hawkins, the proprietor of the sawmill, and Andy Dunbar, the keeper of the general store, both had, in addition to their respective properties at Sawmill Flat, healthy balances at the First National Bank of Tucson. As a matter of fact, money was literally 'no object' to some of the Sawmill Flat people, who frequently paid most extravagant prices for the commonest necessities of life, but lived on and toiled on in the hope that railroads yet unbuilt would some day bring the outside world to their settlement; or else that they themselves, when rich enough, would leave Arizona Territory for the comforts and civilisation of 'the States.'

The clouds of tobacco smoke from John Lee's pipe so effectually shut out the Doctor's immediate surroundings, that he speedily lost himself in a maze of thought, and was considerably startled when a loud voice exclaimed: 'Evenin', Doc.'

'Good-evening, Hawkins.'

'Going along, Doc.?'

'Going along where?'

'To the Flat. Where else? Come, hurry up, Doc.'

'Why, what's going on? I've been as far as the mine once to-day, and it will soon be my bedtime. No; I think I'll not go, Hawkins.'

'Not go? Why, man alive, it's the night of the town meeting. Come on!'

'Meeting? By Jove, that's a fact, though I had clean forgotten it. Anyhow, what's the use in me going to the town meeting? No; I won't go.'

'Confound it all, Doc., ain't you a public-spirited citerzen? Ain't you a real-estate man? Ain't you a man of edgercation? Don't you live at Sawmill Flat, anyhow, and ain't this a meetin' of Sawmill Flat townsfolks?'

John Lee felt compelled to laugh at this man's curious but earnest appeal, and the laugh temporarily dispelled his blueness. Hawkins was a pretty shrewd man, and, in his way, he was generous too.

'You're down in the mouth, Doc., that's what's the matter with you. Don't you lose heart so quick, pardner, for this here place is jest agoin' to strike ile, sir, you bet! In two years from now the City of Sawmill Flat will have five thousand people and five railroads; and your two hundred acres, that you'd be derved glad to get two hundred dollars for to-day, will be cut into streets and sold at high prices for city lots.—Bless my soul, Doc., you'll soon have a big city practice, and be a millionaire land-owner to boot.'

'Meanwhile?' grinned the Doctor.

'Meanwhile, if you want a nugget or two to help you out, you know where old Jim Hawkins lives, don't you?'

'You're very good, Hawkins—very good. Well, I'll go down and look on.'

The two men took several paces in silence. Then, with much abruptness, Hawkins asked: 'Why don't you merry Andy Dunbar's darter? Jen would say "Yes" too quick; and Dunbar would be tickled to death, and set you up in good shape. Why don't you do it, Doc.?'

John Lee pulled at his gray moustache for some moments before he replied: 'Hawkins,' he said, 'a few months ago you showed your good-will to me, so I will answer your question. I broke one girl's heart, and that is sufficient for me. I do not love Jenny Dunbar, and I shall run no more risks where a good woman is concerned.'

'Doc,' said Hawkins bluntly, 'I ask your pardon, sir.'

Sawmill Flat formed part of the town (or township) of San Bernardino, a district fully as large as the English county of Lincoln, settled by a sparse population of but two or three hundred, most of whom resided at Sawmill Flat. Looking to the future, this township had been formed for local government purposes, the chief executive being none other than Jim Hawkins, who was known as the Reeve. The other township officers were one Eliphalet Younghusband, Justice of the Peace, and his constable, Pedro Lopez. The law called for a town meeting twice a year, when all the male residents of legal age were entitled to give voice to their opinions and to present resolutions, &c., regarding public matters. Hitherto, during the six years' history of San Bernardino the town meeting had been systematically ignored by the citizens. But on the present occasion the Sawmill Flat people intended to boom their settlement, and become incorporated under the municipal laws of Arizona as a City. No cash and no enthusiasm was to be spared to bring about the desired result.

The meeting was held in the town-hall, which was a room about twenty feet square, and was attended by well-nigh every resident of Sawmill Flat. No time was lost in appointing the Reeve and the Justice a deputation to wait upon the Governor of Arizona for a charter; nor was it long before fourteen thousand dollars was subscribed to be spent in erecting a new City Hall and an Hotel, in sinking wells for a water-supply, and in widely advertising the advantages and glorious outlook of the new City.

This having been done with much unanimity, Chairman Jim Hawkins arose to make a speech. 'Boys—Feller Citirzens, I should say—from the looks of things, the City of Sawmill Flat will come into existence on the 1st day of January 1889. When it does, we want a man to take charge—a good man and a smart man. We don't want no shyster for Mayor, which we are pretty sure to get if we don't make the office a liberal paid one. We want a competent man, a man with a level head, and a man with interests in Sawmill Flat. In other words we want one of ourselves, and one of our best selves at that. Now, you fellers as know how to do things up in proper shape can make a good living, and you ain't going to neglect your business to run this city for next to nothing a year. We ought to pay the Mayor of Sawmill Flat a salary of at least five thousand dollars, and then he'll do the

fair thing—at least, if he don't, we can string him up or tar and feather him.'

This proposition of the Reeve's was also duly moved and seconded without a dissident.

But the salary question being settled, there were many aspirants for the honour of the nomination to be first Mayor of the new City. The meeting now took the form of a genuine political caucus; and some sensation was caused when, after two or three names had been mentioned, Joe Brice got up and said: 'Gents, I nominate my old pard, Zack Pegg. Zack is a rich man, and an old settler in the Flat, and he 'lows that if he's 'lected Mayor, he'll donate his entire salary to the citizens, which I think is handsome and generous.'

But Jim Hawkins suddenly vacated his chair and took the floor. 'Justice,' he said, 'have the kindness to preside for a few moments while I say my say. This here generosity of Zack Pegg's puts me in mind of the man what got pretty hungry and cut off his pet dog's tail, which he biled and eat, and then gave the bone to the dog. Zack would only be giving back to the boys what he got from them, which wouldn't be much of a virtue in Zack, seeing as he's a-rolling in boodle. But don't you see, boys, it's considerable like bribery to make such offers; and if Zack did get elected on any such scheme, he might find himself in the pen. [penitentiary], instead of Mayor of Sawmill Flat. No; I've got a name to propose that I think will fill the bill. It's the name of a clever man and a well edgercated man, a man of experience, a man who owns real estate in this town, and a man that's one of ourselves. He needs the money that will go with the office of Mayor; and because he needs it, he'll try to earn it. I erlude to Doc. Lee; and he's a blamed good feller, as we all know.'

The Doctor's name was cordially received, and there was a hurrah as Hawkins resumed his seat in the chair. John Lee was well liked in the Flat, except by one or two new-comers.

One of the new settlers arose as Hawkins sat down. 'Feller-citizens,' said the man, 'I take it that you meant what you said at the outset when you resolved that the Mayor of Sawmill Flat must be a good man, an honest man, and a man with a clean record. Now, I don't suppose you want a jail-bird—a murderer, for instance—a'

There was an angry buzz of voices, and many a hand found its way to a pistol-pocket when the insinuation was uttered. But anger changed to surprise when the audience discovered that the speaker was looking squarely at Lee, whose face was a deep crimson. When, therefore, Hawkins called for order, quiet was quickly resumed.

'Gentlemen,' said Lee in a low voice that noticeably shook with violent agitation, 'I beg very respectfully to withdraw my name from the consideration of this meeting. On no account will I permit my name to be presented for the Mayoralty.—Mr Reeve, if it is within your province, and if you will do me a favour, I should like you to adjourn this meeting for one week, when I will request the privilege of addressing my friends—and others—in this room.'

It was well for John Lee, as well as for the man who had cast so terrible a slur upon him, that he promised what was evidently to be an

explanation at a future meeting. Otherwise, there would probably have been a terrible uproar that night in the embryo City of Sawmill Flat. As it was, Dr Lee's request was complied with, and the meeting stood adjourned for one week.

ROYAL MUSICIANS.

It is perhaps not generally known that the late Duke of Clarence, although no brilliant executionist, had inherited the keen ear for and love of music with which his father is endowed, and which, it may be said, distinguish all members of the House of Guelph. The Princess May of Teck, too, is generally known to be a clever musician. These reflections call to mind how many royal personages of the present and past day are likewise endowed.

Lord Chesterfield said cynically: 'If you like music, listen, and pay the violin-player for it; but never play yourself. It makes a man look stupid, and often brings him into bad company, wasting time that might be otherwise well spent. Not so Luther; for in his excellent and sound sermon on Music the great reformer says: 'Kings and Princes should exercise and patronise music; for great potentates ought to patronise noble and useful arts, as even if private persons seriously wish to do so, they are far from having the opportunities of the Great. We learn, indeed, from the Bible that mighty and God-fearing kings supported and rewarded singers.'

If Lord Chesterfield's words held good, many Princes of the past and present time would not be considered 'gentlemen.' But happily on this point the great moralist was wrong; for we all know, for instance, of the keen delight with which the Duke of Edinburgh practises violin-playing, His Royal Highness having even on several occasions performed in public with much distinction, as, for example, once in a quartette at the Albert Hall, and more recently 'solo' at Plymouth. In fact, the Duke's enthusiasm for the art is so great that he has expended a small fortune in the purchase of the instruments of old Italian masters. Again, both his brothers, the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Connaught, have their musical 'hobbies'—the former, at all events, at one time not very long ago, delighting his intimate friends with performances on the banjo, an art which, by the way, His Royal Highness rapidly acquired, and that at a comparatively late time of life; whilst the Duke of Connaught beguiles many a leisure hour with the 'silvery flute,' an appropriate instrument for the 'Irish Prince.' Prince Leopold was also a gifted pianist.

The Queen plays no longer; but in former days Her Majesty was habitually found at the organ—her favourite instrument. Mendelssohn relates how surprised he was, during a visit to Buckingham Palace in 1844, at finding the Queen and the Prince Consort so 'musically finished.' 'The Prince,' says the great composer, 'played a chorale on the organ so beautifully and correct that the performance would have done the highest credit to any professional artist.' And when presently Mendelssohn performed 'How lovely are the Messengers,' the Queen and the Prince Consort, carried away with enthusiasm, began to sing; 'and, later on, I accompanied the Queen at several

songs, which Her Majesty sang with great warmth of feeling and true artistic expression.'

The Princess of Wales is a skilled pianist; and not long since the Princess Beatrice made her début as a composer with a pretty song, 'The Sunny Month of May.' And here, dealing with musicians of the House of Guelph, it may be in place to mention that Prince Henry of Prussia—brother of the Emperor—is also no mean composer, pianist, and violin-player, his productions, however, being of a martial order. On several occasions they have been played before the Queen at dinner, a particular graceful act of Her Majesty being to select one of his Royal Highness's 'morceaux' for performance on the occasion of the visit of the Emperor and himself at Osborne at the grand banquet given in their honour.

Turning to foreign courts, we encounter a host of gifted royal musicians. We have, in the first instance, the Czar, an actual 'worshipper' of music, His Majesty's personal 'forte' being singing. And when in Denmark his greatest pleasure is to invite the students to sing their glees and ballads before him and his relatives in the evening, His Majesty often leading or joining in the same. The students of the North are—as visitors to Lands of the Midnight Sun are aware—particularly distinguished for their part and chorus singing. Needless to say the Czarina also delights in hearing the well-known Norse ballads of her childhood. All the children of the Czar and Czarina are likewise endowed with a deep love of music, particularly the youthful Grand-duchess Xenia.

Crossing the waters to the Swedish court, we find another royal musician in King Oscar, who may often be heard for hours 'fantasera' on the piano, and more particularly on the organ—an instrument almost unknown in private circles abroad. His Majesty is also, like the Czar, a great lover of glee-singing; and not so long ago he appeared unexpectedly one night at a concert of the Masonic Lodge in Stockholm and took part in the glee-singing of the elder members, His Majesty's voice sounding fine and manful in spite of his threescore and a half years. His brothers, Charles XV., and Gustavus—who died at the same age as the late Duke, or who would otherwise have succeeded to the throne—were equally gifted musicians and lovers of that noble art; and, as recently stated in the pages of the *Gentlewoman*, Prince Gustavus Adolphus, the eldest grandson of King Oscar, and future king, already evinces that admirable early love of music which is the heirloom of the gifted House of Bernadotte.

The king of Portugal likes to pose as a violin-player, although his teacher, Professor Casella, appears to have been more of the courtier than the musician, for on one occasion, we are told, His Majesty, after many unsuccessful attempts, at last mastering a difficult passage, he said to the Professor: 'Candidly, now, how *did* I play that?' The answer was: 'Sire, what Princes perform is invariably good.' But a similar though somewhat stinging answer was made by Handel to a German sovereign that shall be unnamed, who asked the king of oratorios 'how he played.' 'Your Majesty,' responded Handel, 'plays *like a Prince*.'

Coming to other courts, the charming Queen Margherita is styled 'a brilliant pianist,' and

what is termed by masters 'thoroughly musical.' And here is an excellent illustration of the words of Luther, as well as of Her Majesty's true love of music. When last summer paying a memorable visit to Venice—memorable through the significant presence of the Mediterranean fleet and the pick of the Italian navy—Her Majesty visited the famous Library of the Doges, and here were shown her some old manuscripts by Stradella, Monteverde, and other famous Italian masters, when, without a moment's hesitation, the real 'Queen of the Adriatic' ordered that they should be published forthwith, adding: 'They will thus delight the world far more than being buried in a glass case!'

Touching the Empresses of the world, we are aware that the Empress of Austria is a charming performer on that curious and heart-stirring instrument of her land, the zither; whilst the consort of the Mikado—as those rare visitors from Europe that have had the honour to ascertain testify—is equally 'at home' on the native string instrument, the 'koto.'

To examine the list of royal musicians closer, it appears that the gifted 'Carmen Sylva' is a fair pianist, but a far more brilliant harpist, stringing the 'lyre of Roumania' to the weird folklore songs of that strange nation. Finally, we may mention that King George of the Hellenes, brother of the Princess of Wales, shows a curious ear for music by delighting in playing all kinds of melodies on the 'glass zither' and wine-glasses, besides handling with great skill the cymbals.

Such is a cursory review of the princely musicians of our own age. But harking back, we find the same love, if not general brilliant execution, of 'the art that charms a savage breast.' For we know as an historical fact that that curious mixture of statecraft, superstition, and 'amour,' King Henry VIII., composed two entire masses, often sung in His Majesty's private chapel, and that a good deal of his time was occupied with more or less artistic performances on the flute! In addition, the great Tudor king is said to have set to music several madrigals and composed some ballads. Indeed, few readers would believe that some of the much-abused king's compositions have endured to the present day, and indicate beyond a doubt a remarkable musical talent, and that, too, developed—very rare, and the more remarkable if we bear in mind the crude and coarse bent of the times.

Queen Elizabeth performed, we are told by her admirers, with wonderful dexterity on the 'spinet,' or, more correctly speaking, on the 'virginal,' an earlier form of the same, resembling a harpsichord. And here Dr Burney relates a good story, which not only confirms but also clearly indicates that Mary, Queen of Scots, should rank among royal musicians. 'Sir James Melville,' says the celebrated historian, 'relates a remarkable conversation with Queen Elizabeth, when, as envoy of Queen Mary in 1564, he was despatched to her court. Having inquired how the Scotch queen dressed, the colour of her hair, whether prettier than her own, who was the most beautiful, who was the taller, Queen Elizabeth asked what she occupied her time with. "I answered," says Melville, "that when serious affairs of state permitted, Her Majesty studied history or amused herself by playing the lute or the

virginal." "Is she a good player?" said Queen Elizabeth. "Irreproachably for a queen," was my answer. The same afternoon, Lord Hunsdon took me to a gallery at the Palace to hear some music—it was the Queen playing the virginal. Having listened for a time, and lifting the curtain, I beheld Her Majesty; but having her back turned towards me, I looked for a while. Suddenly, she turned and saw me, appeared surprised, and then indignant. Presently, I was called, when she said she only played to avoid being melancholy. Next she asked who played best, Queen Elizabeth or Queen Mary. I of course gave the prudent answer that Her Majesty was the superior executionist.'

Charles I., we are also told, played the violoncello or bass-viol with great precision; and James I. of Scotland was endowed with such a keen ear and musical nature that several old traditional Scottish songs are attributed to him. He maintained at his court a host of lute, harp, violin, and horn players, who, it is shown by accounts, were paid regular salaries. It is even said that King James was the sovereign who introduced the organ in the kirk.

Frederick the Great was an enthusiastic musician and a first-rate flute-player. It is said that sometimes, after a victorious battle, he would repair to his tent and amuse himself with his favourite instrument. And the Czar Alexander I., although his father, in blind autocracy, prohibited his learning it, practised and loved music all his life.

Finally, nearly every Emperor of the House of Hapsburg has been musical, and some even composers of considerable merit. Leopold I. was an excellent pianist and a composer of arias and cantatas displaying great musical talent. And Queen Hortense, mother of Napoleon III., has rendered herself famous by composing 'Partant pour la Syrie.'

Truly, the list of royal musicians might be extended indefinitely; but those quoted will go to show that Princes and Princesses are not behind ordinary mortals in love of one of the most noble and soul-stirring gifts of Nature.

IN A SILENT SEA.

SOME years ago I was homeward bound from the East Indies. We had rounded the Cape without getting the usual dressing, and had picked up the South-east Trades much sooner than we expected. Everything had so far been in our favour, and it was only when we got into the latitude where we ought to have picked up the North-east Trades that, instead of the usual breeze, we came in for nothing but a succession of light winds and variables. With these we gradually worked along until we got into about twenty degrees north latitude, when we had a calm for two days. Shortly before midnight on the second day a light breeze sprang up from the southward. There was only enough wind to keep the sails full, and we glided along at about two knots an hour, with lazy little bobs to a swell that came up from the eastward. All that day the breeze continued light. The sun beat down with tremendous power, and towards noon the breeze died almost entirely away, though the swell continued with long, low,

regular undulations. Away on our port bow heavy clouds began to appear on the edge of the horizon, and the glass was falling rapidly.

I was at the wheel in the first dog watch. We lay heading all round the compass, the ship having no steering-way, and I watched the bank of clouds gathering ominously on our port quarter. The sun seemed to set in a perfect atmosphere of sulphur, leaving some angry-looking streaks of red and gold that gleamed like flashes of lightning suddenly arrested. The skipper paced the quarter-deck, occasionally diving below to look at the glass, and each time returning with a more anxious countenance, and saying to the mate that he had never seen the glass so low since he had been to sea.

'We'll reef her right down at four bells, Mr Jarvis,' he said; 'for there's everything good, bad, and indifferent mixed up in those clouds, like an Irish stew.'

As soon as the watch came on deck, sail after sail was clewed up and furled, until we had nothing on her but the two lower topsails, fore-topmast staysail, and storm staysail. The ship, now denuded of her sails, stood out like a skeleton against the background of copper-coloured clouds. The men began to get somewhat depressed, as with a sky and atmosphere like that we knew it was no ordinary blow that we had to expect; and I could hear the shrill voice of a little shrivelled-up old seaman named Lester croaking more than was his wont, and calling to mind the time when he was in the China seas some thirty years before; how the clouds had gathered up in the same way, and how the ship foundered, and all hands were lost except himself.

'Here! cut that yarn,' said one of the men. 'You're a regular old Jonah!'

The watch below turned in at eight bells, having been cautioned to be ready for a rouse-out. I paced the deck for some time. The captain and the mate were discussing the dirty appearance of the weather. The ship looked absolutely desolate, with her long bare masts tapering away into the darkness.

'I don't like the way that stuff hangs about,' said the skipper; 'when it does come, it will come with a run.' Here and there a star would faintly show itself, and the sea glittered with phosphorescent lights. Hour after hour we lay under the shadow of those dense clouds, waiting for the storm to burst. The watch dragged wearily on till close on midnight, when suddenly a bright flash of lightning seemed to part the clouds asunder; then others followed in quick succession.

'We'll catch it directly,' piped the shrill voice of Lester, and he was right. Scarcely were the words uttered when we heard a roaring sound in the distance, which increased into a whirling shriek. In an instant it was upon us. Fortunately, it struck us on the quarter. The ship for a moment plunged forward, burying her bows in the sea. At the same instant there was a terrific bang as the topsails were blown clean out of the bolt ropes; there was not a stitch of canvas left on her, and we scudded under bare poles, the sea bubbling around us, a mass of seething foam. It was impossible to stand upright, and we had to crawl about as best we could.

We were thankful when daylight came, as the

horrors of the storm had been much intensified by the pitchy darkness. When the sun rose, sea and sky presented a wild and grand sight. The scud was flying above us, and the foam below. Everything was rushing madly before the hurricane; there, alone on this wild and desolate world of waters, was our gallant ship staggering before the mighty blast, and fighting the waves like a living thing.

For two whole days and nights we drove along, accompanied only by the incessant roar of the storm. On the third night the ship seemed to lose her buoyancy, and by the heavy deadened way she rose and fell, we thought she had sprung a leak, for her motion was now more like that of an old water-logged Quebeccar than of an East Indian clipper. About midnight we sounded the well, but she was as dry as a bone. The sea also became much smoother, and we seemed to be simply rising and falling on a huge swell, instead of going through a heavy sea. As the night wore on the force of the wind greatly abated, inasmuch that we were able to get new topsails from below and make them ready to bend. It was intensely dark, and as the hurricane went down an awful stillness prevailed. It seemed as if the continued shrieking of the storm for the last three days had affected our sense of hearing, or else there was something strange, as no one could hear the swish of the sea, and no water came aboard. We simply rolled about in absolute silence.

The wind gradually died away until it was a dead calm. We lay aloft and bent the new topsails; and by the time we were ready to hoist the yards the morning was beginning to break.

As daylight came on we were astonished to find that, instead of being in a clear open sea, we seemed to be in a huge green meadow-land. As far as the eye could reach there was nothing to be seen but a heaving mass of green. We had been driven into the midst of the Sargasso Sea. This accounted for the way she had laboured, and the deathlike silence which prevailed. The weeds were already clinging to the sides and bow of the vessel. The sun rose clear and bright, and as the day advanced the heat was excessive. There was not a breath of wind anywhere, so that we lay utterly helpless amidst this tanglement of weeds. We could do nothing now but wait for a breeze to release us. During the day the swell went down, and by night we lay quite motionless, and with a most appalling stillness reigning around.

The night was beautifully clear, and the stars shone out brilliantly; so we spent our first night amongst this sea of weeds and grass, rather pleased than otherwise at the quiet, which was a relief after the three days' incessant shrieking of the hurricane. At sunrise the calm still continued, and the men began to get impatient for a breeze. The day was occupied in scraping the weeds from the sides of the vessel. The heat was intense; there was not a breath of air, and the sky was without a cloud. As far as the eye could see, even from a royal yard, nothing was visible but one unbroken plain of floating weed. The frightful stillness of everything was the worst part of it. Hour by hour it became more oppressive. It was a silence so intense that one seemed to hear it, and by sundown even the nerves of the roughest old seaman had become so unstrung, that

the putting down of a pannikin made every one start. Day after day went on without even a catspaw of wind, and the captain soon saw that the only thing to keep up the men's spirits was to give them plenty of work. We painted the ship, tarred down, scraped, holystoned, and did every other conceivable kind of work until it became hard to find anything else to do. Curious kinds of creatures crawled about on the top of the weeds, gazing at our unfortunate craft with their meaningless fishy eyes.

When we had been thus becalmed for three weeks, the captain thought it advisable to put us on a short allowance of food and water, as there seemed no more prospect of a breeze now than there was on the day in which we had first got entangled. At first we tried to get up entertainments, but no one seemed to have heart for anything, and all our attempts at amusements failed. The one absorbing thought of the whole crew—morning, noon, and night, waking or sleeping—was, 'When shall we get a breeze?' What preyed on our minds most was the appalling stillness. It hung round us like a funeral pall.

One night, whilst the crew were lying about the deck trying to sleep, I was suddenly roused by a voice shouting: 'Let go your royal hal-yards.'

In a moment every one was on the alert, thinking and hoping that we were in for a breeze. It was a bright moonlight night, not a cloud was to be seen. On the forecastle head stood a seaman waving his arms and calling out that a squall was approaching.

'Where away?' shouted the mate.

'Let go!' he yelled in reply.

We now saw that the poor fellow was raving, and immediately a couple of hands secured him. He became very violent, so much so that it became necessary to put him in irons. All that night the poor fellow raved piteously, chiefly about his wife and child, who he thought were stowed away in some place, all alone, and where all was silence. For three days he refused to eat or drink, and appealed incessantly to us to let him go and help his dear ones.

On the fourth morning of his illness it was my turn to watch him. He had been lying quiet for some time breathing heavily. Presently he struggled violently, and I had to call for the assistance of another man to hold him down. Suddenly, with a supreme effort, he burst the irons from his wrists; but the strain had been too much, and he lay back exhausted for a few minutes. Then raising himself on his elbow, he looked round in a dazed way, and putting his hand in mine, said in a quiet voice: 'The silence has gone now, Kitty!' and died.

Now that the ravings of this poor tar had ceased, the silence seemed even more awful than before; and the skipper, in order to keep the men from brooding, ordered a couple of boats to be got out and efforts made to tow the ship clear of the weeds. Our first business was to bury our dead; and as soon as the long-boat was over the side, we lowered the corpse into it. Poor old Jack! he had been a good shipmate, though always rather sentimental! Four A.B.s and the mate manned the boat, and with much labour and difficulty they managed to get her along until she was about one hundred yards away. We

then saw two of the men parting the weeds with the blades of their oars, so as to form a grave. The mate stood up in the stern-sheets and read the burial service, whilst the body of poor old Jack lay across the midship thwarts. I shuddered as I saw him dropped over amongst the dark clinging weeds.

'Oh!' said Lester in his shrill voice, 'there goes the first; I'll warrant it won't be the last.'

'Croaker,' some one remarked; and we set to work to get the other boat over, whilst the funeral party made their way back to the ship.

For a whole week we tried all possible means to shift her with the aid of the boats, but it was not of the slightest use; for if we cleared the tangle of weeds away one day, they were as bad as ever the next; so after a time we gave up this work in despair. Two more of the men now became light-headed, and had to be put under restraint. Day by day things became more desperate, and to our horror we saw that the food and water could not hold out much longer.

The skipper and the mate, after a long consultation, determined to provision a boat and send her to find out how far it was to the open sea.

The mate and four seamen, myself amongst the number, formed the crew. We started at day-break, and made our way slowly along. When night came, we could still see our vessel across the flat extent of green; but we had made fairly good progress, as she was hull down. We divided ourselves into two watches, so that we could keep going both night and day. After three days of this, we found the weeds getting much scarcer, and for the first time for six weeks we felt just a flutter of air. Upon this, the mate determined to return and make another effort to tow the ship. When we got back to the vessel, our report somewhat raised the desponding spirits of the men; and it was arranged to make one great effort to tow the ship away on the morning after our return.

That night one of the sick men died. We buried him at sunrise in the same manner as his shipmate, and then started the work of towing. For hours we toiled, the skipper encouraging us from the poop.

'There she moves, my lads—that's it—keep her going,' and so on, though I don't think we moved her half a fathom the whole day; and when we returned aboard at nightfall, every one felt more disconsolate than ever. Even the captain, who had always appeared to keep his spirits up, seemed thoroughly downcast; and the deadly stillness was only broken occasionally by the cries of the poor fevered man below.

I lay down on the main hatch to sleep, but found it impossible. I was a good deal distressed at the death of the man we had buried that morning, who had been a great chum of mine; and I lay on my back looking up at the starry heavens, wondering if we were to die off one by one, and if so, who would be the last. The more I thought, the more morbid did my thoughts become. In time the vessel would be carried out of the bed of weeds by some storm or current, and when picked up, there would be no one to explain how the crew had all gone mad, and died miserably, killed by the utter silence. I grasped my head with my hands. Was I to be the next? Oh God! I could feel my brain going.

The fearful stillness seemed to come over me in huge waves. I prayed hard and wept desolate tears. I had no energy to move or speak. The sense of overwhelming stillness overpowered me and made me absolutely helpless. Suddenly I heard the mate shout out: 'Port main-brace.'

At the same instant a gentle puff of air swept across my face, and the sails that had been hanging idly for so many weeks filled out to the gentle pressure of the breeze. This brought me to my senses. The frightful feeling in my head vanished as I joined the others in trimming the yards. Yes, there was a breeze, but very, very light. The royals and topgallant sails appeared to be drawing, but we did not seem to be in motion. Presently the captain suggested putting a lighted tarpot over the side, to see if we were making any way. We were only just moving. Men dared hardly speak lest their voices should drive the breeze away.

When the sun rose the wind freshened, and by eight bells we were perceptibly moving. We brought our sick man on deck, hoping the breeze would revive him; but he never rallied, and died that night; and as we dropped him over the side, the voice of Lester could be heard saying: 'Number three gone! We ought to get along all right now.'

'You're the Jonah,' replied his shipmates. 'If we had put you overboard at first, we might have been in dock two months ago.'

In two days' time we once more heard the splashing of the sea as the waves danced and curled around the ship's side, carrying the weeds that had grown to her for yards to leeward. Thus, after a captivity of fifty-three days, we found ourselves again on the restless ocean; and even the roar of angry billows was the sweetest music to us, after our long imprisonment in the 'Silent Sea.'

TABLE TRAITS.

To many of us there is an inexpressible magic in the sound of the word 'dinner'—a certain boding of something good, far more telling than thousands of its brethren in the dictionary. We beget a fondness for it, like the armature for its poles. But the derivation of the word is much more hazy than its meaning. It is believed by some that it springs from a corruption of the words *dic-heures*, indicating the time at which, in the old Norman days, this meal was taken. The mere idea of having dinner at the barbarous hour of ten o'clock in the morning would in all probability send a modern *chef* into a fit; yet it was at this early time that persons of quality, both in this country and in France, partook of the meal. Froissart mentions waiting upon the Duke of Lancaster at five in the afternoon, after he had supped; and during the reigns of Francis I. and Louis XII. of France, fashionable people dined from half-past ten, and supped at the latest at six in the evening. And again, from a Northumberland Household Book, bearing date 1512, we learn that the family rose at six, breakfasted at seven, dined at ten, supped at four, and shut the gates at nine P.M. Speaking generally, though the dinner hour then, as now, was later in this country than in France, Louis XIV. did not dine

till twelve; whilst his contemporaries, Cromwell and Charles II., took the meal at one. In 1700, the hour was advanced to two; and in 1751, we find that the Duchess of Somerset's dinner-time was three. In 1760, Cowper speaks of four o'clock as the then fashionable time. After the battle of Waterloo, six P.M. was the time at which the *beau-monde* took their substantial meal; while at the present day many of the nobility do not dine until eight or nine; so we see that, through four hundred years, the dinner-hour has gradually moved through twelve hours of the day—from nine A.M. to nine P.M. When the dinner hour was so early, often no previous meal was taken.

The Romans, in the time of Cicero and Augustus, took an early breakfast, from three to four in the morning, a luncheon at twelve or one, and at about three o'clock the *cæna*, or principal meal of the day, corresponding with our dinner. Concurrently, we read of some not dining until sunset. A Roman dinner at the house of a wealthy man consisted chiefly of three courses. All sorts of stimulants to the appetite were first served up, and eggs were indispensable to the first course. Amongst the various dishes we may instance the guinea-hen, pheasant, nightingale, and the thrush as birds most in repute. The Roman gourmands held peacocks in great estimation, especially their tongues. Macrobius states that they were first eaten by Hortensius, the orator, and acquired such repute that a single peacock was sold for fifty denarii, the denarius being equal to about eightpence-halfpenny of our money.

As exemplifying the pitch to which Roman epicureanism was carried, and indicative of a truly barbaric nature, a dish consisting of the tongues alone of some thousands of the favourite songsters of the air was requisitioned at immense cost to satisfy the inordinate cravings of one of the emperors. One can hardly avoid the reflection that such a being must have been extremely untuneful. The liver of a capon steeped in milk was thought a great delicacy; and of solid meat, pork appears to have been most relished.

The staunch Roman who did not take his pleasure homeopathically, reclined during dinner on a luxurious couch, his head resting on his left elbow, supported by cushions. Suetonius draws attention to a superb apartment, erected by the extravagant Nero, in which his meals were partaken, constructed like a theatre, with shifting scenes changing with every course. The amount of money often expended by the wealthy Romans on their sumptuous meals appears fabulous. Vitellius is said to have spent as much as four hundred sesteria (about £4228 of our money) on his daily supper; and the celebrated feast to which he invited his brother cost no less than £40,350! It consisted of two thousand different dishes of fish, and seven thousand of fowls, with other equally numerous meats. His daily food was of the most rare and exquisite nature; the deserts of Libya, the shores of Spain, the waters of the Carpathian Sea, and even the coasts and forests of Britain, were diligently searched for dainties to supply his table; and had he reigned long he would, observes Josephus, have exhausted the great opulence of the Roman empire. By the way, we wonder if these happy-go-lucky Romans

ever suffered much from indigestion! Of one thing we are certain, that in order to render the bridge from one feast to another less tedious, an occasional resort was had to the persuasive powers of an emetic. The extravagance of these times was indeed so boundless, that to entertain an emperor at a feast, unless you were a Cræsus, were to encounter almost certain financial ruin—literally, to be eaten up. One dish alone at the table of Heliogabalus has been known to cost a sum equal to four thousand pounds of our money.

No wonder, therefore, observes a recent writer, that these imperial feasts were lengthened out for hours together, and that every artifice, often revolting in the extreme, was used to prolong the pleasure of eating; or that Philoxenus should wish that he had the throat of a crane with a delicate palate all the way down. Many of the guests at such feasts, long before the close, must have been in the condition of an editor who, when asked at a public dinner if he would take some pudding, replied in a fit of abstraction: 'Owing to a crowd of other matters, we are unable to find room for it.' The elegant Romans declared that a repast should not consist of a less number of courses than the Graces or of more than the Muses. According to ancient rule, an invitation not replied to in twenty-four hours was deemed accepted; and from an invitation given and accepted, nothing released the contracting parties but illness, imprisonment, or death.

At a Saxon dinner, the dining-table was oblong and rounded at the ends. The cloth was a rich crimson, with a broad gilt margin hung low beneath the table. The company sat upon chairs with concave backs, and were arranged with regard to the sexes, much as at the present day. The dishes consisted of fowls, fish, flesh of oxen, sheep, deer, and swine, both wild and domestic—not excepting certain portions of the sea-swine or porpoise—a food at present little cared for, but at that period no unfrequent article of diet. Bread of the finest wheat flour lay on two silver baskets upon the table.

Almost the only vegetable in use among the Saxons was kalewort; and the condiments, salt and pepper. The various articles used were boiled, broiled, or baked, and were handed by the attendants upon small *spies* to the company. Prior to the introduction of forks into England, which was not till James I.'s time, our ancestors made use of Dame Nature's forks, their fingers; and for the sake of cleanliness, each person was provided with a small silver ewer containing water, and two flowered napkins of the finest linen. Their dessert consisted of grapes, figs, nuts, apples, pears, and almonds. In the tenth year of the reign of King Edward III. there was an Act of Parliament passed which ordained that no man should be served with more than two courses, except upon some great holiday therein specified, on which occasion he might be served with three.

The following bill of fare for the Court of Assistants of the Worshipful Company of Waxchandlers, in 1478, will give a good idea of the prices then charged for provisions, and make many wish for a return of the 'good old days:' 'Two loins of veal and two loins of mutton, 1s. 4d.; one loin of beef, 4d.; one dozen of pigeons

and one dozen of rabbits, 9d.; one pig and one capon, 1s.; one goose and a hundred eggs, 1s. 0½d.; one leg of mutton, 2½d.; two gallons of sack, 1s. 4d.; eight gallons of strong ale, 1s. 6d.—total 7s. 6d.: truly a most moderate bill.

Peter the Great disliked to have many attendants round him while he ate—'listening lacqueys,' he called them. He loved a dinner composed as follows: 'A soup with four cabbages in it; gruel; pig, with sour cream for sauce; cold roast meat, with pickled cucumbers or salad; lemons and lamprey; salt meat, ham, and Limburg cheese.'

Though we express surprise at the gormandising powers of our forefathers, our own elaborate public dinners are little less disgraceful than they were four hundred years ago. An eminent physician describing our present-day dinners said: 'We begin with soup, and perhaps a glass of cold punch, to be followed by a piece of turbot or a slice of salmon with lobster sauce; and while the venison or Southdown is getting ready, we toy with a piece of sweetbread, and mellow it with a bumper of Madeira. No sooner is the mutton or venison disposed of, with its never-failing accompaniments of jelly and vegetables, than we set the whole of it in a ferment with Champagne, and drown it with Hock and Sauterne. These are quickly followed by the wing and breast of a partridge or a bit of pheasant or wild-duck; and when the stomach is all on fire with excitement, we cool it for an instant with a piece of iced pudding, and then immediately lash it into a fever with undiluted alcohol in the form of Cognac or a strong liqueur; after which there comes a spoonful or so of jelly as an emollient, a morsel of ripe Stilton as a digestant, a piquant salad to whet the appetite for wine, and a glass of old Port to persuade the stomach, if it can, into quietness. All these are more leisurely succeeded by dessert with its baked meats, its fruits, and its strong drinks, to be afterwards muddled with coffee, and complicated into a rare mixture with tea, floating with the richest cream.' If there are many whose daily diet is too varied, too luxurious, there are also many who, through unkind and unpropitious circumstances, are scarcely able to supply the wherewithal to satisfy the legitimate wants of Nature. There are not a few who think themselves lucky if at the dinner hour they are able to allay the cruel pangs of hunger with a philosophic pipe.

WIRE AND WIRE PRODUCTS.

POSSIBLY but few persons realise the enormous strides made of late years by the wire industry, or the constantly increasing consumption of an article which, in one form or another, enters into almost every art and industry, and ministers directly and indirectly in no small degree to the comfort and well-being of every civilised community. Wire is no new thing; specimens of metallic shreds dating as far back as 1700 B.C. are stated to have been discovered; while a sample of wire made by the Ninevites some eight hundred years B.C. is exhibited at the Kensington Museum in London. Both Homer and Pliny allude to wire. The art of wire-drawing was not practised until the fourteenth century, or intro-

duced into this country until the seventeenth century, all wire made previously having been formed by hammering into rounded lengths narrow strips of metal cut from plates previously beaten out.

The manufacture of wire as now carried out may be briefly and concisely stated, and consists in attenuating or reducing in section thin rods of the metal under manipulation by drawing them cold through holes in a draw-plate, usually made of hard steel. The wire-drawer's bench is furnished with a horizontal cylinder, driven by steam or other power, on which the wire is wound after leaving the draw-plate. The holes in the draw-plate are arranged in decreasing diameters; and a fine wire may require some twenty or thirty drawings ere it is reduced to the size desired. Much friction is generated in the process, notwithstanding the use of lubricants; and 'annealing' is necessary to counteract the brittleness produced in the wire. Where great accuracy is requisite, the wire is drawn through rubies or other hard stones in the draw-plate. The speed of the drawing cylinder is increased as the diameter of the wire diminishes.

Much confusion has existed in regard to the gauges of wires, no fewer than fifty-five different gauges being mentioned by a recent writer, of which forty-five were for measuring and determining the sizes of wire as made and sold within the United Kingdom. The Whitworth gauge, introduced in 1857 by Sir Joseph Whitworth, and the Birmingham wire-gauge (B. W. G.) have been extensively employed. In 1884 an imperial standard wire gauge became law, and constitutes the legal gauge of this country. It ranges from half an inch to one-thousandth of an inch in diameter.

The wire industry is actively carried on in Great Britain, Germany, and Belgium, also in the United States of America, and has attained enormous dimensions. A leading continental firm has alone an output of some fifty thousand tons of wire and wire products per annum.

A few figures may here be cited to illustrate how important a part wire plays in our leading industries and manufactures. The output of coal in Great Britain alone, which may be taken at fully two hundred million tons per annum, is mainly raised by the agency of wire-ropes. The importance of carding-wire may be appreciated, from the fact that Great Britain's woollen export trade is worth twenty-seven million pounds per annum. The consumption of wire-netting is enormous; and the annual output in America and Europe of the one item of barbed wire for fencing—a comparatively new adaptation—is estimated to exceed one hundred thousand tons.

The world-wide use of wire for telegraphic and other electrical purposes is too well known to need comment, one company in America owning no fewer than six hundred and forty-eight thousand miles in their own system.

Perhaps, however, as striking a figure as can be adduced in relation to wire is its consumption in

the pinmaking industry. With but few exceptions, all pins are made from brass wire, and the daily production of pins in Great Britain is placed by competent authorities at fifty millions, of which Birmingham supplies about three-fourths. How this stupendous output is consumed affords matter of no small wonderment; and when the proverbial trifling value of each individual pin is further borne in mind, the interest in this branch of the wire industry will be still further augmented.

A point of interest to many of our readers may be noted in connecting our mention of wire with the Forth Bridge, and in pointing out that in the erection of that gigantic structure fully sixty miles of steel wire-rope were temporarily employed.

THE HAPPY LOVERS.

THEY had no 'partings in the wood,'
No 'meetings in the hawthorn lane,'
'Beside the sea' they never stood,
Nor 'watched the sunset after rain.'
Their pathway was the busy street,
Their trysting-place the Office stair,
Yet well I know joy more complete
Did never visit mortal pair.

And why should rustic love alone
Be decked with all poetic art?
These dull, gray city walls have known
The beating of a nation's heart.
The weary workers come and go;
The secret of each soul is dumb;
Yet still at times a radiant glow
Across their wayworn lives may come.

And these, my happy lovers, knew
Hard toil, small wage, and scanty fare;
The skies they saw were never blue,
But Love made gladness everywhere.
His step upon the Office floor
Was sweet to her as thrush's song;
Her face that passed the open door
For him made sunshine all day long.

And doubtless, though these two would fain
Have left awhile the city's roar
To loiter down a country lane,
Or linger by some lonely shore;
Yet sometimes Fate was kind, as when
They travelled by 'the Underground,'
And in a carriage meant for ten,
No other than themselves they found.

You laugh?—My lay is dull, I know;
Truth needs a daintier garb than this;
A gayer scene let others show,
My lovers dwell in happy bliss.
So let the world wheel on its way,
Earth holds not out a dearer crown;
God give the same to all, I pray,
Who live and die in London Town.

MARY MACLEOD.

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ON IGNORANCE.

'THERE is no darkness but ignorance,' is a profound saying of one of our profoundest thinkers. Ignorance in the mental, moral, or physical world, is the darkness wherein man thinks and works until he has gained, or been given, light that is knowledge. As a child, he tries with his infant touch everything within his reach, drawing back oftentimes with a cry of surprise and pain at what he encounters. As a man, he works towards the light, testing and trying this or that course of action—often drawing back, stung or pained; and the exclamation, 'What a fool I have been, to be sure!' is the cry of his heart or conscience.

So essential is knowledge—or, as we say, wisdom—to carry a man safe through the snares and pitfalls of life, that, as a matter of course, this wisdom has many counterfeits, pretended wisenesses, which, like false guides or incompetent pilots, themselves constitute not the least of his dangers. But for their misguidance, he might perhaps, by dint of keeping his eyes open, have floated on, with here a rub against a rock, and there a shove-off from a shoal, weathering the storm pretty successfully. Whereas, with the false pilot, Cunning, on board, lulling his watchfulness with a delusive sense of safety, or flattering his vanity into overweening self-confidence, poor Ignorance is pretty sure to become involved in the intricacies of a short-cut to wealth or wisdom, and damage or shipwreck is an incident of the voyage. And when the disaster is imminent, and wreck apparently inevitable—when the chances of saving life are at their lowest, and organised effort has nearly ceased, then Cunning finishes the work of Ignorance with the selfish cry of *saute qui peut*—each one for himself, and deuce take the hindmost; and that place he, the ignorant, the cunningly selfish, is resolved shall be, at any cost, not his. Of a friendship that will keep faith under such circumstances, will wait for, hold out a helping hand to—risk even its own chance of rescue in order to preserve a comrade

—Ignorance, and its adviser Cunning, know as little as of the lifelong if secret self-reproach which many a man, who has deserted, from whatever motive, a friend in his hour of need, carries silently with him into his grave. What a genuine thief's maxim it is, that 'Every man for himself!'—clutching always at a momentary fancied benefit to itself, no matter at whose expense, only to fall a little sooner, a little later, into the hands of the officer.

'Every man for himself,' says the phoenix financier, rising from the ruins of companies, heedless of the sobs of the women, the execrations of the men, he has helped to ruin, in their ignorance; to recall and ponder over them, perhaps, in the silent night-watches of a sleepless old age. 'Every man for himself'—it is the quintessence of smartness and wide-awakeness to the ignorant egotist hurrying to grow rich, who, without knowing it, has entered a *cul-de-sac* whence there is no egress, and where he will one day awake to find himself—as in a prison—alone.

But it is not merely this pinchbeck knowledge, this wisdom for a man's self alone, that misleads Ignorance and frustrates its own object. There is a fatal superabundance of resource, a too keen and anxious foresight, which will sometimes lend itself to defeat. In the later part of Napoleon's career, for instance, when providing, as he calculated, against every contingency that could by any possibility arise, he foresaw and calculated on everything except the stupidity of his enemies. Thus, perceiving too clearly the weak points in his plans, which his adversaries were by no means clever enough to discover, Napoleon weakened his whole design by providing against surprises which were obvious only to a general of genius equal to his own. This is precisely the mistake of many a chess-player, who is too careful to guard every avenue which he sees—but which his opponent does not see—may be attacked, to leave himself enough strength for an efficient assault.

A contrary form of ignorance is well indicated by the proverb which bids us 'Beware of "If I had wist"'—beware, that is, of the man, or woman,

who cannot look forward, who cannot weigh consequences, or perceive 'what will follow out of what,' on whose lips are perpetually the words, 'If I had only known!' Yet this conscious nescience, which cries out upon itself, is hardly so dangerous as the sublime pedantry which closes its eyes in tranquil assurance and says, 'I know'—not I think, or I imagine, or I hope, but 'I know.' The reflection that the ignorance of one age condemns that which is cried up for wisdom in the succeeding age, might tend to subdue this infatuation. But two centuries since, a lady's will—that of Lady Glanville—was disputed on the ground of her ladyship's alleged lunacy at the time it was executed, the allegation in support of her lunacy resting mainly on the fact that her Ladyship collected insects and was fond of observing their habits. Imagine, years hence, any one attempting to upset the testament of Sir John Lubbock on such grounds!

And Ignorance has been at all times but too apt to attribute wickedness to what is new to it and what it finds it difficult to understand. Many respectable people thought it wicked to travel at the rate of twenty or thirty miles an hour, when railways were first invented; it was new, it was incredible, it was 'flying in the face of a Providence that had not endowed us with wings.'

As with individuals, so with nations. The Chinese have for ages been wise for themselves only. Sixteen centuries ago they possessed a seismometer, displaying a philosophical insight into the action of earthquakes, and bearing a close resemblance to modern instruments; to-day, they close a coal-mine, and insist that it shall not be worked, lest it let loose the 'Earth-dragon,' whatever that may be. Age after age has passed in a shut-up, selfish, wise-in-their-own-conceit fashion; Celestials to themselves, to other nations the slavish victims of pagan prejudices, neither giving nor receiving the benefits of the mutual exchange of knowledge with the rest of the world. As with nations, so with individuals. An egotistical miser, living on in the house in which he was born, scraping a fortune together by the exercise of a persistent regard for his own interests alone, an ingenious reaping of small advantages, unneighbourly, niggardly, never by any chance entertaining angels unawares, because never entertaining strangers at all—this man, though a born and bred Britisher, is in his ignorance and prejudices what the heathen Chinese nation has been for centuries among the nations.

One form of ignorance, very telling upon the patience of those among whom it appears, is the ignorance displayed in conversation by one who neither knows nor cares, so long as he can hear the sound of his own most sweet voice, whether his auditors are equally satisfied with himself, with the subject on which he has chosen to dilate. He has, primarily, no idea of conversation but as a monologue. As a miser probably began to save with an object, and ends by making an object of saving, so the talker begins by talking perhaps with an idea, and ends by having no idea save talking. If your interest and attention unavoidably flag, he will pause to say, 'But perhaps I weary you?' Perhaps! And he takes your mournful 'By no means' in its entirety, and the monologue is resumed with even renewed vigour.

Pausing upon this exhibition of ignorance of, and possibly indifference to, the feelings of others, we can more readily forgive another shape of blindness made manifest in a stolid reserve. Your reserved man only vouchsafes a monosyllable in reply to any observation you may hazard. Whoever ventures on a 'duel of silence' with him will infallibly be worsted. Wrapped in his self-containing mantle, he stalks abroad among his fellows, admired by the eager and loquacious for a reticence they cannot emulate; and feared, because not understood. Should years or accident bring to light the qualifications of the taciturn man, his reticence will sometimes be found to have covered not shyness, or modesty, or prudence, or caution, but a vacuum: he has been very reserved about nothing at all; but that he found a very good covering for his ignorance, we must admit.

It is ignorance that, as we have said, is prone to attribute evil or wrong to the thing, or person, unknown to itself. Wilfred Osbaldestone's objection to his cousin was founded on the fact that he had 'a strange outlandish binding on's castor.' Hundreds entertain a dislike for a new-comer for no more solid reason, perhaps, than the cut of his whiskers. Even the very appearance of those involuntary adjuncts is said to be so obnoxious to the fine sensibilities of the undergraduates of a certain university, that they will insist on their removal from the harmless, if hirsute, face of a comrade, yea, even denude him of them with their own hands if necessary. 'I've only seen the back of his head, but I hate him;' this, though ludicrous enough from the lips of a Dundreary, is the very note, in a different disposition, of the sullen scorn of ignorance. And, start the dislike, depreciate callously and calmly, but persistently, clinch it with a nickname, and you may as well hang the dog, says the proverb most truly, to whom an ill-name has been given. 'He has a hangdog look;' no doubt he has, for he feels acutely the doubtful looks that are cast at him. How can he be frank or free in his conduct, poor brute! when suspicion gleams on him from every eye? How can he graciously and joyously wag a tail, which his conviction of the unjust scepticism with which he is regarded keeps permanently depressed?

We ventured above to take exception to the thief's maxim, 'Every man for himself;' but the wit of one and the wisdom of many—as proverbs are proverbially said to be—is nobly vindicated in a saying which the ignorant—and we are all of that class—would do well to bear in mind, 'Tout savoir c'est tout pardonner.' Ignorance would lose half its venomous quality if it could be brought to own that it does not, that it cannot by any possibility 'know all' about even its nearest neighbour, who has maybe affronted it; and that, if it could by a revelation, once arrive at that complete knowledge, a conviction of that neighbour's pardonableness must be the result.

To conclude—as there is no darkness but ignorance, so a very safe way of continuing in darkness is to declare to ourselves and others that we have got light and can see; by this means we can effectually deprive ourselves of any redundant side-lights which might have been afforded us by any more open-eyed or better spectaclled

than ourselves; and we may remain securely to the end of our days in that state of blissful ignorance which it would be folly to exchange for wisdom, according to the saying of a certain successor of Solomon.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XXXI.—CHECKLEY SEES A GHOST.

To Checkley, watching every evening, though not always at the same time, sooner or later the same discovery was certain to come. It happened, in fact, on Friday evening, the day after Athelstan shook hands with Mr Edmund Gray. On that night he left the office between six and seven, walked to his lodgings in Clerkenwell, made himself a cup of tea, and hurried back to Gray's Inn. Here he planted himself, as usual, close to the passage in the north-east corner of South Square, so that he could slip in on occasion and be effaced. Like many of the detective tribe, or like the ostrich, fount of many fables, he imagined himself by reason of this retreat entirely hidden from the observation of all. Of course the exact contrary was the result. The Policeman regarded him with the liveliest curiosity: the laundresses watched him daily: the newspaper vendor came every evening from the gateway to see what this ancient spy was doing, and why he lurked stealthily in the passage and looked out furtively. He was one of the little incidents or episodes which vary the daily routine of life in the Inn. Many of these occur every year: the people who come to their offices at ten and go away at five know nothing about them: the residents who leave at ten and return at six or seven or twelve know nothing about them. But the Service know: and they talk and conjecture. Here was an elderly man—nay, an old, old man, apparently eighty years of age. What did he want, coming night after night to hide himself in a passage and peer out into the Square? What, indeed? The Policeman, who had done duty in Hyde Park, could tell instructive stories from his own experience about frisky age: the laundresses remembered gentlemen for whom they had 'done,' and pranks with which those gentlemen amused themselves: but no one knew a case parallel to this. Why should an old man stand in the corner and secretly look out into the Square? He generally arrived at half-past seven, and he left his post at nine, when it was too dark to see across the Square. Then he went to the *Salutation* and enjoyed society, conversation, and a cheerful glass, as you have seen.

The time he chose was unfortunate, because Mr Edmund Gray, when he called at his Chambers, generally did so at half-past six or seven, on his way to the Hall of Science, Kentish Town. Therefore, Checkley might have gone on watching for a long time—say an æon—watching and waiting in vain. But an accident happened which rewarded him richly for all his trouble. It was on Friday. Elsie, provided by this time with a latchkey to the Chambers, arrived at Gray's Inn at six. She was going to spend

the evening with the Master. She walked in, ascended the staircase—Mr Gray had not yet arrived—opened the door, shut it behind her, and entered the room.

The hand of woman was now visible in the general improvement of the room. The windows were clean and bright: the wainscoted walls had been cleaned: the ceiling whitewashed: the carpet had been swept and the furniture dusted: there were flowers on the table: there was an easel, on which stood Elsie's fancy portrait of Mr Dering, so wonderfully like Mr Gray—a speaking likeness: books lay about the table—they were all books on the Labour Question: on the Social Question: on the Problems of the Day: all the books on all the questions with which men now torture themselves, and think thereby to advance the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven. There were new curtains, dainty curtains, of lace, hanging before the windows; and window-blinds themselves were clean and new. Elsie looked about her with a certain satisfaction: it was her own doing, the work of her own hand, because the old laundress was satisfied to sit down and look on. 'At the least,' she said, 'the poor dear man has a clean room.' Then she remembered that in a day or two she would leave him to his old solitude, and she sighed, thinking how he clung to her and leaned upon her, and already looked upon her as his successor—'a clean room,' she said, 'when I have left him. Perhaps he will leave the room, too, and be all day long what he used to be.—Sane or mad? I love him best when he is mad.'

The table was covered with manuscripts. These were part of the great work which he was about to give to the world.

Elsie had never seen the room behind this. A guilty curiosity seized her. She felt like the youngest of Bluebeard's wives. She felt the impulse: she resisted: she gave way: she opened the door and looked in.

She found a room nearly as large as the sitting-room. The windows were black with dust and soot. She opened one, and looked out upon a small green area outside, littered with paper and bottles and all kind of jetsam. The floor of the room was a couple of inches deep with dust: the chairs and the dressing-table were deep in dust. The bed was laid, but the blankets were devoured by moths: there was not a square inch left whole. It looked as if it had been brought in new and covered with sheets and blankets and so left, the room unopened, the bed untouched, for the ten years of Mr Edmund Gray's tenancy.

Between the bedroom and the sitting-room was a small dark room, containing a bath, a table for washing up, knives and forks in a basket, teacups and saucers.

'The pantry,' said Elsie, 'and the scullery, and the housemaid's closet, all together. Oh! beautiful! And to think that men live in such dens—and sleep there contentedly night after night in this lonely, ghostly old place. Horrible!' A rattling behind the wainscoting warned her that ghosts can show themselves even in the daytime. She shuddered, and retreated to the sitting-room. Here she took a book and sat by the open window, heedless of the fact that she could be seen by any one from the Square.

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It was seven o'clock before Mr Edmund Gray arrived. 'Ah! child,' he cried tenderly, 'you are here before me. I was delayed—some business. What was it? Pshaw! I forget everything. Never mind—I am here; and before we take a cab, I want you once more to go through with me the points of my new Catechism. Now, if you are ready.'

'Quite ready, Master.'

At half-past seven Checkley arrived at his corner and took a preliminary survey of the Square. 'There he is,' said the Policeman. 'There he is again,' said two laundresses conversing on a doorstep. 'There he is as usual,' said the newspaper man. 'Now,' asked all in chorus, 'what's he want there?'

Mr Checkley looked out from his corner, saw no one in the Square, and retreated into his passage. Then he looked out again, and retreated again. If any one passed through the passage, Checkley was always walking off with great resolution in the opposite direction.

Presently, in one of his stealthy peerings, he happened to look up. Then he started—he shaded his eyes: he looked his hardest. Yes; at the open window, freely displayed, without the least attempt at concealment, he saw the head and face of Miss Elsie Arundel. There! There! What more was necessary? Edmund Gray was Athelstan Arundel, or George Austin, or both—and Elsie Arundel was an accomplice after the act. There! There! He retreated to the seclusion of the passage and rubbed his hands. This would please Sir Samuel. He should hear it that very night. This ought to please him very much, because it made things so clear at last. There she was—up-stairs, in the Chambers of Mr Edmund Gray—in the very room! There! There! There!

Perhaps he was mistaken. But his sight was very good—for distant things. In reading a newspaper he might make mistakes, because he was one of those elderly persons who enjoy their newspaper most when they can nail it upon the wall and sit down to read it from the other side of a large room. He looked up again. The setting sun shining on the window of the side where he stood—the eastern side was reflected upon the windows of No. 22—Elsie's shapely head—she had taken off her hat—was bathed in the reflected sunshine. No doubt about her at all. There she was. There! There! There! The old man was fain to take a walk up Verulam Buildings and back again, to disguise his delight at this discovery. He walked chuckling and cracking his fingers, so that those who saw him—but there are not many in Raymond's Buildings on an August evening—thought that he must be either a little mad or a little drunk or a little foolish. But nobody much regards the actions of an ancient man. It is only the respect of his grandchildren or the thought of his possessions that gives him importance. Only the strong are regarded, and an old man who looks poor gets no credit even for foolishness and silly chuckles. Then Checkley went back to his corner. Oh! what was that? He rubbed his eyes again. He turned pale: he staggered: he caught at the doorposts. What was that? He shaded his eyes and looked again—bent and trembling and shaking all

over. Said the Policeman: 'Looks as if he's going to get 'em again.' Said the laundresses: 'He looks as if he'd seen a ghost.' The newspaper boy stepped half-way across the Square. 'He's looking at Mr Edmund Gray and the young lady. Jealous—p'raps—knows the young lady—wouldn't have believed it, probly.'

Yes—Checkley was looking at that window. No doubt of that at all. He was not able to disguise his astonishment: he no longer pretended to hide himself. For he saw, sitting in the window, the young lady whom he believed to be an accomplice in the crime; and standing over her, with an expression of fatherly affection, was none other than Mr Dering himself.

Yes—Mr Dering. Most wonderful! What did it mean? Had Mr Dering resolved to clear up the mystery of Edmund Gray? Had he penetrated the Chambers and found there—not Edmund Gray—but Elsie Arundel?

'My friend,' said the Policeman, standing before him so that the view of the window was intercepted, 'you seem interested over the way.'

'I am. I am. Oh! yes. Much interested.'

'Well—don't you think you've looked at that old gentleman long enough? Perhaps he wouldn't like so much looking at. There's a young lady, too. It isn't manners to be staring at a young lady like a stuck pig.'

'No—no, Policeman—I've seen enough—thank you.'

'And, still talkin' in a friendly way, do you think Mr Edmund Gray over there would like it if he knew there was a detective or a spy watching every evening on the other side of the Square? What's the little game, guv'nor? Anything in our line? Not with that most respectable old gentleman, I do hope—though sometimes— Well—what is it? Because we can't have you goin' on as you have a been goin' on, you know.'

'Policeman'—Checkley pulled him aside and pointed to the little group at the window—'you see that old gentleman there—do you know him?'

'Certainly. Known him ever since I came to the Inn—two years ago. The people of the Inn have known him for ten years, I believe. That's Mr Edmund Gray. He's not one of the regular residents, and he hasn't got an office. Comes here now and then when he fancies the place—Mr Edmund Gray, that is. I wish all the gentlemen in the Inn were half as liberal as he is.'

'Oh! it's impossible! Say it again, Policeman. Perhaps I'm a little deaf—I'm very old, you know—a little deaf perhaps. Say it again.'

'What's the matter with the man?' For he was shaking violently, and his eyes stared. 'Of course that is Mr Edmund Gray.'

'What does the girl do with him? Why are they both there together?'

'How should I know why she calls upon him? She's a young lady, and a sweet young thing too. He's her grandfather likely.'

Checkley groaned.

'I must go somewhere and think this out,' he said. 'Excuse me, Policeman. I am an old man, and—and—I've had a bit of a shock and— Good-evening, Policeman.' He shaded his eyes again and looked up. Yes—there they

were, talking. Then Elsie rose, and he saw her putting on her hat. Then she retreated up the room. But still he stood watching.

'Not had enough yet, guv'nor?' asked the Policeman.

'Only a minute. I want to see her go out.—Yes—there they are—going out together. It is, after all— Oh! there is no mistake.'

'There is no mistake, guv'nor,' said the Policeman. 'There goes Mr Edmund Gray, and there goes that sweet young thing along of him—Ah! there's many advantages about being a gentleman. No mistake, I say, about them two.—Now, old man, you look as if you'd had a surprise. Hadn't you better go home and take a drop of something?'

It was earlier than Checkley generally went to the *Salutation*. But he delayed no longer. He tottered across the Square, showing very much of extreme feebleness, looking neither to the right nor to the left, his cheek white, his eyes rolling. The people looked after him, expecting that he would fall. But he did not. He turned into the tavern, hobbled along the passage, and sank into an armchair in the parlour.

'Good gracious, Mr Checkley,' cried the barmaid as he passed, 'whatever is the matter?'

Some of the usual company were already assembled, although it was as yet hardly eight. The money-lender was there, sitting in his corner, taking his tobacco and his grog in silence. The decayed Barrister was there, his glass of old and mild before him, reading the morning newspaper. The ex-M.P. was there. When Checkley tumbled into the room, they looked up in surprise. When he gazed about him wildly and gasped, they were astonished, for he seemed like unto one about to have a fit.

'Give me something, Robert—give me something,' he cried. 'Quick—something strong. I'll have it short. Quick—quick!'

Robert brought him a small glass of brandy, which he swallowed hastily.

'Oh! he groaned, sitting up, 'I've seen—I've seen'—

'You look as if you'd seen a ghost,' said the barmaid, who had come along with a glass of water. 'Shall I bathe your forehead?'

'No—no. I am better now—I am all right again.—Gentlemen'—he looked round the room solemnly—'I've seen this evening a good man—an old man—a great man—a rich man, gentlemen, wrecked and cast away and destroyed and ruined. With a little devil of a woman to laugh at him!'

'They don't generally laugh at the men when they are ruined,' said Mr Langhorne. 'They laugh while they are ruining them. It's fun to them. So it is to the men. Great fun it is while it lasts. I daresay the little woman won't really laugh at him. In my case'—

His case was left untold, because he stopped and buried his head in his newspaper.

Then Shylock spoke. He removed his pipe from his lips and spoke, moved, after his kind, by the mention of the words wreck and ruin, just as the vulture pricks up its feathers at the word death.

'To see a rich man wrecked and ruined, Mr Checkley, is a thing which a man may see every day. The thing is not to lose by their wreck—

to make money out of it. Rich men are always being wrecked and ruined. What else can you expect if men refuse to pay their interest and to meet their Bills? The melancholy thing—ah! the real sadness—is the ruin of a man who has trusted his fellow-creatures and got taken in for his pains. Only this morning I find that I've been let in by a swindler—a common swindler, gentlemen—who comes round and says he can't pay up—can't pay up—and I'm welcome to the sticks.—Which kind of man might your friend be, Mr Checkley, the man who's trusted his neighbour and got left—or the neighbour who's ramped the man that trusted him?'

'It isn't money at all,' Checkley replied.

'Then, sir, if it isn't money,' said the money-lender, 'I don't know why you come in frightening this honourable company out of their wits. If it isn't money, how the Devil can the gentleman be wrecked and ruined?'

For two hours Mr Checkley sat in silence, evidently not listening to what was said. Then he turned to Mr Langhorne the Barrister: 'You've known Mr Edmund Gray a long time, I believe?'

'Nine years—ten years—since he came to the Inn.'

'Always the same man, I suppose?' said Checkley. 'Never another man—not sometimes a young man—or two young men—one rather a tall young man, looks as if the world was all his—supercilious beast?'

'Never more than one man at once,' replied the Barrister with a show of forensic keenness. 'He might have been two young men rolled into one; but not to my knowledge: always the same man to look at, so far as I know—and the same man to talk with.'

'Oh! yes—yes. There's no hope left—none. He's ruined and lost and cast away and done for.'

He rose and walked out. The company looked after him and shook their heads. Then they drew their chairs a little closer, and the gap made by his departure vanished.

INFANTICIDE IN INDIA.

THE question of early marriages in India is one which has been before the public in this country a great deal of late, and in India itself it has been a question of very great moment, and has been the subject of legislation there. The discussion of this question has led to much attention being given to the position of women in India and the wrongs from which they suffer. Among these wrongs there is none more cruel than the crime of infanticide, for by that term is meant almost exclusively the destruction of female children. The writer of this paper, when in the service of the Government of India, had many instances of this crime brought to his notice, and a summary of the results he obtained is given below.

It would be wrong to suppose that this crime is prevalent in all parts or among all the people of India. Happily, it is not so, for it is only practised by the members of a few of the many castes, and chiefly among the Rajpoots, who were originally the warrior or soldier caste. How long this custom has existed cannot now be told, but there are indistinct traces of its having been

practised among the people living near the Indus, at the time of the invasion by Alexander the Great. However this may be, infanticide came almost suddenly into view in the year 1789, when Mr Jonathan Duncan was the British Resident at Benares. Mr Duncan obtained unequivocal admissions from the natives themselves as to the existence of the crime among them; but they did not admit the offence to be a very heinous one: their palliation for it then was the same that is offered now—namely, the intense pride of caste which prevents them from marrying their daughters to the sons of any tribe lower than their own. Among the Rajpoots is a sub-tribe called the 'Chohans,' and it is amongst them that the destruction of female offspring exists in the most marked way. If a Rajpoot did allow his daughter to grow up, he would be obliged to marry her before she came to the age of puberty, and to give with her a very handsome dowry; while, on the other hand, if it was a son, he could hope that he would live to get married and would bring a dowry to him.

Although a Rajpoot speaks of infanticide as only a venial offence, he does not claim any religious sanction for it: he knows, on the contrary, that his sacred books condemn the practice, as, for instance, it is mentioned in the *Brahma vaivartta Purana* that to kill a female is as criminal as to kill a Brahman, and one guilty of such is to suffer in *narka* or hell. The Rajpoots also admit that the crime is against all natural affection, and it is also known to be a terrible trial to the mothers to have their infant girls destroyed. Indeed, the harder task is assigned to the mother of not only giving an unwilling consent, but also that of aiding in the commission of the crime. Some of the wealthier Rajpoots in the North-west Provinces of India live in houses surrounded by a walled enclosure. This isolation from the nearest villages and neighbours has rendered the crime easier of concealment. Mr Charles Raikes in his *Notes on the North-west Provinces* has the following: 'At Mynpoorie there is an old fortress which looks far over the valley of the Eesun river. This has been for centuries the stronghold of the Rajahs of Mynpoorie—Chohans, whose ancient blood descending from the great Pirthee Raj and the regal stem of Neem Rana represents the *crème de la crème* of Rajpoot aristocracy. Here, when a son, grandson, or nephew was born to the reigning chief, the event was announced to the neighbouring city by the loud discharge of wall-pieces and matchlocks; but centuries had passed away and no infant daughter had been known to smile within these walls.' Mr Raikes gives the following supplement to his story, to show how the Government approved of the conduct of the Rajah who first preserved a female child: 'In 1845, thanks to the vigilance of Mr Unwin—a magistrate of the district who had exerted himself to put down infanticide—a little grand-daughter was preserved by the Rajah of that day. The fact was duly notified to the Government, and a letter of congratulation and a dress of honour were despatched from headquarters to the Rajah.'

Although the attention of judicial and police officers has been directed to this crime for many years, but little is known as yet as to the mode by which it is committed. It is not difficult

in any case to sever the bond to life in a new-born babe. As a Rajpoot, who was favourable to the cessation of infanticide among his clan, said, when pressed for an answer as to how the female children were killed: 'What is easier to destroy than the blossom of a flower.' It is believed that in the greater number of cases the child is left to die from want of nourishment; in many others, the death is effected by suffocation, and in a small number by poison.

Infanticide is diminishing because of the activity with which the suppression of it is pursued, and for the same reason the cases that escape judicial inquiry are now fewer. It is only with those into which an inquiry is made that any knowledge whatever can be arrived at as to how the death was accomplished. A part of the judicial inquiry may include a post-mortem examination by a medical officer, and as a result of this there may be a reference to a chemical expert, if there should be a suspicion of poison having been used. Of these cases, I am in a position to say that between the years 1873 and 1888, both years inclusive, two hundred and twenty-three cases of infanticide by poison were referred to me from the North-west Provinces and Oudh alone, and the result of my inquiries was to show that poison was detected in thirty-six of them. The poison detected was opium in thirty-four, and arsenic in two of them. In one of the latter, the poison had been administered with great clumsiness, as gritty particles of white arsenic were found adherent to the highly inflamed mucous membrane of the infant's stomach.

The number of cases in which opium was found gives a percentage of fifteen of all the cases referred. These numbers testify that poison is one of the modes of infanticide, and they also bring out that when it has been determined to kill by poison, opium is employed. The Rajpoots, then, had acquired this knowledge about opium, that it is out of all proportion more fatal to very young children than it is to adults. I need hardly add that all medical men know this fact very well. Concerning the administration of this drug for the purpose of infanticide, it is said there are two methods used, both of which exhibit a ruthless kind of skill: the one method is to smear the drug over the nipple of the mother, so that the child will imbibe the poison along with its mother's milk; the other is to spread on the roof of the child's mouth a little opium and allow it gradually to be dissolved and swallowed. This latter is probably the most frequent method employed.

No sooner was it discovered that infanticide was practised among the Rajpoots, than a means of suppressing it was sought for. Mr Jonathan Duncan, only a few months after his discovery, persuaded the Rajpoots around Benares, who were under British rule, to enter into a covenant by which they engaged themselves to abolish the crime. This, however, turned out a failure; for the crime was still rampant in the same part of the country in 1816; and the magistrates then stationed there—Messrs Fortescue, Smith, Shakespeare, and others—reported to the Governor-general of the day that infanticide still existed.

Mr Duncan, from being Resident at Benares, had been promoted to be Governor of Bombay,

and there he soon stirred up inquiries on the subject of infanticide, and the result was to find it was largely practised in Gujerat, Katch, and Kattiawar, among a tribe called the 'Jadelas,' who are nearly identical with the Rajpoots. In 1807, Major Alexander Walker was commissioned to make an extensive inquiry embracing the countries named above; and this officer did much to bring about a better state of things. In Northern India little was apparently done till the year 1841, when Mr Robert Montgomery (afterwards Sir Robert Montgomery, Lieutenant-governor of the Punjab), then magistrate of Allahabad, made a vigorous crusade against infanticide. He established the system, which, with modifications, is that which is still used for its suppression. His efforts were followed up by those of an officer already mentioned, Mr Unwin, the magistrate of Mynpoorie, who instituted a system of inspection in the villages of the district in which Chohan Rajpoots dwelt. This consisted in the village watchmen being called on to report the birth of a female child to the police, who, in turn, had to report to the magistrate. An order was then issued that one month afterwards the health of this child was to be again reported on; and if it became ill, it was to be seen by a police officer, who again reports; and if it died under suspicious circumstances, a post-mortem examination must be made by the civil surgeon of the district. The effect of this system of inspection was that in six years after its institution there were one thousand two hundred and sixty-three girls of six years and under living in the Chohan villages of the Mynpoorie District; while at the beginning of those six years there were none at all. In other words, at the end of 1843 there were no girls in those villages of Chohan parents; in May 1851 there were over twelve hundred of them. This statement gives some idea of the destruction of life that would have taken place had this able magistrate not interfered in the way he did.

The means taken to suppress female infanticide in later years are similar to those instituted by Mr Unwin. Since 1870, these measures have had the authority of a special Act of the Legislative Council of India, the Female Infanticide Act being Act VIII. of that year. This enactment was chiefly for use in the North-west Provinces. It gives power to the local Government to proclaim villages where the crime is known to be practised; and to entertain police in excess of the ordinary establishment, for the detection and prevention of the crime; and to keep registers of births, deaths, and marriages, or to take a census of suspected classes and persons, as well as other minor regulations. The working of the Act during the last twenty years has been attended with a great decrease of the crime, as may be seen from the following: In the Administration Reform of the North-west Provinces for 1881-82, the number of proclaimed villages was 2368; in the Report for 1883-84 it is said that the practice had been suppressed to a considerable extent, and was then confined to a very few families: in the Report for 1886-87 the crime was stated to be getting still rarer, and the number of proclaimed villages had gone down to 1573. It is also remarked that the custom of the father of the bride receiving a sum of money from the bride-

groom had been adopted, and was increasing. This in itself tends to diminish the temptation to infanticide. In the Report for 1887-88, it is said that the proclaimed villages were 1381, nearly two hundred fewer than in the previous year. It is also remarked that the alteration in the marriage custom just mentioned was at work, and producing favourable results, the crime still decreasing, so that hopes are entertained that it will soon disappear.

THE MAYOR OF SAWMILL FLAT.

CHAPTER II.—CONCLUSION.

THE reader doubtless inferred, when he discovered an Englishman of talent and refinement in the wildest frontier Territory of the United States, that such a man had his own good reasons for being there. The inference was a correct one. John Lee was a man with a history—an unpleasant history—and he went to South-western Arizona to begin life over again, and to 'grow up with the country.' The day after the town meeting, the remarks of the new settler anent jail-birds and the subsequent confusion of Dr Lee furnished the topic of conversation throughout the settlement. At the noon hour several miners and others gathered, as was their wont, in front of Andy Dunbar's store. Jim Hawkins, whose faith in Lee was still unshaken, was there and bore as long as he could the generally unkind remarks which fell upon his ear.

'Boys,' he said at last, 'you don't give the Doctor a fair shake. You've knowed Doc. Lee longer a good deal than you've knowed this feller Cadwell, and yet just because Cadwell gets up and makes some dirty remarks which ain't proven, not by a jugful, you jump on the Doctor with both feet. Wait and see what Lee has to say for himself. I'll just bet any of you lads an even thousand that Cadwell is a liar, and will crawl down from his perch. Here's the cash—who wants to cover it? Put up or shut up!'

The men felt somewhat ashamed of themselves, and no one cared to accept Hawkins' bet. The old man continued: 'There's just one thing I'll promise you, boys. If Cadwell can't or won't prove his words, Jim Hawkins is a-going to lick him clear out of Arizona. Yes, sir, that's what I'm a-going to do, Reeve or no Reeve; and if the Justice wants to have me arrested for assault, I'll pay a good round fine with pleasure.'

Jim Hawkins' blood was hot and his fingers tingled. He was an old Westerner, and had lived most of his life in communities where law and order were only theories. But the old Anglo-Saxon comes strongly to the surface in Western men, and his love of fair-play was as keen as his hatred for a slanderer or a coward. He felt that he could not wait a week to thrash Cadwell, so on his way home he stopped at John Lee's shanty. The Doctor was busy writing in the room that he called his surgery. There was a blank dull look upon his face, which did not brighten as usual at the sight of his friend, and neither of the two offered any greeting to the other.

'Doc,' said Hawkins shortly and excitedly, 'was you ever in jail?'

'Yes, Hawkins, I was.'

Those words cost John Lee his best friend, just when he needed him the most. If he had only qualified his reply, or if Hawkins had pursued his inquiry a little further with a view to learning particulars, the result would have been different. But no more words were spoken; and Jim Hawkins, shocked and disappointed, walked away to his mill with a faltering step. For if there was in Sawmill Flat that day a man with a heavier heart than John Lee carried, that man was honest Jim Hawkins.

That same night John Lee lay down as usual upon his rather hard couch, but he could not sleep. He lay awake, ruminating upon the mysterious ways of Providence and of mankind. He had never in his whole life done aught of which he need be ashamed; and yet he had been incarcerated for weeks in a prison, had been put upon his trial for murder, and acquitted only because of a persistent disagreement in three different juries which had been impanelled to try him. He had left his native land with the dark shadow of suspicion resting upon him—a shadow which he and his many friends were utterly powerless to dispel. Despairing of ever regaining his old standing in any English community, John Lee, hoping against hope that he might be justified in the sight of his fellow-men before death should claim him, emigrated to the Western world, and took up his abode upon the frontier of civilisation. And as he lay upon his sleepless bed, he could not but think how very small, after all, the world is. For he had travelled six thousand miles to escape the sneers and black looks of those who had mistrusted him, only, when Time was beginning to heal his wound, to find himself confronted by one of the men who verily believed him guilty of a foul crime.

Lee had seen this man Cadwell several times during the six months' residence of the latter at Sawmill Flat; and yet, although something about the man had always seemed familiar to him, he had, strangely enough, never made Darius Cadwell's acquaintance. But when, at the town meeting, the man arose and in hard tones utterly void of feeling asked the assemblage if they wished to elect a jail-bird or a murderer for their Mayor, Lee in a moment recognised him as a member of one of the juries that had tried him at the York Assizes.

Far into the night the doctor lay thinking upon the cruelty of his fate. It was two o'clock perhaps when he fell into a troubled doze, only to be awakened by a hammering upon the door of his shanty. He started up but half awake, and went to the entrance, almost expecting to see the cold-blooded jurymen.

'What now?' he asked, loudly and roughly for John Lee.

The door was now open, and by the moonlight could be seen a man, haggard and weary and covered with dust. In the left hand he held the rein of a saddle horse, and Lee could see that both horse and rider had travelled a long distance.

'Air you Doc. Lee?'

'I am.'

'I'm from Rosario, near the Mexican line. It's seventy miles from here. We've got the yellow fever—got it bad. The town's picketed, and I'm the last man out. We only had one doctor, and he died 'tending the first case. We heered you doctored yellow fever in Louisiany, two years ago. Is that right?'

'Yes, it is. I have seen a good deal of yellow fever.'

'Will you come down to our town and help us out, Doc.?' The man gasped his request as if he dreaded a negative reply. He was a rough specimen, but he realised that he spoke for dying men and women.

'Yes, I will—right off,' replied Lee, as he commenced to dress himself. 'How many cases when you left—and when did you leave?'

'Thirty cases and eight deaths already, boss. I left at four o'clock yesterday afternoon. Been riding ever since, and my mare's clean tuckered out.'

'Well, you just take a wash and then lie down for half an hour. Here is water and a towel. I've got a couple of good ponies out here at the back. I'll bring them round while you rest.'

Lee was wide awake by this time, and his professional interest was aroused. He had plenty to think of now besides his own troubles, and that suited John Lee. He set all that his modest larder contained before the tired messenger, and gave him a glass of whisky-and-water.

'Do you feel like doubling?' Lee asked the man half an hour after his arrival.

'You bet I do, Doc. I'm made over, and I'm good for a hundred miles.—By the Lord, Doctor, you're the stuff, you are. I suppose you know, sir, that once you're in Rosario you can't get out?'

'Come on; never mind that. Let's start.'

Both men stepped outside where the ponies were waiting. Lee locked the door, and with a piece of chalk wrote upon it: 'Gone to Rosario—Yellow Fever.' Then they leaped into their saddles and cantered away.

The settlement or town of Rosario was a much larger place than Sawmill Flat, although the settlers were by no means so prosperous as those at the Flat. Rosario was now visited by that fearful scourge from which none of Uncle Sam's territory bordering on the Gulf and the Mexican line is altogether exempt. The terrible summer climate, the morasses and swamps, and the bad drinking-water, all lend their aid to the plague itself, which, when it once breaks out, flees before nothing but the winter frosts.

It was noon when Lee and his companion reached the 'dead' line of pickets, posted for quarantine purposes around the afflicted place by the people of the adjacent districts, and there the physician parted with his guide.

Lee was not at all fearful. He had himself suffered from the 'yellow jack' in a mild form; and he had afterwards been one of the most active and successful doctors when the scourge had visited New Orleans two years before. Of course he incurred some risks, but not so many as those who had never been attacked by the disease, or who knew nothing of the correct method for treating it.

He was a welcome arrival in that miserable community of dead and dying, and he plunged right into his work. Before dark he had visited every case, and had enrolled a corps of assistants to nurse the sick and to enforce the rules which he drew up to minimise the spread of the plague. By nightfall, too, he had forgotten for the time being his personal troubles and the existence of Darius Cadwell.

Besides Jim Hawkins, whose good-will he had now lost, John Lee had at least one other staunch friend in Sawmill Flat. This was none other than Jennie Dunbar, the belle of the settlement, and only child of the wealthy storekeeper and trader, Andy Dunbar. Perchance she loved the handsome and interesting Doctor; at all events, she much admired him, and, with a woman's instinct, believed that he was innocent of any such fearful crime as had been indirectly charged to him by Cadwell. Her acquaintance with Lee was very slight and superficial. Of course, in so limited a community they had met often; but Lee, for good reasons, which he had partially explained to Hawkins, had steadily and consistently refrained from paying any particular attention to the girl, who was very handsome, and, though spoiled by her father, possessed of much good common-sense. Now, this girl of twenty years knew well the value and good moral effect of an expression of sympathy and confidence; and she judged rightly that such an expression from herself to Dr Lee at this time would have an immense influence with 'the boys' of Sawmill Flat, who one and all admired the girl and esteemed her father.

Upon ordinary occasions, Jennie would have been the last to make any overtures to Lee or any other man for a closer acquaintance, but the present was not an ordinary occasion. Her father had just bought her a spirited horse, and on the very day of the town meeting a spick and span new buggy had arrived from St Louis. She resolved to make this an excuse for inviting Lee to drive with her, knowing that if they two were seen riding together it would be a tacit but unmistakable intimation that she believed in Lee and counted him her friend. So, immediately after breakfast, on the morning that John Lee was riding hard and fast to fever-stricken Rosario, Jennie Dunbar drove out to the Doctor's shanty, and was the first to read the notice written in chalk upon the door.

The girl was not only surprised and disappointed; she was thunderstruck. She sat down upon the bench where the Doctor often smoked his pipe, and remained there some moments lost in thought. Then she looked at her watch. It was just seven o'clock. She sprang into the buggy and drove to her father's house, which she entered. In ten minutes she came out again with a small bundle in her hand, and behind her she had left a note for her father and mother. The bundle contained one cotton dress and a change of underwear. The note ran as follows:

DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER—I have gone to Rosario to nurse the yellow-fever cases. I knew it was no use to ask your permission. But do not be angry; I want to do something useful. I feel sure that I shall come back soon and well; so don't worry.

JENNIE.

That night, Jennie Dunbar left her new horse and buggy with one of the quarantine guards, and passed through the dead line into Rosario to report at Dr Lee's headquarters as a volunteer nurse.

Jennie Dunbar was an impulsive girl; and as is the case with most young women of a similar nature, her impulses were usually good. Do not let it be supposed for a moment that her sudden trip to Rosario was a foolish escapade, nor yet merely a girl's tribute of love to the man who had well-nigh—if not quite—won her heart. She had longed over and over for such an opportunity as this; for Jennie Dunbar was not the sort of a girl to remain contentedly the spoiled favourite of a small frontier settlement. She wanted work, and work of a nature wherein she could display her sound judgment and her fearless spirit. Such work was now before her.

Lee shook hands with the girl, and cordially welcomed her. He was not an effusive man, but he was just as glad to see the familiar face of a woman whom he knew he might fully trust with his most critical cases.

'Your father and mother know of your coming of course?' remarked Lee.

'Yes,' replied the girl—which she believed, rightly, to be true enough by that time.

'Well, you take a rest, and I will assign you to work at daylight,' he said; adding, as he looked at his watch, 'it is now ten o'clock.'

It is not necessary here to detail the hard and weary life, full of both discouragement and cheer, which the Doctor and his nurses led during the next few weeks in that pest-smitten town. At first the number of patients increased steadily, and, notwithstanding all the efforts of Lee, each day found Death reaping a rich harvest. But in three weeks the climax was reached and the fresh cases became fewer.

When October arrived, the worn-out watchers at Rosario began to look eagerly for the first night-frost of autumn, however slight; for frost and yellow fever never dwell together.

During the long weeks the Doctor had become acquainted with well-nigh every man, woman, and child in Rosario; but there was one man who had carefully avoided Lee. This was an Englishman, who was taken down with the fever on the 1st day of October, and in forty-eight hours he was a doomed man. His tongue was swollen badly, but he managed to ask the Doctor how long he might expect to live.

'The chances are, my poor fellow, that you will have exactly twenty-four hours of life. Is there anything you wish done—any message to send to any one?'

'Yes, Doctor, I've got a message for the whole world, but most of all for you. Can't you guess who I am?'

A curious gleam played upon John Lee's face, and mingled feelings crowded his bosom as the truth dawned upon him. 'Good God!' he exclaimed. 'Yes, you are—you are Richard Dent!'

The dying man nodded assent. After a pause, in which to gain strength, the doomed victim asked: 'Did you ever suspect—er—er—anything, Doctor?'

'Suspect? Suspect? Why, Dent—I know

beyond the shadow of a doubt that you murdered the father of my betrothed bride.'

Again the man nodded. 'Yes, that's right. I didn't mean to, but I did, and I let you shoulder it all. I wasn't man enough to toe the mark and let you out, Doctor. You came mighty near—yes, you did—mighty near swinging for it. But I'll pay it all up pretty soon, Doc. Twenty-four hours you said, that's all.'

There was another pause, during which Lee gave Dent some medicine to relieve him a little.

'Why don't you tell the boys, Doctor? There's time to hang me yet. Those fellows would hang me or burn me, or a dozen like me, if you only say the word. There's time enough—twenty-four hours.'

'Bah!' replied Lee. 'I wouldn't hurt you. You've probably paid a big price already. Don't think about me, Dent: a dying man should make his peace with God—not with men.'

'There ain't a notary or a magistrate you could get, is there? I could make a—you know—yes, a deposition.'

'No; there's no one, and if there was one, I wouldn't bother. I must leave you for a while; but I will return soon. Your nurse is on the veranda.'

When John Lee left, by the front door, the house in which Richard Dent lay dying, Jennie Dunbar, who, unseen, had heard all, ran out at the back. As fast as she could go, she hastened to the picket line, which she reached at a spot where mounted messengers waited to do errands for the imprisoned people of Rosario.

'Two of you,' she said, quietly but quickly, 'start at once for Sawmill Flat. One of you find Jim Hawkins, and the other look for Darius Cadwell. Tell them that I, Jennie Dunbar, and Dr Lee both demand their presence on a matter of more than life and death. The yellow fever is not to stop them. Hurry, for God's sake, men! One thousand dollars apiece if you bring them here within twelve hours; and one hundred dollars extra for every hour saved from twelve. You know me—you know the Doctor: our promise is good.'

Before the last word was spoken, the two men were in the saddle galloping toward Sawmill Flat, and Jennie Dunbar began to count the minutes until their return. She had not intended to deceive them when she gave her order in Lee's name: she only did it to add weight, for scarcely a man in Rosario but would have deemed it an honour to make some sacrifice for the brave physician who had served them so well.

It was eight o'clock in the evening when the two messengers departed from Rosario: at five o'clock in the morning they were back with Hawkins and Cadwell—the former of whom had come willingly enough; the latter after some demur.

The anxious girl was waiting for them, and at once conducted them to the cottage where Richard Dent, in all the throes of the last stages of the fever, awaited his rapidly approaching end. They were none too soon, for the power of speech had already left him, and delirium would speedily set in.

Lee, who was in the room, was much surprised

when Hawkins and the others entered, and would have ordered them out. But Hawkins had been advised of what was necessary by Jennie.

'Excuse my rudeness, Doc,' he said; 'but I am here by virtue of my magisterial commission received from the Governor of Arizona.—Now, Cadwell, you ask questions of this poor cuss. I will listen.'

Cadwell at once began. 'Do you know anything of the murder of old Squire Bowes of Leyburndale, Yorkshire?'

Dent nodded.

'Did this man, Dr Lee, have aught to do with it?'

A shake of the head was Dent's reply.

'Do you know who did commit that murder?'

Again Dent nodded affirmatively.

'Can you tell us who did?'

The dying man nodded once more and feebly pointed his forefinger at himself.

'And your name is Richard Dent?'

Another nod.

'That will do, Cadwell,' said Hawkins, who now stood over Dent.—'Doctor, hold up the sick man's hand.'

Lee complied.

'Now, then,' said Hawkins, 'you solemnly swear that the murder of one Bowes at Leyburndale, Yorkshire, England, was committed by you, Richard Dent; and that John Lee was not a party to the act in any way, shape, or manner? That is the truth, so help you God?'

For the last time Dent nodded assent, and then all but the Doctor left the room.

Richard Dent was the last victim of the yellow fever at Rosario; but the quarantine was not removed for some weeks, during which time all the Sawmill Flat people were compelled to remain within the prescribed limits. Even when the dead line was wiped away, only Jim Hawkins and Jennie Dunbar returned to the Flat.

John Lee, worn out with his labours, went up into the mountains of Colorado to recuperate; while Darius Cadwell, after making an elaborate statement in writing, which he signed before a notary, decided that he might find elsewhere a more comfortable residence than his shanty at Sawmill Flat.

On the 1st day of January, John Lee was still at Denver, and there, about a week later, a letter from Jim Hawkins found him. The following is the letter, with all grammatical errors eliminated:

CITY OF SAWMILL FLAT, ARIZONA TERRITORY,
Jan'y 1st, 1889.

DEAR FRIEND—We have just held our election for Mayor. The boys nominated you, and we polled a full vote. You are elected by acclamation. Hurrah! How soon can you come and take hold of the City? All the boys send their regards.—Your friend,
JIM HAWKINS.

Mayor Lee replied in person, for he at once went down to 'take hold.'

Whether or not the City of Sawmill Flat will ever attain the success anticipated by its progenitors is as yet an unsolved problem. But Dr John Lee is still its honoured Mayor, and he will without doubt do his best for his friends

and neighbours; while, if there is one person who approaches him in popularity it is his wife, who bears a striking resemblance to Jennie Dunbar.

RATS ON SHIPBOARD.

It was a very great while before the mariner came to realise that among the perils which beset his calling he must reckon the existence of rats on shipboard as by no means an insignificant one. That sailors have for centuries viewed the vermin with a superstitious eye is evident upon the testimony of many old writers. Shakespeare, in the *Tempest*, says:

A very carcass of a boat,
Nor tackle, nor mast—the very rats
Instinctively had quit it.

The reputation of the rat as an evil omen, therefore, is beyond question very ancient; but as a pest whose presence is a menace to the safety of life at sea the animal has earned a distinction which is quite modern. A most remarkable instance of the mischief which the creature is capable of doing came to light during the proceedings of a Naval Court of Inquiry held in August 1875 for the purpose of investigating the cause of the loss of the barque *Commodore*, of Hartlepool. The vessel, which was burnt at sea, had been loaded with a cargo of timber, and the fire broke out in the hold in a most mysterious manner. It was eventually proved, on the evidence of the entire crew, that beyond a shadow of doubt the outbreak was originated by a rat carrying off a lighted candle, which had stood in the fore-castle, and was presently missed by the sailors, and dropping it among the dry and resinous pine stowed below. The *Shipping Gazette*, in commenting upon this extraordinary case at the time, and speaking of the danger generally of rats on shipboard, said that 'they have caused the foundering of many ships by gnawing holes in the planking, or so eating away the inner sides of the wood as to leave very little for the straining of the hull to do in completing the aperture; they have been known to nibble the timber at the waterways until the wood was so thin as to admit rain-water through it; they will attack the bungs of casks and create leakage; find out the soft parts of the knees or lining, and make a passage for themselves from one part to another.' So fully has the danger of this now come to be recognised, that such contingencies are generally provided for in the insurance of wooden-built ships.

As one pair of rats will produce three or four dozen young ones in the course of a twelvemonth, it may easily be conceived that a sailing-vessel, loaded with a cargo likely to prove particularly attractive to the rodent quadrupeds, by the time she returns from an ambling voyage around the world must be literally infested with the creatures. Various are the means of extermination employed. The owners of the big lines of steamships find it necessary to engage a regular rat-catcher; and on the return of each vessel, as soon as the freight has been discharged, he sets to work with all the science of his calling to remedy the nuisance. In a passage across the Atlantic and back again, occupying barely a

month, it is commonly found that the rats have increased so prodigiously, notwithstanding the ship sailed with an apparently clear hold, as to require a good-sized cart to remove the carcasses when the professional gentleman has made an end of his work. The common plan in use among shipmasters who do not aspire to the dignity of employing a regular rat-catcher is to smoke the animals out of the hold. Dana, in his admirable *Two Years before the Mast*, gives a good account of the manner in which this is done. He says: 'As the next day was Sunday, and a good day for smoking the ship, we cleared everything out of the cabin and fore-castle, made a slow fire of charcoal, birch bark, brimstone, and other materials on the ballast in the bottom of the hold, calked up the hatches and every open seam, and pasted over the cracks of the windows and the slides of the scuttle and companion-way. Wherever smoke was seen coming out, we calked and pasted, and, so far as we could, made the ship smoke-tight. The captain and officers slept under the awning which was spread over the quarter-deck; and we stowed ourselves away under an old studding-sail, which we drew over one side of the fore-castle. The next morning, we took the battens from the hatches and opened the ship. A few stifled rats were found: and what bugs, cockroaches, fleas, and other vermin there might have been on board, must have unrove their life-lines before the hatches were opened.'

It has frequently happened that ship-captains, finding their vessels whilst at sea overrun with rats to such a degree as to be a serious inconvenience, have attempted to deal with the nuisance by scattering poisons in the hold. The remedy has of course proved effectual, but in the end, far worse than the disorder; for the creatures, perishing at the bottom of the ship, naturally begin to decompose after being dead a little while, and then the vessel is haunted by a most villainous odour. Imagine a craft becalmed for days under a broiling equatorial sun, with hundreds of rats decaying among the inaccessible nooks and crannies of her hold! The origin of more than one marine pestilence might doubtless be traced to this cause.

Sailors have a novel rat-trap, which, we believe, was devised in the first instance by an old Jack as an amusement for the rest of the fore-castle. Its great charm is its perfect simplicity. An inverted box is placed upon the deck, one end of which is tilted upon a short stick that balances it, and attached to which is a piece of twine, leading into the hand of a seaman who lies stirless in his hammock with his eyes cautiously peering over the rim of it. Under the box are dropped a few crumbs of biscuit or a small cube of salt junk. Presently the rats in the forepeak beneath, finding all still overhead, venture up through the interstices between the timbers. The sight of their sharp snouts and small bright eyes is as cheering to the expectant sailor as the bob of the float is to an angler. By-and-by one of them spies the bait, and makes for it, when jerk goes the string, down comes the box, and the animal is imprisoned.

A writer in the *Nautical Magazine* tells a story of how a Yankee skipper contrived to free his ship from rats. Whilst he lay in port, he

discovered that one of the British ships then in the harbour had amongst her cargo a great quantity of cheese. He thereupon found an excuse for hauling over to her and mooring his own packet alongside. The next step was to procure a plank, smear it well with an odiferous preparation of red herrings, and place it so as to lead through one of the ports on board the Englishman. The immediate result was a wholesale emigration of the rats from the American ship's hold to the cheese-laden vessel alongside.

The sagacity of the rat is not perhaps to be equalled by that of any other animal, the dog alone excepted. Their instinct in quitting a sinking ship is remarkable. Nor do they always rush up just as the vessel is settling down and leap blindly overboard in the manner generally supposed. Some years ago a ship whilst lying secured to a quay was run into and stove by another vessel. She was sinking rapidly, when a long trail of rats were observed very cautiously creeping along the hawsers which connected her with the wharf, and scampering away as hard as they could pelt for the shelter of a friendly warehouse the moment they touched the land. There is even more talent shown in this procedure than in the monkeys' manner of bridging a river.

The sea-going rat occasionally exhibits an extraordinary and most perilous desire to get at water. Some little while since, a vessel, then almost new, began to leak so seriously that she had to be docked before she could proceed on her voyage. It cost the shipwrights a long search to discover the weak spot; but at last they found that right aft, in the bilge, the rats had gnawed clean through the planking; and nothing kept the water from rushing in save the thin sheets of metal with which the vessel was sheathed. The leak was repaired and the ship sailed; but after a short time she began to make water again rapidly, leaving no doubt that the rats were still the cause of the mischief. Upon this the captain, wisely imagining that it must be thirst which drove the creatures to this expedient of nibbling away the timber, ordered a daily allowance of water to be placed for them upon the hatch-coamings in the 'tween-decks. This they were not very long in discovering; 'and never again,' concludes the captain, in telling the story, 'during all the while that I remained in the ship and carried out this plan were we troubled with any more leaks.'

All of us must recollect the story of the shipwright in the *Uncommercial Traveller* who bartered his soul to the devil for an iron pot, a bushel of tenpenny nails, half a ton of copper, and a rat that could speak; and how this rat was incessantly signifying the fact by repeating the melancholy refrain:

A lemon has pips,
And a yard has ships,
And I'll have chips!

"What are you doing, Chips?" said the rat that could speak.—"I'm putting in new planks where you and your gang have eaten old away," said Chips.—"But we'll eat them too," said the rat that could speak; "and we'll let in the water, and we'll drown the crew, and we'll eat them too." Chips, being only a shipwright, and

not a man-of-war's man, said: "You are welcome to it!"

It is perhaps a pity, seeing that the animals swarm to such a degree on board every variety of vessel, that some means of utilising them could not be devised. The first idea to naturally follow this reflection is, why not *eat* them? Let not the epicure shudder at the suggestion: one and all who, whether by necessity or curiosity, have partaken of the rat declare it to be by no means such an unsavoury morsel. The flesh when cooked is about the colour of a pigeon's, and of a flavour that combines with the tenderness and succulence of the rabbit the higher and more matured qualities of the hare. The famous Sir Sidney Smith entertained a high opinion of the delicacy of rats. 'He asserted,' says Lieutenant Parsons in his entertaining *Nelsonian Reminiscences*, 'that rats fed cleaner and were better eating than pigs or ducks; and agreeably to his wish, a dish of these beautiful vermin was caught daily with fish-hooks, well baited, in the provision hold, for the ship was infested with them, and served up at the captain's table. The sight of them alone took off the keen edge of my appetite.' No doubt, the feeling of disgust which exists against the idea of employing the rat for gastronomic purposes is largely due to the want of discrimination which the creature shows in its own feeding. It will devour with equal avidity human flesh or decayed vegetable matter; whilst its known predilection in favour of the sewers is enough to nauseate the most unscrupulous appetite. But it may at least be urged that whilst the rat is on shipboard it is free from the contamination of the drain-pipe; and as to its indelicacy of feeding, it cannot surely be worse or more debauched in its taste than the hog or the duck, or a great many other animals which are reckoned very choice eating indeed. Different nations have different palates, and amongst the Chinese and other eastern races the rat is considered so much of a dainty that it is no uncommon circumstance for a vessel entering one of the ports of the Celestial Empire to be boarded by a party of natives who come to offer money for permission to hunt the ship in search of the animals. During the siege of Paris, rats were consumed in prodigious quantities, and one of the luxuries of that dreadful time was a rat-pie made with mushrooms.

The rat on board ship, as elsewhere, has a disagreeable trick of getting into the most untoward places. Herman Melville in one of his books describes how, after he had long been eating molasses from a certain jar, he discovered a rat lying smothered in the stuff; whilst one of the commonest things possible is to find the creature drowned in the scuttle-butt which holds the fresh water, or hopelessly wedged into a tierce of beef that is opened to replenish the harness-cask. A case was quite recently reported by one of the shipping papers in which the water-tanks of a vessel newly arrived from the antipodes, on being emptied and cleared out, were found to contain the skeletons of many dozens of the creatures, so that the crew were startled by the discovery that for the whole voyage home their water had been tainted with an infusion of rats. Yet the health of all on board had been wonderfully good during the passage, nor had the least disagreeable

taint been apparent in the water beyond the flavour of the brine used to preserve it. Such is the effect of the imagination upon the bodily health, that had the crew *known* they were drinking from a cistern full of dead rats, the flavour of the water would have been found most repugnant, and possibly a good deal of sickness would have been reported upon the ship's arrival.

The seafaring rat is not as a rule of such a ferocious disposition as his brother rodent of the sewers. Sailors when on long and tedious voyages, such as a whaling cruise, will often make pets of them, training them to come up out of the hold at certain hours to be fed. We knew of one old sailor who used regularly to sleep with a rat in the clews of his hammock, till one night he was rudely awakened by being precipitated to the deck. He at first imagined his shipmates had been playing a very common fore-castle prank upon him; but he discovered, on examining the lanyard which had suspended his hammock, that the sharp teeth of his favourite rat had gnawed right through it. This was the occasion of a little coolness between them.

Many are the stories of rats on board ship which might be told were there space; but one more must now suffice. A vessel lying moored in the river Hooghly neglected the usual precaution of unbending sails, and kept her canvas furled upon the yards. She stayed at Calcutta for about a fortnight. When she was ready to get under way, sail was of course made; but imagine the astonishment of all on deck when the gaskets had been cast off and the canvas dropped loose, at seeing a perfect shower of rats fall squeaking through the air! The various sails in which the animals had harboured themselves were nibbled through and through, so as to resemble sieves, and were rendered so perfectly useless that the vessel could not leave until fresh ones had been bent in their place. For what reason the rats should have taken to the rigging, or how they managed to get aloft, was a speculation which, but for his vexation at the loss of his sails, the captain might well have amused himself in trying to solve.

THE OLD BARGE.

By THOMAS ST E. HAKE.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.—ALONGSIDE.

ON the river-bank, a mile above Battersea Bridge, there once stood—it stands there no longer—a small thatched house. It was constructed of wood; and the two diamond-paned windows, one on each side of the porch, looked out upon the Thames. The house was not accessible at all hours. At high-tide the garden was sometimes under water; and there were times—though these were fortunately of rare recurrence—when the whole structure threatened to get under weigh and take a seaward course with the ebb. But when the tide was out there was an impassable barrier of mud betwixt it and the water's edge. Between tides was the best moment for landing. A few rugged stone steps led up from the bank to a gateway facing the porch.

One evening, about the hour of sunset, a young girl came out into the garden, stopped at the gateway, and looked down at a barge moored alongside. It was an old barge, long and narrow: a 'one-horse' canal barge, that had seen its best days, and was now leading an amphibious existence, rising when the water rose, and sinking reposefully upon mud and slime when the water fell. It had marks of wet-rot upon it, and of dry-rot too. Time and tide had carried away every vestige of paint from its sides long ago.

On board this barge were seated two men. One of them was old, the other young. The latter, seated upon the upper deck, or cabin roof, was making a large net, which hung over the cabin door between him and his companion. He was a dark-skinned young man, with something of the gipsy in his appearance. He had black watchful eyes, when no one else's eyes were bent upon him; but when he thought himself observed—and he was keenly suspicious—all his senses seemed concentrated upon the net-work in hand. The old man, who was sitting in the stern, smoking a short clay pipe, appeared completely lost in thought. He was staring down-stream, towards Battersea Bridge; but it was obvious that he saw nothing—nothing of the light craft that floated to and fro—except in an absent-minded, dreamy way. He was a small-featured, weather-beaten bargee, with a white beard, and thick white eyebrows; and the deep lines at the corners of his eyes expressed a certain degree of cunning. There were deeper lines across the brow, which gave a care-worn, anxious look to the face. His broad muscular frame had, to all appearance, lost none of its strength; and he had large bony hands, which had a peculiar grasping tendency. But frequent work at the tiller, the handling of ropes, barge-hooks, and barge-oars for so many years, might account for this.

'Grandfather,' said the girl, after watching the two men for a moment in silence, 'you'll come in and sup with us to-night; won't you?'

The man gave a slight start at the sound of her voice. 'Why,' said he—'why should I come in to-night? Come now.'

'It's my birthday,' replied the girl, half apologetically.

'Ah!' and the old man glanced towards his companion, whose eyes, happening to be bent upon him, were at once cast down upon the net. 'What do *you* say, John?'

'I?' and he flashed a look at the old man and then at the girl. 'I'm not invited.'

At this moment the sound of sculls, falling with a soft plash upon the water, attracted their attention. They all looked quickly round. A light skiff, rowed by a handsome young fellow, pulled into the little creek where the barge was lying, and came alongside. 'Good-evening!' and the boatman, speaking in a cheery voice, raised himself into the barge and attached his skiff to the iron ring. 'Good-evening, all!—Bertha,' he added, looking up with an eager face towards the girl—'look!' and he pointed to a little scarlet flag that was fluttering in the stern of his boat. 'Brand-new, and hoisted in honour of the occasion. Happy returns!'

The girl's face had brightened at sight of the boat. The boatman's voice brought a look of

radiance into her eyes. They were large eyes, that contained something more than mere gratitude for his words. She reddened slightly as she said: 'Thank you, Davy;' and added: 'You'll stay and take some supper with us to-night?' Her look and tone expressed more than an invitation; it seemed like an appeal.

'Ay,' the old bargeman chimed in, 'Davy will stay.' Then glancing at the net-maker, he said: 'Come, Morison! you're invited too, you know. Go and keep them company.'

John Morison, never raising his eyes, never ceasing to work at the net, answered: 'You're not going to sup indoors, are you, Mr Landrick? I've never known you do it, birthday or no birthday. Very good. Then I shan't, and that settles the matter.'

As Davy Rotherford stood there, looking at these two men, an odd thought crossed his mind. What had put the idea into his head, and why it should come to him at such a moment, he could not comprehend. He had seen these men seated there scores of times before. He had seen Morison making nets, and always in the same attitude, ever since Landrick had brought his barge alongside and settled down here to pass his remaining days within sight of his own home. Perhaps it was something in these men's expressions, something in their attitudes towards each other. He could not say; but he saw in this swarthy young net-maker a quaint resemblance to a dark spider spinning a web; and he saw in the old bargeman an unconscious victim, who would presently get caught in the toils.

'Ah, well,' said Landrick, evidently displeased at Morison's refusal. 'Please yourself, John!—Run up to the house, Davy, and cheer up grandmother. She's a bit low-spirited, Bertha says. I shall stop o' board. It has been my habit for nigh upon fifty years; and habit is second nature. At my time o' life a man can't alter his habits, bad or good. He can only drift, as we say, with the tide.'

Bertha had already gone in; and Rotherford now followed. The room which he entered from the porch, without crossing hall or passage, was a low-pitched kitchen supported by oak beams overhead. The furniture was antique. A great clock, resembling a sentry-box, stood between the window and door, with the date upon its cracked and yellow face. The chairs were of dark oak, with bars in their backs like prison gratings. In one of these chairs was seated, beside a smouldering fire, a gray, wrinkled woman bent with age. She looked up quickly, as though startled out of a nap, as the young man closed the door.

'Who's that?' said she, shading her eyes with her hand. 'What's the matter? The tide ain't ebbing yet, is it?'

'Why, Mrs Landrick,' said Rotherford, 'don't you know me? I'm David—Davy Rotherford, your old favourite. Ain't you glad to see me?'

The woman's face softened. 'Come in, Davy,' said she—'come in. I thought it was Morison: I was dreaming about him. That's how it was. He's aboard with Landrick, ain't he?'

'Yes; and too busy net-making,' said Rotherford, 'to leave his work.—Why, how,' he added, as his odd thought suddenly recurred—'how does he happen to be troubling *your* dreams?'

A listening look became intently expressed in Mrs Landrick's whole attitude. 'Wait, Davy,' said she significantly—'wait! The tide ain't ebbing yet.'

Rotherford was standing with his eyes bent upon the woman. He was trying to put some clear construction upon her words. Suddenly he looked round and caught sight of Bertha Landrick standing at an inner door. Her face was so changed—so pale and expressive of alarm—that he took a quick step towards her, for she seemed on the point of falling. But she recovered almost before he reached her side, and lifted her finger to her lips to enforce silence. He sat down at the supper-table without a word; and Bertha began to busy herself in getting some provisions into a basket for her grandfather. Glancing presently towards the old bargeman's wife, Rotherford was surprised to find that the woman had relapsed into her drowsy state, with her head bent forward over the fire, and her hands clasped upon her lap.

Rotherford was the son of a master-lighterman. He was employed all day in his father's office; and of an evening was usually out upon the river. Landrick had served his father in his earlier days, and Rotherford had been for many a journey on river and canal with the bargeman when a boy. They had always been on friendly terms; and since Bertha had budded into womanhood, it would seem that Davy's visits by no means diminished.

As he sat there to-night, eating his supper with an appetite after his vigorous row up stream, he was greatly concerned when observing that Bertha would eat nothing. That unaccountable appearance of anxiety was still expressed in her restless eyes and pale cheeks. He longed to question her; but she scarcely remained at table two minutes at a time. Her thoughts seemed all the while to be centred in her grandfather; for she was constantly hurrying out to the barge to see if he needed anything. Davy found it impossible to get a word with her; and he had many words to speak of—words he had rehearsed over and over again to the quick dip and plashing tune of his sculls.

Bertha had gone down to the barge for the twentieth time at least, leaving Rotherford alone with the drowsy old woman. Mrs Landrick awoke suddenly, as she always made a point of doing, and glanced eagerly round. The red glow of the setting sun, looking aslant through the window, touched her face. 'Not night yet?' she muttered, blinking her eyes in the glare of sunlight—'Not night yet? I dreamt it was quite dark—dreadful dark, and that the tide was ebbing fast.—Where's Bertha?'

'On board the barge,' said Rotherford, crossing to the window. 'She'll be back directly.'

Mrs Landrick looked quaintly at the young man. There was a puzzled expression on her face. 'Davy,' said she, 'I dreamt that the barge was gone—that my old man was gone—and then—and then I awoke.'

'Gone?' said Rotherford, with a smile. 'Do you mean sunk?'

'I don't know,' said the woman. 'Gone—disappeared. I can't get the dream out of my head! I've had the dream before: it's the second time since daybreak. Can there be anything wrong?'

Look out, Davy. Is the old barge alongside?' said he.

'Yes, yes. It's lying snugly alongside,' said he. 'There's nothing wrong. But it's nearly high tide,' he added, 'and time for me to be getting home. Good-night, Mrs Landrick.'

'Good-night, Davy. You're sure the tide ain't ebbing yet?'

'Quite sure.'

When Rotherford reached the barge and stepped on board, he found that Morison had taken his leave. There was no spider; but the web lay spread across the deck. Bertha was in the cabin, putting a match to her grandfather's stove; and the old bargeman was busying himself with trimming his lamp for the night.

'So you still sleep on board, Mr Landrick?' remarked the young man.

'Ay, ay,' was the reply.

Rotherford looked thoughtful. 'Now, wouldn't it,' he persisted, 'at your time of life be safer to sleep indoors?'

The bargeman glanced suddenly round: 'Where's the danger here?'

'Oh, I was merely going to remark,' Rotherford hastened to explain, 'that you might find your house, perhaps, preferable to an old barge! The river-fogs and cutting winds are apt to get at one, you know, when the winter comes round. That's all.'

The girl was still bending down over the stove. She looked up with a thankful face at Rotherford. 'You are right, Davy,' said she—'I am sure you are right.'

'Davy,' said the old bargeman, as he lit the lamp and fastened it on its hook overhead, 'I've been used to this sort of life, as I've often told you, ever since I was a lad. And there's another thing I've told you,' he added, 'many a time—a man can't change his habits at my age. He must drift along with the tide.'

The sun had set; but it was still broad daylight, with a deep glow over the sky. It was an autumn evening; and a chilly wind fled across the river with a shivering sound and died away. The cry of some water-fowl in its flight over the marshes reached their ears, and that too died away. Was the night likely to prove a stormy one? In the upper sky the clouds were motionless, but their distorted shapes expressed commotion.

The desire on Rotherford's part to speak with Bertha, since he saw that it was equally her desire to speak with him, became intense; and as he lowered himself over the side of the barge and she went forward to loosen the rope, he seized the moment to whisper: 'Bertha! what is troubling you?'

She glanced about her with that look of dread again in her eyes. 'I cannot tell you now,' said she hurriedly. 'Grandfather will think there's something amiss if he hears us talking together. I'll try,' she added, 'though I can't promise—I'll try to come to you before the twilight is gone. Will you wait for me?'

'You know I will!' and he pressed her hand to his lips. Then he quickly added: 'At the old ferry steps?'

The girl nodded. The boat was detached; and with a turn of the sculls Rotherford was out in the tide. He rowed quickly down stream. Not

that there was any need for so much haste; for even had Bertha been able at once to slip away by the little pathway behind the house, she could not have reached the ferry steps before him. But Davy was naturally impetuous; and the mere thought of seeing Bertha, of speaking with her alone, impelled him to pull vigorously at his sculls. In a few minutes he reached the ferry steps, attached his boat, and walked up and down by the river-side, waiting impatiently for her. It was a deserted, lonely spot. For since Battersea Bridge had been built, the ferry had fallen into disuse, and few people passed this way. But it was a spot which Rotherford loved. He and Bertha had met here many a time. It was here that he had avowed his love for her; it was here that she had given him her promise that she would one day be his wife.

He was troubled about Bertha to-night. The strange look of dread upon her face, which he had never seen there before, sorely perplexed him. Was some peril at hand? He could comprehend nothing: his brain was crowded with a hundred odd fancies, that flashed upon him and took to flight, and came back again, only bringing bewilderment and a deeper state of anxiety concerning her.

Nearly half an hour had passed, and he had begun to despair of Bertha's coming; for it was beginning to grow dusk, and he knew that when the twilight was gone he must give up all hope of seeing her. But in the midst of these despondent thoughts he descried her pretty figure hurrying along the pathway. He hastened forward to meet her.

'Davy,' said the girl, answering his inquiring look, 'it's about grandfather I'm worried. A danger threatens him. I have come to tell you what it is. You will help me—will you not?'

He answered her earnestly: 'Dear Bertha! you know I will. Tell me what this trouble is.'

They sat down side by side on the ferry steps. Rotherford took the girl's hand, and looked with eager interest into her uplifted face. The twilight was fast fading out of the sky; and the gusts of wind that came across the Thames ruffled the water, and rocked Rotherford's boat as it lay close by with the tide lapping at its sides. With scarcely a pause and in a low hurried tone, Bertha explained to David Rotherford the cause of her distress.

'I'm going to tell you something,' said she, 'that grandfather believes is only known to himself and me. He is wrong. His secret is known to others. It is known to those who can and will injure him, as I fear, before daybreak—unless,' she added, 'you remain on guard all the night through. Can I ask you to do that?'

'Why, Bertha,' said Rotherford, 'do you think that would be a hardship to me? You do not know how deeply I love you.'

An expressive sigh escaped Bertha's lips. 'Davy,' said she, 'I will tell you everything. Ever since grandfather brought the old barge alongside the home, as you know he has led the same life on board as when he was an active bargeman making journeys up and down canals. He cannot change his habits, as he is always reminding us. The cabin is his home, and the little stove his fireside. How often have I seen

him seated there, smoking his old clay pipe, and looking as though he would scorn to change places with a Prince! He has been a very sober, thrifty man; and during his long lifetime he has saved a good deal of money. In his cabin on board the barge there is a small cupboard, and in this cupboard, locked up in a strong iron box, are all his savings—quite a little fortune.—Now, listen! If he is robbed of this, Davy, he and grandmother will be destitute. At least,' she added, 'they will probably be dependent upon me—upon the little that I can earn—for their support. For grandfather will be too broken to go on making or mending nets, as he does now. Indeed, I scarcely dare think what would happen to him if the mere dread of any such disaster crossed his mind.' As Bertha whispered these words there was fear in her look and tone.

Rotherford sat for a moment silent, staring intently over the darkening river, deep in thought. Suddenly he started up. 'You suspect some one,' he said; 'you know that a plot is hatching to rob your grandfather. Yes, and I can name the man.'

'Stay!' said Bertha. Rising hastily, she placed her hand upon his arm. 'Don't breathe his name, not even in my ear. The very thought of him frightens me. He may be listening, as I always think he is, in hiding hard by. He haunts me; and grandmother, as you must have noticed to-night, is haunted by him too.—Now, Davy,' the girl went on, 'I'm going to tell you something strange.' Her hand was still upon his arm, and her scared face still raised to his in the growing dusk. 'When it is high tide,' said she, 'the water lies close under our windows on the river-side; and often, the night being still, voices will come to us from the Thames and startle us out of our sleep, as a dream will sometimes do. It is sometimes a shout—possibly a warning of danger to some one—that wakes us. Sometimes it's a cry—a shrill cry of distress—that sets one's heart beating fast. But the voices that have meaning in them, speaking together as they go by with the tide, are the voices that frighten us most; and among these voices more than once we've heard *his* voice: we've heard enough to satisfy us that he's planning to rob grandfather of his gold; and it's to-night he's for carrying out his scheme. Davy! what shall we do?'

Rotherford took both the girl's hands in his own and tried to reassure her. 'Leave all to me! I will keep guard along the bank,' said he, 'and be within call of the old barge, until day-break. Be brave! Trust me, Bertha. Good-night.'

Bertha threw her arms about his neck without a word, and then she hastily left him and went back along the pathway to the thatched house.

It was now almost dark; and when Bertha entered the kitchen it was quite dark there; for the fire was almost out. But she managed to light the lamp by the smouldering embers, and with it in her hand she went through the rooms, only four in number, to assure herself that all was well before locking up the house for the night. In one of these rooms she found her grandmother sleeping; for Mrs Landrick always retired to bed at sunset, though she slept a good part of the day in her armchair by the fireside.

Bertha looked out of the window towards the place where the old barge was moored. Gusts of wind, louder and more frequent now, passed over the river; and the rain had begun to fall and beat against the panes. But the barge-lamp was burning steadily over the cabin door, and she felt satisfied that all was well on board.

She drew her grandmother's chair towards the fire and sat down to keep her guard within doors. She would not think of resting while Davy was out upon the Thames and on such a night. She would sit here till daybreak—till the danger was past, and then she would go down to the ferry steps to thank Rotherford for his watchfulness and devotion. She was exceedingly wakeful for an hour or more. She listened nervously to every gust of wind, as though she thought the voices that had frightened her on other nights might again reach her ear. But no sound of voices came; and gradually her eyelids drooped and her head sank upon her arm and she lay there fast asleep.

Suddenly a loud voice wakened her. It was a shout such as she had heard at night upon the Thames many a time before. But she started up with a cry upon her lips and ran to the window and looked out into the night. The light that she had seen burning steadily, before she fell asleep, was not visible now. She threw a cloak about her shoulders, took the lamp from the table, and hurried out. It was a pitch-dark night; and the wind and rain beat in her face. With difficulty she found her way to the water's edge. Raising the lamp over her head she looked down upon the dark river. A cry of despair escaped her—the old barge was gone!

LOVE.

STRANGE are his moods, and strange is he,

A child of divers ways:

He leads you on through flowery paths,

Through bright and golden days;

And guided by his gentle hand,

And listening to his song,

And gazing in his lovely eyes,

You walk for ever on.

And many pass you by, and they

Stretch out their hands in vain;

Some go with Death, and Sorrow some

Walk hand in hand with Pain;

And some with Scorn go laughing by,

And some who weep and moan:

But all of them young Love ignores,

And on they pass alone.

And through the pathways where they go

No ray of light appears;

No gleam of sunshine ever comes,

The way is wet with tears.

Sad for a moment, too, you grow,

And beg Love take them too:

He smiles, and shakes his golden curls—

'They cannot come with you.'

FLORENCE MALCOLM LEVEAUX.

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A TOURIST'S HOLIDAY IN VENICE.

DOES not a Tourist who has entered the hard service of Cook—who has made Baedeker's closely-printed itineraries his rule of life—who has thoughtlessly asked his friends before starting, 'What ought I to see?' and dare not face them again until he has obeyed their so lightly uttered, 'Go there; do this; be sure to see that'—does not such a one, by all that is fatiguing, deserve a holiday? Who shall condemn him if for once he plays truant, shuts the guide-book with as deep a sigh of relief as erstwhile the daybook, and leaves undone, wittingly, much that reason and conscience assure him he ought to have done?

Thus we, hard-wrought tourists, have taken a holiday; partly in bravado, defying the bondage of sight-seeing—partly in despair at finding our task beyond us. 'Venice,' says the methodical Baedeker, 'may be seen in three or four days;' and forthwith he allots to each day its share of churches and pictures and points of view. Have we not plodded after him, book in hand, day after day? Have we not cricked our necks agonisingly in the study of ceiling paintings, climbed towers, explored *pozzi*, with the best will in the world, only to find ourselves at the end of a week hopelessly in arrears? We play truant to-day, therefore, half from weariness, and half with the hardened conscience of the boy who knows if he did go to school it would only be to sit at the bottom of the class—in conspicuous failure.

Baedeker left at home, and our minds clear alike of cant and Ruskin, we wander forth with an unwonted air of leisure, to enjoy such humours of life as we may chance upon. It is a brilliant morning, in a course of fitful weather. Last night's rain lies still in the hollows of the pavement, and is baled out by gondoliers as they make their boats smart for the day's custom. One turns his cushions, revealing their orange-striped, fair-weather sides; another wreathes the prow of his boat with flowers; a third spreads the gayest of carpets for his patron's feet. But we do not

succumb to these lures, for, to tell the truth courageously, we find the swaying motion of a gondola anything but pleasant, and immensely prefer the penny steamer. So, with a half-formed purpose of ultimately taking a steamer up the Grand Canal, we drift with the general tide of humanity towards the square of San Marco. It is early, but the shops are open, and fascinating as usual, and we glance as we pass at the long array of windows stored with trinkets, pictures, photographs, lamps of wrought-iron, necklaces of coral and pearl, mosaics, and a thousand trifles of Venetian glass. Reaching a street corner, we are stayed by a gathering crowd, and find, emerging from one of the narrow *callés* or lanes between the closely-built, tall houses, a funeral procession, preceded by the most perfunctory of hired mourners, whose insignia of office, tall four-wicked candles, carried indifferently at all angles, flare smokily in the sunlight, and bespatter with wax as they pass the people and the pavement on either hand. Then follow the clergy and the bier and the real mourners, all slowly making for the adjacent church of San Moise, where the long service is to be performed. As they disappear within its great doors, the spectators disperse, most resuming with us their way to the square of San Marco, the heart of Venice. As we enter the square, a man mutely offers infant turtles for sale, creatures no bigger than garden snails, each in a little open box, with a supply of green meat of some sort—net cost probably ten centimes, although the vendor as we glance at them speculatively suggests half a franc. Next comes a dealer in sweetmeats, holding forth long wooden pins—I should say skewers, did that not suggest cat's meat—on which are threaded pieces of orange, or two or three figs, or shelled walnuts, each cluster encased in caramel, and valued at fifteen centimes.

At every doorway of the glittering shops all round the great arcade, ingratiating tradesmen greet you as you pass with cordial good-mornings, and entreat you, with spider-like friendliness, to walk into their parlours. Out-at-elbows loafers

make for you as you leave the importunities of the arcade for the open square, and thrust upon you brown paper cones of peas, wherewith to feed the numberless pigeons circling overhead, and pecking about, more tame than winter robins, at your feet. As you come near the glorious façade of St Mark's—fain to stand and look to your heart's content at the rich glow of these mosaic pictures filling the arches, and the oriental beauty of the clustered domes beyond them—a flight of greasy touts surround you, and clamour for the privilege of showing you the Campanile, the Baptistry, the Church itself.

There is no peace, no holiday, you perceive, for the tourist among these birds of prey, and you turn off at random out of the square into one of the narrow *callés* on your left. Narrow alleys are these streets, as a rule scarce more than three feet wide; and the light which reaches the little shops and ground-floor dwellings of the tall houses on either hand cannot even in midsummer be more than twilight. Yet all sorts of trades are carried on briskly in these obscure regions: milliners, bakers, smiths, jewelers, poulterers, display their wares in the dusky recesses on either hand; rows of poultry in the last instance ingeniously proclaiming their original nature by means of a few ruffled duck, or turkey, or ordinary hens' tail feathers still decorating their otherwise plucked and trussed carcasses. A calf's head, ghastly in its pallor, is faintly visible from the *chiaroscuro* of a butcher's shop; and at the adjacent barber's you find yourself literally face to face with, and within a few inches of, the be-lathered customer upon whom he operates. You emerge upon the open paved *campo*, originally the burying-ground of the little island parish you happen to be traversing. It is Saint's day in this parish—and some little boys have dressed a tiny shrine in the corner near the church, an old wooden chair, whose seat is covered with handfuls of grass, stuck with half-withered flowers; among them a floating wick in a saucer of oil burns in front of the little coloured print, representing some sacred subject, propped up like an altar-piece against the broken back of the chair. The boys dart at you with saucers, clamouring for a donation towards expenses; and before you can cross the *campo*, the church doors open, and out streams a procession of the Host—a larger edition, as it were, of the child's-play you have just seen. Tonsured, and glorious in stiffly-flowered brocade, they parade under a golden canopy, preceded by acolytes swinging empty censers, and bearing outshone candles in the face of the sun. Some dozen of the crowd, stopped perforce to make way for them, kneel, and uncover as the Host passes; most glance indifferently, and press on as soon as the way is clear.

The next *campo* we cross is almost deserted, except for a flower and vegetable market in one corner, and in the centre a Venetian baby, taking a walking lesson. I do not know whether the means of instruction used is peculiar to Venice; in any case, it is worth description. The little one-year-old was put, standing, in a sort of crinoline of wicker-work very wide at the base, and at the top fitting under the baby's arms. The mother stood some way off, the child stretching its hands to her, and at every step of the

little dancing feet the light framework slid forward, while it could not upset. The self-satisfaction of the baby with the random progress it found itself making was evident in its happy face and crowing laughter.

We found ourselves by this time again in the neighbourhood of San Moise. The funeral party had not yet emerged from the church; and in the nearest canal, gondolas draped with black and silver waited to convey the bier to the cemetery island. Later, as we wait on one of the floating barges used as steamboat stations, we see the funeral barge and its attendant gondolas slowly rowing away across the lagoon, accompanied by music, which sounds doubly sweet and mournful across the water. We are waiting for a steamer to the Lido, that long island which lies, a protecting barrier, between Venice and the sea. The Lido is a sort of Cockney pleasure resort for Venetians. There are no churches on it, neither altar-piece nor ceiling painting to constrain attention; and Baedeker scorns to include an excursion thither in any of his well-filled days. It is all modern, and somewhat vulgar. Big restaurants anticipate your custom in self-laudatory leaflets thrust upon you ere you land. Weather-beaten sailors, professional Jacks-ashore of the Brighton and Margate type, pursue you with trays of shells and coral; and to convey you across from the inner to the outer shore of the island, a tramway presents itself, drawn by two creatures almost as startling at first as griffins or dragons, but which you realise are horses—the forgotten beast of traffic and burden common to all the universe, Venice alone excepted. To jolt across the Lido behind them is of course a thrilling experience for the Venetian Cockney, and our consciences prick us not a little as we, on whom such pleasures palled in childhood, selfishly take possession of two of the seats so greatly in demand.

Arrived at the other side of the Lido, we may wander at will on the long sandy shores of the island, may sit on the grassy banks, where, here and there, storms and high tides have left a tangled wreath of seaweed to mark their farthest claim. And here we may, and we do, fleet the time, basking in the sunlight, and breathing in the drowsy balm of the soft sea-wind, as we watch the coming in of the tide from the wide Adriatic, whose waters, so wonderfully blue, break in iridescent foam at our feet, each bubble rainbow-hued, like the fairy-haunted foam-bells of Sir Noel Paton's pictures. We looked vainly for the little sea-horses, said to strew the shores here, and had indeed to condescend to buy some afterwards from the shell-vendors rather than return empty-handed. We searched in vain for these; but we chanced on a rarer wonder. Beaten down among the foam at the edge of the tide by the wind, which, though so warm, was too strong for him, we found a dragon-fly, his long rainbow-wings clogged with wet sand, his gleaming body limp and motionless. He revived, however, in the warmth and shelter of his rescuer's hand; and before we left the Lido, we placed him in the leafy seclusion of a garden hedge, to dry his beautiful wings at leisure and take stock of his strange experience.

Our holiday was over. We returned to Venice and our hotel, with its electric-lit *table-d'hôte*;

and although in the general jabber of exchanged confidences there we could not say we had 'done' a tithe of the sights our fellow-travellers could boast of since we parted at breakfast, yet, on soul and conscience, we thought, and incline to think still, that we had secured a holiday well worth remembering.

J. M. S. M.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XXXII.—THE DAY AFTER THE GHOST.

WHEN Mr Dering arrived at his office next morning he observed that his table had not been arranged for him. Imagine the surprise of the housewife should she come down to breakfast and find the ham and the toast and the tea placed upon the table without the decent cloth! With such eyes did Mr Dering gaze upon the pile of yesterday's letters lying upon his blotting-pad, the pens in disorder, the papers heaped about anyhow, the dust of yesterday everywhere. Such a thing had never happened before in his whole experience of fifty-five years. He touched his bell sharply.

'Why,' he asked, hanging up his coat without turning round, 'why is not my table put in order?' He turned and saw his clerk standing at the open door.—'Good heavens! Checkley, what is the matter?'

For the ancient servitor stood with drooping head and melancholy face and bent shoulders. His hands hung down in the attitude of one who waits to serve. But he did not serve. He stood still, and he made no reply.

He understood now. Since the apparition of South Square he had had time to reflect. He now understood the whole business from the beginning to the end. One hand there was, and only one, concerned with the case. Now he understood the meaning of the frequent fits of abstraction, the long silences, this strange forgetfulness which made his master mix up days and hours, and caused him to wonder what he had done and where he had been on this and that evening. And somebody else knew. The girl knew. She had told her lover. She had told her brother. That was why the new Partner laughed and defied them. It was on his charge that young Arundel had been forced to leave the country. It was he who declared that he had seen him place the stolen notes in the safe. It was he who had charged young Austin and whispered suspicions into the mind of Sir Samuel. Now the truth would come out, and they would all turn upon him, and his master would have to be told. Who would tell him? How could they tell him? Yet he must be told. And what would be done to the jealous servant? And how could the old lawyer, with such a knowledge about himself, continue to work at his office? All was finished. He would be sent about his business. His master would go home and stay there—with an attendant. How could he continue to live without his work to do? What would he do all day? With whom would he talk? Everything finished and done with. Everything—

He stood, therefore, stricken dumb, humble, waiting for reproof.

'Are you ill, Checkley?' asked Mr Dering. 'You look ill. What is the matter?'

'I am not ill,' he replied in a hollow voice, with a dismal shake of the head. 'I am not exactly ill. Yes, I am ill. I tried to put your table in order for you this morning, but I couldn't, I really couldn't. I feel as if I couldn't never do anything for you—never again. After sixty years' service, it's hard to feel like that.'

He moved to the table and began mechanically laying the papers straight.

'No one has touched your table but me for sixty years. It's hard to think that another hand will do this for you—and do it quite as well, you'll think. That's what we get for faithful service.' He put the papers all wrong, because his old eyes were dimmed with unaccustomed moisture. Checkley had long since ceased to weep over the sorrows of others, even in the most moving situations, when, for instance, he himself carried off the sticks instead of the rent. But no man is so old that he cannot weep over his own misfortunes. Checkley's eye was therefore dimmed with the tear of Compassion, which is the sister of Charity.

'I do not understand you this morning, Checkley. Have you had any unpleasantness with Mr Austin—with any of the people?'

'No—no. Only that I had better go before I am turned out. That's all. That's all—he repeated the words in despair. 'Nothing but that.'

'Who is going to turn you out? What do you mean, Checkley? What the devil do you mean by going on like this? Am I not master here? Who can turn you out?'

'You can, sir, and you will—and I'd rather, if you'll excuse the liberty, go out of my own accord. I'm a small man—only a very small man—but, thank God! I've got enough to give me a crust of bread and cheese to live upon.'

'I tell you what, Checkley: you had better go home and lie down and rest a little. You are upset. Now, at our age we can't afford to be upset. Go home, and be easy. Old friends don't part quite so easily as you think.' Mr Dering spoke kindly and gently. One must be patient with so old a servant.

Checkley sobbed and choked. Like a child he sobbed. Like a child of four, Checkley choked and sniffed. 'You don't understand,' he said. 'Oh, no—you can't understand. It's what I saw last night.'

'This is very wonderful. What did you see? A ghost?'

'Worse than a ghost—who cares for a ghost? Ghosts can't turn a man out of his place and bring him to be a laughing-stock. No—no. It was a man that I saw, not a ghost.'

'If you can find it possible to talk reasonably'—Mr Dering took his chair and tore open an envelope—'when you can find it possible to talk reasonably, I will listen. Meantime, I really think that you had better go home and lie down for an hour or two. Your nerves are shaken; you hardly know what you are saying.'

'I was in Gray's Inn yesterday evening. By accident, at eight.' He spoke in gasps, watching his master curiously. 'By accident—not spying.'

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No—by accident. On my way to my club—at the *Salutation*. Walking through South Square. Not thinking of anything. Looking about me—careless-like.

'South Square, Gray's Inn. That is the place where the man Edmund Gray lives: the man we want to find and cannot find.'

'Oh! Lord! Lord!' exclaimed the clerk. 'Is it possible?' He lifted his hand and raised his eyes to heaven and groaned. Then he resumed his narrative.

'Coming through the passage, I looked up to the windows of No. 22—Mr Edmund Gray's Chambers, you know.'

'I believe so.' Mr Dering's face betrayed no emotion at all. 'Go on; I am told so.'

'In the window I saw Mr Edmund Gray himself—himself.'

'Curious. You have seen him—but why not?'

'The man we've all been so anxious to find. The man who endorsed the cheque and wrote the letters and got the papers—there he was!'

'Question of identity. How did you know him, since you had never seen him before?'

This question Checkley shirked.

'He came down-stairs five minutes afterwards, while I was still looking up at the windows. Came down-stairs, and walked out of the Square—made as if he was going out by way of Raymond's Buildings—much as if he might be going to Bedford Row.'

'These details are unimportant. Again—how did you know him?'

'I asked the Policeman who the gentleman was. He said it was Mr Edmund Gray. I asked the newspaper boy at the Holborn entrance. He said it was Mr Edmund Gray, and that everybody knew him.'

'So everybody knows him. Well, Checkley, I see nothing so very remarkable about your seeing a man so well known in the Inn. It adds nothing to our knowledge. That he exists, we know already. What share, if any, he has had in this case of ours remains still a mystery. Unless, that is, you have found out something else.'

Checkley gazed upon his master with a kind of stupor. 'No—no,' he murmured. 'I can't.'

'What did you do, when you found out that it was the man?'

'Nothing.'

'You did nothing. Well—under the circumstances I don't know what you could have done.'

'And he walked away.'

'Oh! He walked away. Very important indeed.—But, Checkley, this story does not in the least account for your strange agitation this morning. Have you anything more to tell me? I see that you have, but you seem to experience more than usual difficulty in getting it out.'

The clerk hesitated. 'Do you,' he asked at last—'do you—happen—to know Gray's Inn?'

'I daresay I have been there—years ago. Why?'

'Oh! you haven't been there lately, have you?'

'Not lately—not for forty years, or some such inconsiderable period. Why?'

'I thought you might yourself have met Mr Edmund Gray—been to his chambers, perhaps.'

Mr Dering sat upright and laid his hand upon

his letters. 'Checkley,' he said, 'I am always willing to make allowance for people in mental distress, but I think I have made allowance enough. Come to the point. Have you lost any money?'

'No—no; not so bad as that—but bad enough. No, I couldn't afford to lose money. I haven't got enough to spare any. But I got a shock—kind of stroke—partly because of the man I met, and partly because of the person with him.'

'Oh! who was that? Are we arriving at something?'

'I hadn't told you that. The person who was sitting at the open window with him, who came down-stairs with him, and walked out of the Square with him, was no other than your own ward, Miss Elsie Arundel herself!'

'Oh! why not?' asked Mr Dering carelessly. 'She told me yesterday, was it? that she knows him.'

'If it had been any one else she was with,' he replied, mixing up his grammar—'if it had been any one else who was with her—I wouldn't have been surprised! But to see the two together. That gave me a turn that I can't get over.'

'Still—why not? Miss Elsie Arundel has already told me that she is acquainted with Mr Edmund Gray.'

'What? She has told you—she has actually told you? Oh! what has she told you? Oh! Lord! Lord! What is a man to say or to do? She told you—what is best to do?' He wrung his hands in his distress and his perplexity.

'I cannot understand, Checkley,' said Mr Dering with emphasis, 'the reason for this display of excitement. Why should she not tell me or anybody else? Do you suppose that my ward is doing anything clandestine? She has told me that she is acquainted with this man. She asserts further—that we have made a great mistake about him. What she means, I cannot understand. She says, in fact, that this gentleman is a perfectly honourable person. It is possible that he has deceived her. It is also possible that the name of Edmund Gray had been wrongfully used in the papers which belong to the case. Certainly it was an Edmund Gray who endorsed the first cheque: and an Edmund Gray having an address at 22 South Square whose name is connected with the later business. Well, we shall see presently.—When do you take out the warrant for the arrest of this man? By the way, Elsie Arundel implores me not to allow that step. When are you going to do it?'

'This morning, I was going to do it. Everything is ready—but—'

'But what?'

'I can't do it now.'

'The man is clean gone off his head.'

'Leave it till to-morrow—only to-morrow, or Monday. Before then, something is certain to turn up. Oh! certain sure it is. Something must turn up.'

'There is certainly something that you are keeping behind, Checkley. Well—wait till Monday. To-day is Saturday. He can't do very much mischief between this and Monday.—That's enough about Edmund Gray. Now, here is another point, to which I want a direct answer from you. My brother asserts, I believe on your authority, that Athelstan Arundel has been living

in a low and profligate manner in some London suburb, and that he was in rags and poverty early this year. What is your authority for this?

'Why, I heard him confess—or not deny—that he'd been living in Camberwell in bad company. It was at the *Salutation* I heard it. He didn't see me. I'd got my head behind a paper. He never denied it.'

'Humph!—And about the rags?'

'I don't know anything about the rags.'

'Very likely there is as much foundation for the one charge as for the other. Three or four years ago, he was in America, to my knowledge. He wrote to me from America. I now learn, on the authority of his sister, that he only came back a month ago, and that he has been and is still in the service of an American paper. What have you got to say to that?'

'Nothing. I don't feel as if I could say anything. It's all turned upsy down. That won't do, I suppose, no more than the rest.'

'But, my friend, if that is true, your theory of conspiracy and confederacy, which you took so much pains to build up, falls to the ground as far as Athelstan is concerned.'

'Yes.—Oh! I haven't nothing to say.' It was a mark of the trouble which possessed him that his language reverted to that of his young days, before he had learned the art of correct speech from the copying of legal documents. He preserved the same attitude with bent head and hanging hands, a sad and pitiful object.

'Since Athelstan was not in London during the months of March and April, he could have had no hand in the later forgeries. And it is acknowledged that the same hand was concerned both in the earlier and the later business.'

'Yes—yes—the same hand. Oh! yes—the same hand,' he repeated with pathos unintelligible to his master. 'The same hand—the same hand; yes—yes—the same hand—that's the devil of it—same hand done it all.'

'Then what becomes of your charge against my young Partner? You were extremely fierce about it. So was my brother. You had no proofs—nor had he. If the same hand was in both forgeries, it could not have been the hand of George Austin. What do you say to that?'

'Nothing. I'm never going'—still standing hands hanging—'to say anything again as long as I live.'

'But you were very fierce about it, Checkley. You must either find more proofs or withdraw your accusation.'

'Oh! if that's all, I withdraw—I withdraw everything.'

'Why did you bring that charge then, Checkley? You've been making yourself very busy over the character of my Partner. You have permitted yourself to say things in the office before the clerks about him. If it turns out that he has had nothing to do with the business, you will be in a very serious position.'

'I withdraw—I withdraw everything,' the old clerk replied, but not meekly. He was prepared to withdraw, but only because he was forced.

'Remember, too, that it was you who brought the charge against young Arundel.'

'I withdraw—I withdraw everything.'

'You went so far as to remember—the other

day—having seen him replace the notes in the safe. What do you say to that?'

'I withdraw.'

'But it was a direct statement—the testimony of an eye-witness. Was it true or not?—I don't know you this morning, Checkley. First, you appear shaking and trembling: then you tell me things which seem in no way to warrant so much agitation. Next, you withdraw an accusation which ought never, to have been made except with the strongest proof. And now you wish to withdraw an alleged fact.'

Checkley shook his head helplessly.

'I acknowledge that the business remains as mysterious as before. Nothing has been found out. But there remains an evident and savage animosity on your part towards two young gentlemen in succession. Why? What have they done to you?'

Checkley made reply in bold words, but still standing with hanging hands: 'I withdraw the animosity. I withdraw everything. As for young Arundel, he was a supercilious beast. We were dirt beneath his feet. The whole earth belonged to him. He used to imitate my ways of speaking, and he used to make the clerks laugh at me. I hated him then. I hate him still. It was fun to him that an old man nigh seventy, with no education, shouldn't speak like a young gentleman of Oxford and Cambridge College. He used to stick his hat on the back of his head as if it was a crown, and he'd slam the door after him as if he was a Partner. I hated him. I was never so glad as when he ran away in a rage. He was coming between you and me, too—oh! I saw it. Cunning he was. Laying his lines for to come between you and me.'

'Why—you were jealous, Checkley.'

'I was glad when he ran away. And I always thought he'd done it, too. As for seeing him put the cheque back in the safe, I perceive now that I never did see him do it. Yet I seemed to think at the time that I'd remembered seeing him do a kind of a sort of a something like it. I now perceive that I was wrong. He never done it. He hadn't the wits to contrive it. That sort is never half sharp. Too fine gentleman for such a trick.—Oh! I know what you are going to say next. How about the second young fellow? I hate him too. I hate him because he's the same supercilious beast as the other, and because he's been able to get round you. He's carneyed you—no fool like an old fool—and flattered you—till you've made him a Partner. I've worked for you heart and soul for sixty years and more, and this boy comes in and cuts me out in a twelvemonth.'

'Well! but Checkley—hang it!—I wouldn't make you a Partner.'

'You didn't want no Partners. You could do your work, and I could do mine and yours too, even if you did want to go asleep of an afternoon.'

'This is grave, however. You hated Mr Austin, and therefore you bring against him this foul charge. This is very grave, Checkley.'

'No—I thought he was guilty. I did, indeed. Everything pointed that way. And I don't understand about young Arundel, because he came into the *Salutation* with the Cambridge gentleman who gets drunk there every night,

and he said that he'd lived at Camberwell for eight years with bad company as I wouldn't name to you, sir. I thought he was guilty. I did, indeed.'

'And now?'

'Oh! now it is all over. Everything's upsy down. Nobody's guilty. I know now that he hasn't had anything to do with it. He's a young man of very slow intelligence and inferior parts. He couldn't have had anything to do with it. We ought to have known that.'

'Well—but who has done it, after all?'

'That's it.' Checkley was so troubled that he dropped into a chair in the presence of his master. 'That's it. Who's done it? Don't you know who done it? No—I see you don't so much as suspect. No more don't I. Else—what to do—what to say—Lord only knows!' He turned and ran—he scuttled out of the room, banging the door behind him.

'He's mad,' said Mr Dering. 'Poor man! Age makes men forgetful, but it has driven Checkley mad.'

THE COLOURS OF THE SEA.

NINE people out of ten, if asked to make a definite statement as to the colour of the water of the ocean, would unhesitatingly pronounce it to be blue. 'The deep blue sea' and 'the azure main' are familiar expressions, and the blueness of the ocean is looked upon as its unvarying attribute. Yet the sea that fringes our shores is not blue; its colour is a much nearer approach to green; and in other parts of the world the departure from the tint that is supposed to belong peculiarly to the world of waters is even more marked. From the earliest days, mariners have been struck by the variation in the colours of the sea. The hardy Phœnician sailors, when first they ventured away from the blue waters of the Mediterranean, were astonished to find themselves floating on seas that seemed to belong to another world, so different was their hue; and at a later day, Columbus and the other hardy pioneers in the discovery of the New World were equally surprised at the various coloured waters which they encountered. This change of colour in the sea was a phenomenon that influenced the superstitious and faint-hearted amongst those venturesome crews more than any other cause except the trade-winds: the wrath of Heaven seemed to them to be pictured in the unwonted tints which the familiar element assumed; and all the tact and firmness of their leaders was needed to combat the feelings thus aroused. Broadly speaking, the waters of the ocean may be divided into two colours—blue and green: the former prevailing in the tropics; the latter, in the higher latitudes. It has been proved that the blueness of sea-water holds a constant ratio to its saltness; that is to say, the greater the amount of salt present in it, the more vivid the shade of blue that it assumes. The specific gravity of green sea-water is less than that of blue; so, when the colour of the ocean is observed to change from blue to bluish green, and from bluish green to green, it may be taken for granted that it decreases at the same time

in saltness and weight. The waters that surround these islands and stretch between them and the North Pole are by the continual melting of the ice of the Arctic Circle made fresher than the waters that lie under the burning skies of the tropics; and because they are fresher, they are green instead of blue.

There are numerous exceptions to the broad rule that we have enunciated; but, as exceptions should, they only serve to make its truth more apparent. For instance, great tracts of green water may be met with in the neighbourhood of the Cape Verd and the Canary Islands, where generally the ocean shows an unvarying shade of blue. This is caused by the mighty flood of fresh water which the river Congo pours into the ocean there; and as the mouth of this great stream is neared, the waters lose their blueness more and more completely, until they pass from green into the brown which marks the actual mouth of the river. Every one knows that river-water is lighter than the salt water of the ocean, and this lighter water floats on the top of the heavier, spreading out for a distance of hundreds of miles on either side of such a huge artery as the Congo. The frigate *Gazelle*, which was sent out by the German government for the purpose of exploring the ocean and laying bare some of its secrets, furnished a convincing proof of the difference in colour between river and sea water. Both on entering and leaving the mouth of the Congo, the action of her screw was observed to bring up water from below the surface which formed a broad green track at her wake; while the brown waters of the river continued to flow on either side, and gradually closed over the green path which showed the true colour of the ocean there.

In the same way as green water is found within the tropics, water of the intense, vivid blue usually peculiar to the equator and its neighbourhood is met with in the more temperate latitudes, that commonly exhibit sea-water of a bluish-green or green pure and simple. The blue waters of the Mediterranean, culminating in the wonderful ultramarine of the Grotto of Capri, seem out of place, until we consider that a comparatively small amount of fresh river-water finds its way into this land-locked sea, resulting in a state of saltness of its waters which renders them of the brilliant hue that is so charming a feature of the scenery of Southern Europe. The Gulf-stream, again, that grand dispenser of warmth gathered from the fervid sun of the tropics, gives another example of the presence of blue waters in high latitudes. It preserves the azure tint which marks the seas whence it originates long after it has left them, and right across the Atlantic carries a shade of blue that reminds the sailor in the ship crossing it of brighter seas and skies than are ever seen outside the tropics. The current that flows towards the equator from the north, called the Labrador Current, meets the Gulf-stream between the Banks of Newfoundland and the Bermuda Islands, with the result that the Atlantic is there divided into broad stripes of blue and green-blue where the southern-born waters are making their way to temper the cold of less genial climes; green where the northern stream is flowing along bearing its chill flood to the sunny south.

The colour of the Red Sea has been at one time and another ascribed to a variety of causes. It is really owing to the presence of innumerable microscopic algae; but red sand and red animalcules have both been advanced as the reason for the peculiar hue of the water of this sea, the shores of which are the hottest spot on the face of the earth. The White and Black Seas are named from the never-melting snow and ice which surround the one, and the bleak inhospitable shores and sudden tempests of the other.

Minute algae, called 'diatoms,' are responsible for the black waters that are often met with in the northern seas. Whalers always seek these tracts of dark water, as they know that there they are most likely to encounter the objects of their search. The little animals upon which whales feed are supported by diatoms, which are consequently the indirect cause of the presence of the huge sea-mammal in the waters which they blacken by their inconceivable numbers. The Yellow Sea derives its colour from the presence of a minute vegetable organism similar to that which gives to the Red Sea its distinctive hue. Darwin, in the account of his voyage round the world in the *Beagle*, adduces two interesting instances of coloured waters in the following words: 'On the coast of Chili, a few leagues north of Concepcion, the *Beagle* one day passed through great banks of muddy water, exactly like that of a swollen river; and again, a degree south of Valparaiso, when fifty miles from the land, the same appearance was still more extensive. Some of the water placed in a glass was a pale reddish tint, and examined under a microscope, was seen to swarm with minute animalcules, darting about, and often exploding. They are exceedingly minute, and quite invisible to the naked eye, only covering a space equal to the square of one-thousandth of an inch. Their numbers were infinite; for the smallest drop of water which I could remove contained very many. In one day we passed through two spaces of water thus stained, one of which alone must have extended over several square miles. What incalculable numbers of these microscopical animals! The colour of the water as seen at some distance was like that of a river that has flowed through a red clay district; but under the shade of the vessel's side it was quite as dark as chocolate. In the sea round Tierra del Fuego, and at no great distance from the land, I have seen narrow lines of water of a bright red colour, from the number of crustacea, which somewhat resemble in form large prawns. The sealers call them "whale-food." Whether whales feed on them I do not know; but terns, cormorants, and immense herds of great unwieldy seals, derive, on some parts of the coast, their chief sustenance from these swimming crabs.'

Many purely local causes influence the colours of marine waters, and give them certain decided and constant shades. Thus, a bottom of white sand will communicate a grayish colour to the sea, if it be not very deep; while yellow sand will give a sort of apple-green tint. The presence of rocks lends a deep shade to the water that covers them. Red sand exists on the bed of the ocean at some places, notably the Bay of Loango, and here the waters assume a deep red hue. These are some of the more prominent

instances of the variety of colours that different circumstances give to water which in every instance appears perfectly transparent and colourless when viewed in an untinted vase.

THE OLD BARGE.

CHAPTER II.—WITH THE EBB.

MEANWHILE, Rotherford had stood on the ferry steps, watching Bertha's retreating figure until the twilight had hid her from view. He had then gone to his boat and cautiously rowed down stream, with the wind and rain driving up against the tide and growing rougher as the night fell. He kept close under the bank, out of the rapid current. His intention was to pull alongside Landrick's barge while there was still a gleam of light, make fast there, and remain on the alert till daybreak. And although the prospect was anything but promising, even to an ardent lover, David Rotherford would have gone through a severer ordeal for Bertha's sake. For was not this solitary night-watch on the Thames under her very window? And within doors—as he judged by the light—she was keeping night-watch too. He came up alongside the barge as noiselessly as possible in order not to disturb Landrick, and attached his boat to the stern, where his presence would not be suspected.

The tide had begun to ebb. Rotherford listened intently for the slightest noise. All that Bertha had told him about the weird midnight voices on the river recurred to him now. The wind blew boisterously, and in the sound he imagined that he heard whisperings on all sides; and he frequently peered round with a strong conviction that there was a noiseless figure moving about on the barge—a black, crawling thing, like a huge spider, and blacker than the night. So strong did this conviction become that at last he resolved to go stealthily on board and satisfy himself concerning the dark shadow. If it existed only in his brain so much the better; if not—

Suddenly the barge began to move—move slowly out of the creek towards mid-stream; and Rotherford's boat, swinging round, glided after it—glided away with the ebbing tide! Rotherford could hardly believe his senses. It was like a dream—a strange nightmare. His first thought was to raise an alarm; but as he opened his lips the thought flashed across him that the figure—a dim moving figure now—was on the deck and creeping towards the cabin; and were he to cry out, his boat would be cut adrift. It was still in his power to leap on board the barge and go to Landrick's aid.

As the figure went into the cabin, leaving the barge to take its course with the tide, Rotherford drew alongside and crept up into the stern, advancing on hands and feet across the deck towards the little skylight. His heart throbbed loudly as he looked down. The cabin lamp, still hanging in its place, was burning brightly, and its light fell upon the dark eager visage of John Morison. His figure was bent forward, and his hands—no longer employed in mending nets—were busily occupied in opening a cupboard over Landrick's head. The old bargeman was lying asleep in his bunk; he was enveloped in a rough coat; and

over this coat was a quantity of netting. Should he awake suddenly and attempt to rise, he must become entangled in this web. This was obviously the 'spider's' handiwork, thought Rotherford. The intention was doubtless to throw Landrick into confusion while he completed his purpose and made his escape.

In another moment Rotherford was standing at the cabin door. Morison's arm was already plunged into the cupboard. As Rotherford's shadow fell upon him he looked round : a gasping cry escaped him, and the box dropped ringing and clinking upon the floor. The man sprang towards Rotherford, more with the intention of making his escape than of showing fight ; but Davy caught him by the throat, flung him down as he would have done a dog, and stood over him ready to repeat the action should he move. But Morison made no attempt to rise ; he lay cringing at the other's feet, and trembling from head to foot.

The ringing sound of the iron box, or more possibly the money inside it, had roused Landrick. He started up on his elbow and stared at these two men as though he doubted whether he were awake. The one man, standing silently over the other under the dim light of the barge-lamp, was as startling and unexpected as any dream could be.

Davy was the first to break the silence. 'Mr Landrick,' said he, in a rapid manner, 'the barge is adrift ! Throw that netting off you, if you can, and get to the tiller. The tide's ebbing fast. We shall be down on Battersea Bridge and broken to pieces against the timber, if you're not quick. I'll look to this fellow : it's all his work.'

'Let him go, Davy !' cried the old bargeman—'let him go overboard, or I shall pitch him there. Let him take his choice.'

Rotherford obeyed. He stepped back a pace to allow Morison to rise. 'You hear ?' said he.

Morison had heard. He instantly sprang to his feet and glanced round with an air of desperation. There was a slight gleam of light in the sky. The day was breaking. It was just light enough to indicate objects over the river and on either bank, in dark uncertain outline. The nearest object—and it was the one that instantly caught Morison's quick eye—was Rotherford's boat at the stern. He ran aft and flung himself into it. A minute afterwards he was rowing away in the semi-darkness ; and the very fluttering of the sculls upon the water expressed the creature's abject fright.

Old Landrick now seized the tiller and pointed down-stream. 'Davy,' said he, 'that's Battersea Bridge yonder. Stand steady. We shall be upon her, I'm afeared, afore we can get the barge righted for shootin' between the piles. Stand steady, lad, and a sharp lookout !' he added ; 'ay, there's rocks ahead.'

Rotherford made no reply. He bent down and kept his eyes fixed upon such dim outlines of the bridge as were indicated in the uncertain morning light.

It was a dark mass, with some dozen oil-lamps at equal distances, spanning the Thames. This wooden structure, which connected the antique parish of Battersea with Old Chelsea, was an object of dread to all who navigated 'above bridge.' Its history stretches back a century or

more. During the severe winter of '95 the bridge had been considerably damaged by huge blocks of accumulated ice, that had become attached to the piles, drawing them rudely at the rise of the tide. It was not until the end of the last century, about the period of this tale, that the bridge was even lighted with lamps : it was indeed the only wooden one that possessed this poor accommodation. In those days the bridge had nineteen openings, varying from thirty-one feet in the centre to sixteen at the ends : the piers were formed of groups of timber piles with a clear headway of fifteen feet under the centre span at high-water. It was towards this centre that Landrick now exercised all his ingenuity to direct the barge. No harder task could have been set a bargee in broad daylight ; but it was still practically night ; only a glimmer of dawn, in dusky gray, stretched across the sky beyond the openings under the bridge. And the tide was ebbing faster now, was carrying this old and slender craft straight down upon the massive piles ; and only a miracle could prevent a collision.

No words passed between Landrick and his young companion. Each was at his post. Rotherford stood in the forepart of the barge-boat, hook in hand, and with a 'fender' ready if needed to deaden the blow. The old bargeman, with a firm grasp upon the tiller, looked keenly ahead. He knew that his cabin home—his iron box that contained all his savings—his life and Davy's too—depended upon such skill as he possessed, such as time and tide were doing their utmost to defeat. A minute more—one more gleam of daylight and a slower tide—and the barge might be saved ! But that could not be : to shoot between the piles at so narrow an opening was now impossible. The barge swung round. Rotherford shouted loudly and ran aft—shouted to Landrick to let go the tiller and cling to the rope astern for his life. A moment afterwards there was a crash ; the barge creaked and shivered, and began to settle down among the piles, with the water rushing in through a leak in her side.

CHAPTER III.—CONCLUSION.

When Bertha discovered that the barge was gone from its moorings, she did not lose her presence of mind : she kept a cool head and acted promptly. Passing with her lantern farther within the creek, and walking at the water's edge, she came upon a little tub of a boat. It belonged to her grandfather ; and it was one which she had used for crossing the river since she was a child. The boat was propelled by dropping a short oar over the stern, and screwing in fish-tail fashion to and fro. The girl stepped into this boat, fixed the oar, and began to work her course out into the river. The barge could have taken but one direction—down-stream with the tide. And in that direction she now began to urge the boat, making but slight noise with the oar. She listened and looked about her, wondering where Rotherford could be. Had he not promised her that he would watch the night through ?

The deep silence on all sides troubled her. And even the gleam of light that came into the sky only roused a momentary sense of reassurance. For the sight of the dark bridge brought a dreadful thought to her brain and awoke

sudden terror and despair. She felt the danger ; and now the gleam of daybreak came to show her, like a beacon, where that danger lay. She could not hide from herself that the barge, with her grandfather on board, had probably sunk to the bottom of the river. And in the dead of night ! It was horrible to think of. But where was Davy ? The mere thought of him gave her courage. Had he gone for aid ? He must know what had happened : he had feared to alarm her. She paused in her rowing and called to Rotherford by name : 'Davy !'

But no answer came back to her across the river—not a sound. The sense of loneliness and dread grew upon her now ; and yet she persevered, screwing vigorously at the oar—hurrying on towards Battersea Bridge with the tide racing after her and dancing in dark eddies round her boat. As she neared the bridge, always listening with intentness, she fancied that she heard voices—voices among the shadowy piles. Her heart beat loudly. She went down on her knees and began working like a mad woman at the oar. In her anguish she again cried out : 'Davy—Davy !'

At last ! It was his voice : it came to her from under the bridge and urged her to fresh exertion : 'Bertha ! we are here—your grandfather and I, and the barge is sinking fast. Can't you see us ? —There ! Now ship your oar. I can hold the boat.—Can't you see us now ?'

Bertha could see nothing—hear nothing. A darkness deeper than the night came across her eyes ; her senses were forsaking her ; and as Rotherford reached out his hand and brought the boat alongside the sinking barge, the girl dropped down unconscious in the stern.

In a moment old Landrick had stepped into the boat and Davy too, but not a moment too soon. Rotherford had scarcely taken the oar and pushed the boat clear of the woodwork under the bridge, when the barge rolled upon its broken side and went down stern foremost. The tide swept over it, eddying and gurgling among the piles.

'Gone !' cried Landrick with a groan. 'Home and savings too, Davy, all swallowed up. I'm a ruined man.'

Rotherford answered angrily : 'Come, come, Mr Landrick ! What are you thinking about ? If it hadn't been for Bertha, we should have been swallowed up too. Look to your grand-daughter, sir. Don't you see she has fainted ?'

'Ay, ay. Poor thing !' and he bent down over her.

Rotherford, setting the boat's head against the tide and getting free of the bridge, steered towards the ferry steps where he and Bertha had met in the twilight on the previous evening.

Nothing more was seen of John Morison. But Rotherford afterwards learned that the notorious *Red House* tavern in Battersea Fields—in those days a den of gamblers and thieves—had been his favourite resort. It then became evident, even to the old bargeman, that the net-mending was a mere pretext for discovering the best means of gaining possession of the iron box which Landrick had guarded day and night in the barge cabin ever since he had taken up his moorings beside the thatched house.

At low tide, when Rotherford rowed back with

Landrick under Battersea Bridge to examine the spot where the barge had sunk, they were not a little surprised to discover the old craft lying half out of water. Upon closer inspection, it was found that she had got caught among the piles, and had become wedged in between them so firmly that there was no likelihood of her sinking deeper if she could be recovered before the tide broke her to pieces.

The difficulty proved comparatively slight. On the following day, at low tide, the barge was buoyed up and towed back to its moorings. But it was no longer habitable : there was a great hole in the stern as well as in one side. Landrick was compelled to take up his quarters in the thatched house, and here he soon settled down, mending nets all day long, and in the evening sitting down opposite Mrs Landrick in the chimney corner.

The iron box was found upon the cabin floor, where it had fallen. And when David Rotherford had won Bertha's hand, and become a partner in his father's firm, he induced Landrick to invest his savings in the lighterman's business, where they proved far more profitable than when lying 'cabined and confined' on board the old barge.

SOME CURIOUS MARRIAGE CUSTOMS IN SCOTLAND.

ALONG the northern and north-eastern coasts of Scotland there are many towns and villages whose populations consist mainly of fishing-folk. These people live as a class unto themselves. They have their own peculiar customs and their own deep-rooted superstitions. Amongst these, marriage is the occasion for many a strange ceremony which is unknown in other classes of society.

On the shores of the Moray Firth—the spot need not be more specifically localised—there is a flourishing little village of some fourteen hundred inhabitants, consisting chiefly of fisher-folk. Every autumn at the close of the herring-fishing there is a succession of weddings in the village, and the superstitious and uniform customs associated with these ceremonies are interesting and somewhat unique. The young man and maiden do not court in the orthodox fashion. Their method is much more prosaic, and what is characteristic of one case may generally be accepted as characteristic of them all. There is, of course, an occasional instance of genuine good old-fashioned courtship, but that is rather a rare exception.

'Mother,' said one young man on his return from a successful herring-fishing, 'I'm goan to get merried.'

'Weel, Jeems ; a' think ye sh'd just gang an ask yer cousin Mārack.' And as he had no particular preference, he went straight away to ask her.

'Wull ye tak me, Mārack ?' was the brusque and business-like query which he put to the young woman in the presence of her sister Bella.

But Mary had promised her hand to another that same evening. 'I canna tak ye, Jeems,' was her reply ; and then, turning to her sister : 'Tak ye 'im, Bellack.' And the sister took him.

Here is another instance, and the difference of

method is not very pronounced. Meg was a young woman of some nineteen summers, fairly good-looking, as the majority of the girls are. She was visiting a neighbouring house, when her mother put her head in at the door and addressed her: 'Yer cousin Danny is doon the hoose askin' if ye'll hae 'im.'

'Tell 'im to come an' ask,' is Meg's sensible answer. And when Danny forthwith comes and repeats the request, Meg simply says: 'Ay, Danny.'

These specimens, with slight variation, are of the most common occurrence. The young folks sometimes have no immediate expectation of receiving an offer of marriage. They may anticipate a 'Wull ye tak me?' from some one when they think their turn has come; but as often as not they have no indication beforehand of who the particular swain is to be. It must not be supposed that the young man is always successful in his advances. There is at least one authentic case in the village where the would-be proposer was refused by five successive young women in the course of the same evening.

When the offer of a young man is accepted, he is said to be 'contracted,' and there is no delay in carrying through the other necessary formalities. They forthwith go through the ceremony called 'beuking,' which is the localism for booking. The beuking consists simply of entering the names of the contracting parties in the Registrar's book for proclamation. If either party resiles from the contract, a fine of forty pounds Scots (£3, 6s. 8d. sterling) is exacted from the defaulter. From the time of the beuking until the marriage, which takes place a fortnight or three weeks later, the bridegroom, as he now comes to be named, never goes to sea in pursuit of his calling. In refraining from going to sea until the marriage, he is carrying out a fixed and established rule. In the interval there are many things to be done. The young man proceeds to purchase some few necessaries for himself and his bride, procures the little furniture required for their house, and generally makes arrangements for the stocking of the household. He invariably presents his bride with one or two requisites, in which custom appears never to allow him any latitude. A dress, a pair of boots, and a Paisley shawl or plaid of good dimensions, are procured for presentation to the young woman against her wedding day; and in these she is borne to the altar.

The beuking usually takes place on a Friday, and as a rule the invitations to the marriage are given upon the same evening. The invitations are issued in a simple and primitive manner. The bridegroom chooses a best-man and the bride a best-maid, and these two important functionaries, having received their instructions, proceed to bid the friends of the respective parties to the wedding. They go from house to house and verbally deliver their message, the best-man going to the bridegroom's friends and the best-maid to the bride's. Any one who receives an invitation of a later date, or by any other method, views it very much in the nature of a 'piper's bidding.'

A peculiar and somewhat oriental ceremony takes place on the evening before the marriage: this consists of the washing of the bride's feet.

A few of the girl's principal female friends only are invited to this ceremony; and although it is viewed as a solemn rite, without which the marriage would be incomplete and unlucky, yet it must be confessed that the ordeal is usually carried through with considerable levity and good-natured fun. The bride as a rule just dips her feet in the tub, and the washing is at an end. But the ceremony does not end there. The young woman, on the withdrawal of her feet from the tub, drops a ring and a shilling into the water, whereupon there is a struggle by the girls who are present for possession of these articles. The one who secures the ring will be the next to get married, and the finder of the shilling will have the most of this world's goods and gear. In the excitement and fun which ensue, there is a rush to the chimney for soot, and a general attempt at blackening each other's faces takes place. When the fun is at its height, an expected visitor is ushered into the room. This proves to be the bridegroom, who approaches the bride, and in a very matter-of-fact way hands her the pair of boots which he has purchased for her. Inside one of the boots there is a small present for the bride, consisting of seven or eight shillings in silver for her own particular use. Before the party breaks up, all present receive a general invitation to breakfast on the morrow—that is, the wedding day. Other verbal invitations to breakfast are also issued—some to the house of the bride's, and others to the house of the bridegroom's, parents. This concludes the ceremonies of the evening.

On Friday the marriage is celebrated. It is always on a Friday, which is a curious reversal of the popular superstition attaching to that particular day. The first important event of the wedding day is the breakfast, which goes on at the house of the bride's parents and at the house of the bridegroom's at the same time. The breakfast may occupy over an hour, and then the guests go home to dress for the wedding. The marriage guests proper are usually more numerous than those who have been invited to the breakfast.

The marriage invariably takes place in church, about one o'clock in the afternoon. Shortly before that hour the bride's invited guests begin to assemble at her parents' door and form into couples on the roadway. Then the bride issues forth with her best-man on one side and her best-maid on the other, and the three, arm-in-arm, take their places at the head of the guests. But the procession must be preceded by at least two married couples fairly advanced in years, and without them the company is not complete. With one or two married couples in the van there is good luck and omen. In this order, then, the procession wends its way to the church, two deep, and the couples arm-in-arm. When they reach the church, most of the guests take their seats near the officiating clergyman, with the bride and her best man and maid in the front pew. But a few of the party leave the building immediately the others are seated. The object of their doing so is to proceed to the house of the bridegroom and inform the party there that the bride is ready. Then the same order of procession of the bridegroom's party takes place—the bridegroom leaning on the arm of his best-

man on one side and of his best-maid on the other, and the whole company preceded by two or three married couples, as in the case of the bride's procession. The bride's guests meantime have been waiting in the church, doing nothing. There is nothing unusual in the ceremony performed by the clergyman; it is in the orthodox fashion.

When the ceremony is ended, the whole of the guests of both parties re-form in front of the church; and, with the four or five elderly married couples leading, the newly-married pair coming next, and the whole body of guests following, the company—consisting often of forty or fifty couples—marches back in procession to the house of the bride's parents. On the way, many of the party scatter coppers and sweets amongst the spectators on the roadway, and not infrequently special offerings are handed by the processionists to favoured onlookers. At the door of her parents' house, bread is broken on the head of the bride; and then the guests disband. Most of the women go into the house; and many of the men repair to a public-house to drink, on their own account, to the health of the newly-married couple. Outside the door of the house a crowd has collected, largely composed of children. To them are thrown offerings of currant cake and sweets, for which there is a general scramble, and much innocent fun is indulged in by the children, to whom a wedding is a great event.

In due time the minister who has married the young couple puts in an appearance, for to him falls the duty, at a fisher wedding, of cutting the marriage cake. The room in which the ceremony takes place is crowded with the guests of both parties, and refreshments are passed round. With much talk and many congratulations half an hour is pleasantly spent, and then the apartment is cleared, to make way for the laying of the dinner tables. In the interval the guests fill up the time as they please, usually in walking about the streets and greeting friends and neighbours. In the course of about an hour dinner is ready.

The dinner ceremony of a fisher wedding is a function peculiar unto itself. It goes on in two houses at the same time, the bride's party partaking of the meal at the table of her parents, and the bridegroom's party at that of his parents, just as in the case of the breakfast. As the married pair cannot be in two places at the same time, they give preference by custom to the bride's guests, and take up a prominent position at the dinner table. But it is doubtful if they always enjoy that dinner. Their freedom of movement is somewhat circumscribed. Whilst the other guests are enjoying their dinner in a rational manner, the poor young man and wife are penalised by the restrictions of a custom which is as inconvenient as it is unique. They are not each allowed a plate from which they can separately partake of the food provided. A plate of soup of which the first course consists is placed *between* them, and they are compelled to sup from it turn about, neither of them being permitted to take two spoonfuls in succession. The division of labour has to be equal and uniform. The effort is somewhat awkward for both parties, but it is performed in good-humour, and to the satisfactory fulfilment of an unwritten law which is more

binding than statutory enactment. The second course is served up in like manner to the first, and the young couple are again restricted to a joint supply on a single dish. The difficulty of eating from the same plate is even more marked in this instance than in the case of the soup supply. A spoon is not so difficult to handle as a knife and fork, and how they manage to wield the double instrument whilst eating from the same dish requires to be seen to be appreciated.

But while the second course is in progress, we arrive at an interesting stage of the feast. In the house of the young man's parents a similar meal has been proceeding. It commenced concurrently with the other, has been conducted on the same lines, with a similar supply of edibles on the table, and will occupy a similar space of time. But the second party has not been honoured with the presence of the young couple. Their patronage is required to complete the enjoyment of the dinner and the fulfilment of the marriage customs. Accordingly, the bridegroom's best-man and best-maid rise from their places in the middle of the second course, and make their way to the house where the young married pair are going through the ordeal of a public exhibition of unity. The two messengers, without ceremony, appear in the midst of the bride's guests and demand the presence of the young couple at the bridegroom's table. The request is never denied. It is part of the ceremony, and is carried out to the letter. They leave the table at which they have been endeavouring to fulfil an awkward part, proceed to the bridegroom's house, take the places reserved for them at the table, and proceed with their meal at the place where, at the other table, they left off! They are of course received with manifestations of pleasure, and at this table they finish their dinner, but under the same restricted formula as they were subjected to at the other.

The dinner, or rather the double dinner, occupies an hour or more of time, and when it is finished the guests of both parties disperse to amuse themselves about the streets as they see fit. By so doing they make room for another relay of guests, who, owing to the numbers invited, have been unable to find accommodation with the first relay. When these are satisfied, they in turn make way for the children—usually the children of the guests—and the little ones make a hearty meal of what is left of the supplies.

Two or three hours afterwards the guests again assemble at the respective tables, when high tea is partaken of. This meal is quite a function of the day's proceedings. By the time it is over the evening is pretty well advanced, and the hour is nearing for the inevitable dance. This dance might more fittingly be called a ball, so far as numbers are concerned, for it is not restricted to those who were bidden to the wedding. It is practically open to all the young men and maidens in the village, and many who have taken no part in the earlier proceedings of the day put in an appearance. A description of the dance with its attendant amusing features would occupy an article by itself. The dances are all of the 'country' character, and very brimful of humour are some of the scenes. Perfect decorum is maintained, but the dancing is generally

of a ramshackle kind, with much gesticulation and shouting. An old fiddler supplies the music.

Saturday is a comparatively quiet day with the marriage party; but there are a few ceremonies to be gone through. Many of the wedding guests are early astir, and make their way to the house of the young couple, who are informed by their visitors that it is time to rise from their slumbers. If they ignore the advice, it will be the worse for them. The intruders have a duty to perform—to carry them away to breakfast to the house of the young woman's parents—and that duty they intend to accomplish. As a rule they experience little opposition at the hands of the newly-married pair, who in due time are conducted to the breakfast table. Here a number of the guests of the previous day assemble. These friends have received a special invitation through the medium of the young woman's best-maid, and the invitation only extends to a favoured circle. Breakfast over, the young couple dress for a round of calls. They visit the guests who had been present at the marriage ceremonies, and receive at their hands, according to the ability of the several donors, a variety of presents; for amongst this fishing community the wedding gifts are presented after, and not prior to, the event which calls forth their generosity. The forenoon visits occupy many hours, and when these are at an end the young man and maiden rest from their labours until the following morning.

On the Sunday there are several important duties to be performed, and these are never overlooked. The husband and wife are up betimes, and for the first time in their married experience they are permitted to partake of a meal together, alone and unobserved. It must be a relief which they fully appreciate. After breakfast they dress with scrupulous care in their wedding garments, for they have to go through the 'kirking' ceremony with due formality and circumstance. No marriage is complete until this custom has been fully observed. The young man attires himself in the regulation blue-black suit most favoured by the villagers, puts on his white cotton marriage gloves, and carefully adjusts upon his head a tall satin hat. The hat is probably not his own, and, apart from the uncertainty of fit, he is unaccustomed to its use. But he must perforce wear it, and cheerfully adapts himself to use and wont. His wife is careful of her adornment, and seldom arrays herself in borrowed plumage. It is her husband's prerogative to provide his spouse with fitting apparel, and he is always faithful to his trust. In addition to the boots already referred to, she has received a bonnet of excellent design. The colours are sometimes pronounced, but not unduly, and as a rule the headgear is not devoid of taste. Her gown is also new and of good solid material. But the great feature of her clothing is the Paisley shawl, comparatively rich in substance, and of a pattern and texture which have become stereotyped in the village as the regulation design for newly-married women.

When the couple are ready and the time arrives, the husband's best-man at the marriage and the wife's best-maid arrive arm-in-arm at the door of the house, and the husband and wife immediately join them. In procession they march to church, the married pair leading the

way. The small company is watched with interest by many of the inhabitants, particularly by the younger villagers. But there is no demonstration. In procession they march up the aisle, and all four seat themselves in the pew which is henceforth to be occupied every Sunday by the young couple, who at this stage have practically settled down to their wedded life. There is no ceremony of any kind performed in the church. They just go through the service like the other worshippers. At its conclusion, the party must return in procession to the house whence they started, and with that the ceremony ends. The remainder of the day is observed as a day of rest. The evening service does indeed again claim their attendance, but the ordeal is not so formidable, and does not exercise their attention to the same extent as the forenoon ceremony. Thus on the evening of the fourth day the marriage rites come to an end. On the Monday all go about their usual vocations, and engage in their hard life's struggle for existence.

AUSTRALIAN SNAKE YARNS.

ALTHOUGH not so frequently met with, nor so deadly in their effects as the snakes of India, still, the snakes of Australia are a power sufficient to make their presence known and felt in every portion of it. They are occasionally found even in the most populous towns. In removing an old house in the centre of Sydney, a few years ago, a good specimen of the death-adder was discovered. It is not by any means an uncommon experience in the outskirts of a town to discover a snake in the wood-pile or under the veranda. Farther out in the country, they frequently appear in houses; and many instances are related of these creatures having been discovered in the bed of the settler. Such bedfellows, though coming only to enjoy the superfluous heat, are far from being pleasant companions, more especially if the human animal awakes before his reptile-friend has gone. During my protracted residence in the Bush, I have occasionally known of a bite having been received through some sudden movement of a restless sleeper. For, so long as the snake may be permitted to enjoy the heat of the body unmolested, so long will it remain passive, and share the bed quietly with its companion. Treated, however, to a sudden movement which threatens its worldly peace, the snake will retaliate by biting, and then endeavour to escape in the disturbance it has made. As a rule, snakes will use their utmost endeavours to escape from man. The fang of the snake is deadly, but the weapons of mankind are more so. It is only when hard pressed by necessity or fear of danger that a snake will strike at all. The desire to destroy a snake is far more deeply implanted in man than the desire to destroy man is implanted in the snake. When once seen, a snake is bound to be killed, if possible. This may be considered to be the first principle of a Bushman's creed, and thus, with the increase of population, these reptiles are being effectually exterminated.

Some of those snakes, too, of which we hear

the 'yarns' are perfectly innocuous. It by no means follows, then, that every snake we have heard about was a poisonous reptile; nor is it every bite that comes from a poisonous snake. A snake is, however, a snake; and a snake-bite is a snake-bite; so that every precaution is taken to kill the animal and to cure the patient, and that, too, whether the reptile is venomous or not. This caution is praiseworthy; but the doctors make capital out of the transaction, for almost every snake-bite with its result finds its way into the papers. By that time the reptile has developed into one of the most poisonous of snakes, and although 'killed by a well-directed blow,' it has acquired since its death at least three feet additional in length.

The snakes most common to Australia, naturalists tell us, are the brown snake, the black snake, the death-adder, the tiger-snake, the diamond-snake, and the carpet-snake. I don't say this list exhausts the series, but these I have seen and handled—after their death. Of these, the diamond and the carpet snakes are perhaps the most common, the most beautiful, and the largest. Fortunately, they are not venomous, although they will hiss and rear and bite exactly as the others. The death-adder is the shortest and smallest, but its bite is considered to be fatal. The tiger-snake is the fiercest, and very venomous. The brown and black snakes also inflict injuries, but these, under favourable conditions and with attention, may be cured. The wound given by a venomous snake is simply two small punctures, produced by the fangs. The wound produced by the bite of his non-venomous kinsman shows four or more punctures, made by the true teeth. The fangs of a venomous snake are two long teeth, having a canal passing down the centre of the tooth. At the base of this fang there is a little sac or cavity containing the poison. The fangs are ordinarily kept lying flat in the mouth, and are no more used for purposes of mastication than is the sting of a bee. In fact, snakes don't masticate. When the snake wishes to strike, the fangs are erected. Additional poison is secreted, and, as the fang is pressed against the limb or body 'struck,' the poison is pressed from the sac down the fang and into the wounds. The fangs are sometimes drawn by inducing the snake to strike a towel or other soft cloth, and then by a sudden jerk the fangs are absolutely torn out. They are not teeth. During the swallowing process the fangs are lying quietly in the mouth, and are not used at all. The peculiar construction of the skull of the snake enables it to take in the body of an animal very much larger than itself, and snakes always swallow their prey entire, leaving it to nature to digest the mass.

The aboriginal blacks when bitten rush into water, and having immersed themselves therein, remain there for a very considerable time. They say this is an effectual cure. The natives and the residents of these colonies tie ligatures above the wound, bleed, suck, cauterise, and amputate, according to the position of the bite. They also dose the patient with whisky, brandy, gin, gunpowder, pain-killer, ammonia, anything that is handy. The medical profession tries subcutaneous injection of morphia, ammonia, and other things simple and compound. Latterly, the profession

has attached much credit to strychnine administered as a remedy—not to assist the patient in his exit to 'that bourne.'

In the month of February, snakes are said to be in their most ferocious mood. It is stated that they will during that month commence the assault on a person without waiting to be attacked.

Snakes can run rapidly, but are easily killed when attacked properly. A single blow of a sapling, or even a whip-lash, will break a snake's back. After it has undergone this operation, it is positively powerless, being only able to wriggle. As a rule, when one is killing a snake, he does not take time to see the effect of his back-breaking blow. He has the creature in a pulp before he finishes. He usually draws up from shortness of breath, quite unable to continue the exercise longer. Many houses in the country have snake-sticks—long slender saplings—standing at known places round the house, so as to be handy when a snake shows up. 'For snakes only' might be written on these sticks, as 'For fire only' is written on the buckets standing in order in our large establishments. In killing a snake, great care must be used not to come up too close behind the reptile. On such an occasion it has the habit of throwing a back somersault like a circus clown and bringing its fangs into contact with your face. Many persons become so fearless that they will seize the most venomous snake by the neck, and kill it coolly with a stone or knife or against a tree. Others, catching the reptile by the tail, will swing it, and keep swinging it round the head, making the creature's head describe a circle, and so move about with it until a convenient opportunity offers for dashing its brains against a tree or rock. Such experiments may exhibit the performer's intrepidity of character, but at the same time they indicate a reckless foolhardiness that makes one shudder even to be a spectator.

But I have said so much about snakes, that my readers will think I have forgotten the promised yarns. The first which I shall mention I heard directly from a clergyman. He said it occurred to himself. It comes, therefore, stamped with truth. I tell it as nearly as possible in the language of my friend.

'My father had two farms: on one of these we resided; the other one we kept simply as a grazing farm. The distance from the one farm to the other was about twenty-five miles. One day my father sent my brother and myself to the distant farm to bring home some of the cattle. So we rose and started early, and by the afternoon we arrived at our destination. There was an old house on that farm which had been used by the late settler. We kept the door locked, and only used the house when our business led us to the other farm either for branding cattle, mustering them, or making repairs on fences. The roof was fairly water-tight, and we kept a sort of a rough bed in the kitchen, and an old blanket or two in a chest. Taking with us what provisions we required, we often camped here for a week at a time. On this occasion, however, we arrived in the afternoon, lighted our fire, got in a supply of wood, set our blankets to the fire, and made ourselves comfortable generally. Then we went out and rounded up the cattle, so as to have them handy for the morning; and

about eight o'clock we turned in, my brother and I sleeping in the same bed. You learn to turn in early in the Bush.

'Some time during the night I was awakened by something heavy pressing on my chest. Fortunately, I became conscious at once; and you may guess my horror when I perceived it was a snake, which had coiled itself like a watch-spring across my breast. It had crept in below the blankets, and was simply enjoying the heat without exhibiting the slightest concern as to the person from whom that enjoyment was obtained. To say that I became immediately conscious is to say that my blood ran cold. I had the satisfaction of knowing that as long as I remained still I had nothing to fear; but the moment I moved I was a dead man. And yet to lie still was torture. There was that horrible cold crawling snake lying a practical nightmare on my body. What was I to do? What I did was to reach over my hand and pinch my brother sharply.

"What are you doing?" he drawled, half sleeping.

"Archie, get up quietly and get a light. There's a snake lying coiled on my breast. Get up very quietly, man, or the thing will bite."

'Archie was all awake. He jumped out of bed, and was at the fire in "no time" with the lighted candle in his hand. Meantime the snake lay still, quietly enjoying the hot cushion on which it rested.

"What shall I do now? Are you sure it is a snake?"

"Certain. Get a stick, and be ready."

'Archie got one of the snake-sticks from the corner, and placing the candle on the table, awaited my further instructions.

"Now lift the clothes quietly. The brute will likely slip off. But I say, look here, Archie—don't strike at it till it is well off me."

'My brother threw off the blankets while I lay motionless, glaring at the deadly reptile coiled upon me. I declare its head was within eighteen inches of my own. Its eyes seemed burning fire.

'The snake looked up at the rough treatment which it was receiving and fastened its eyes on Archie. Then it raised its head, darted out its little forked tongue and hissed at him. It was just like a cat. Oh, it was terrible agony! My brother started back, while I lay like a log, bathed in a fearful perspiration. Suddenly it moved, and the next moment I experienced a great relief by feeling the horrible creature crawling off my body.'

'And the snake? I asked, hanging on the words of a man who had survived such fearful experiences. 'You killed him, of course; and what length was he?'

'Killed him—not at all. The creature got clean off. He ran like a rat, and escaped into a hole below the floor. We never saw him again; and I assure you I never wish to have any nearer acquaintance with the same gentleman.'

Mr. Richard Palmer lived in a beautifully situated cottage on the Macleay River. He had come out to the colony of New South Wales when a very young lad. He was the eldest son of his parents, and had been visited with a great misfortune: he had been born blind. However, his father had succeeded in business,

and he was enabled to leave Richard comparatively well off. The other members of the family were also very good to Richard, so that he was, as the world says, independent when he married and settled down on the Macleay.

One day Richard was walking in his little garden. In his right hand he carried a glass, in which one of his children had brought him some new milk to the arbour. His child Johnny—eight years old—held him by the other hand, and guided the father's steps. Suddenly the child cried out, 'A snake! a snake!' and dropping the father's hand, ran off towards its mother, who happened to be a spectator of the whole adventure. Mr. Palmer stood paralysed. He was perfectly incapacitated through his blindness to fight a snake, and the reptile was even now winding itself about his leg. The child had given him no indication of its whereabouts, and he was fearful of moving anywhere, lest he should tread upon it. The blind man therefore stood still, while Mrs. Palmer set up a shrieking and a clamour that called all the family around her. Suddenly he heard the angry hiss, and immediately a blow was struck with much force, which fortunately struck the glass that he carried in his hand. He stepped back involuntarily, and so released the snake, on the point of whose tail he had been standing all the time. The snake then disappeared among the plants and long grass, and Mrs. Palmer rushed forward to find her husband safe. Had the glittering glass not attracted the reptile, the probability is that it would have struck the man, and so brought about his death.

The above adventure was not Mr. Palmer's only snake-experience. On a former occasion he was sitting on his own veranda, his arm leaning on a little table beside him. On this table there was also a glass of milk. He was sitting in that silent way in which a blind man will rest for hours, when he suddenly became aware of some animal lapping the milk in the glass at his elbow. Thinking that it was the cat, Mr. Palmer reached out his hand to drive the animal away. One can conceive his horror when he found he had placed his hand fair on the cold body of a large snake. One may conceive his happiness when he heard the dreadful creature glide gently away without attempting to do him any injury. This snake was subsequently killed, and measured about seven feet in length. It belonged to the brown species, and owed its death to the unbridled fondness which all snakes have for milk.

As an illustration of how greatly snakes are realised, and how much their bite is dreaded, the writer will venture on one short narrative of an event which actually came within his notice.

Mrs. Peters went out one evening for some wood for the fire. The wood cut during the day was kept in a wood-box near the kitchen door. Her imprudence in not taking a light with her was shown by the speedy return she made within the door. Receiving a smart prick in her finger while she was scraping up a handful of the wood, she at once came to the conclusion that she had been bitten by a snake. The neighbours rushed in, attracted by her cries. They examined the wound, or what Mrs. Peters said was the wound. There was little or no visible mark, yet Mrs. Peters was most determined in her assertion.

She had been bitten by a snake, and she was going to die, no matter what the neighbours said to the contrary. One ran off for whisky, and another galloped into town for the doctor. The foolish but heroic woman would wait for none of these. She seized the tomahawk, and ordered her husband to cut off the top of her finger there and then. It was a piece of rude surgery, and the husband naturally objected. Still the woman persisted, and the poor husband was compelled to do as she directed. She spread out her fingers on the kitchen table, and the husband, after much entreaty, cut off the top of the luckless finger with one blow of the tomahawk. Ten minutes after, the writer saw the poor woman, now perfectly calm, with her finger-stump held in a bowl of water, and the severed tip lying on the table by her side. She was not growing sleepy or exhibiting other indications of snake-bite. The doctor assured me she had not been bitten by a snake at all, but had probably received a smart jag with a splinter of some sort. To this day, she attributes her life to her own prompt action. He would be a bold man, even now, who would dare to hint that the wound might have been caused otherwise than as she determined. Everybody else believes that she lost her finger through an injudicious mixture of foolish fancy and strong determination.

On one occasion, says another correspondent, I was walking with my wife over to the house of a neighbour, and to save ourselves a detour, we passed through a portion of the Bush that was generally very wet. It was known to be much frequented by snakes, and therefore generally avoided. Hearing a slight rustle below some brush, I looked in, and saw a sight which I had never seen before. A large snake had succeeded in securing a half-grown chicken, and was busily engaged in licking it all over, preparatory to swallowing it entire. I lay down on the ground beside it, and attentively watched the operation. My wife, who was less interested than I was, went on to the house of our neighbour, and sent me assistance in the shape of a man with a loaded gun. The snake seemed so intent upon its work that my presence did not disturb it in the slightest. It was very methodical, cementing all the feathers the one way, so as to let the bird glide naturally and easily down the contracted orifice of its throat. Having slimed the body to its satisfaction the snake proceeded to swallow it. This it did by commencing at the head of the fowl. The head and neck disappeared slowly, and with a sort of sucking-in motion. It would be almost more correct to say that the snake crept outside and round the fowl. The mouth was gaped so much over the head and neck, we wondered how ever it could take in the body of the fowl. The snake's jaws were quite equal to the occasion. They even seemed to be capable of a little more distension, and gradually—bit by bit, jerk by jerk—the chicken disappeared, and the snake appeared the greater. The legs of the chicken hung out last, and slowly followed the body. What seemed strange was that the throat, which had enlarged to admit the body of the fowl, was now tight even for its legs. I judge by this that the pleasure of eating in snakes must be in the direct ratio of the size of the food bolted. The legs also disappeared ;

and we could distinctly trace the shape of the entombed fowl passing down the body of the snake in the same slow manner as it had entered by its mouth. The process of the eclipse of the chicken lasted over an hour, from the first point of contact till it was completely hidden. When the free exhibition had afforded us all the amusement we were likely to receive, a shot from the gun brought the career of the serpent to a close. It was a carpet snake, and measured eleven feet seven inches from head to tail.

THE GLOW-WORM.

ONE of the most striking and comparatively rare sights that summer affords is to behold on the green mossy bank of some country lane, as night draws on, a multitude of gleaming lights like terrestrial stars, now glittering in their emerald setting and anon disappearing from view. This surprising spectacle to the townsman is readily understood by the dweller in the country, who knows that these bright points 'glowing like night-tapers with beauty' are but glow-worms, and who perhaps is able to capture for us one or more of these interesting creatures.

Other and especially tropical lands possess many specimens of light-giving insects ; there 'the fireflies dance through the myrtle boughs ;' but the glow-worm is almost our sole representative of luminous animals. The Rev. J. G. Wood, the veteran naturalist, in his admirable book on *Common British Insects*, says : 'It is fortunately very plentiful in this country ;' but if this be true, it cannot apply to the north of England or to Scotland, for, though there are spots where, on some warm evening in July or August, they may be seen lighting up the shady glade, yet there are wide districts, probably whole counties, where they have never yet been observed. In Essex, Kent, the Isle of Wight, and similar localities, in sheltered, slightly-damp places, the glow-worm's greenish-blue lamp may be oft observed shining among the grass or leaves. Many a greenwood legend is associated with its bright twinkling light ; it often brings to mind

Those fairy elves
Whose midnight revels by a forest side,
Or fountain, some belated peasant sees—
Or dreams he sees ; while overhead the moon
Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth
Wheels her pale course.

When a colony is thus seen in some damp shady lane, overhung with trees and bordered by green sloping banks, the effect produced is very beautiful. They look like tiny lamps in the soft moss, and afford the naturalist a subject for contemplation as to the chemistry and mechanism by which such a delightful result is brought about.

The animal belongs to the Malacodermata, or Soft-skinned Beetles, all of which have a flexible exterior, and are usually covered with a very short and delicate down. The species is termed *Lampyridæ*, from two Greek words signifying 'shining tail ;' and the English example—for there are many in the family—has the special name *Lampyris noctiluca*, the last word being Latin for 'night-light.' The sexes differ much in appearance. The female possesses neither

wings nor elytra (wing-sheaths); the head is concealed under a large and rounded prothorax; the male has large wings and elytra that cover the whole body. He is less in size than his mate; one writer calls him 'a slender scarabæus.' He is difficult to meet with, and is therefore regarded as a prize by the entomologist who is lucky enough to effect his capture. Both sexes have the power of emitting light; the lamp of the female being, however, much brighter than that of the male. Instead of a mass of phosphorescence throwing a radiance of some inches in extent, such as the female exhibits, he has but two tiny spots of light no larger than pinheads, which he displays in flying. It was formerly thought that he had no light-giving faculty; but this has been proved to be a mistake. The female also possesses the singular power of shutting off or being able to conceal her light on the approach of nocturnal birds or of footsteps. She can also trim her lamp to an unwonted brilliancy, but generally extinguishes it altogether about eleven or twelve at night. Shakespeare, whose knowledge of the natural world excites our wonder, and who never missed an opportunity of using an illustration therefrom, makes his Ghost in *Hamlet* say:

The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,
And 'gins to pale his ineffectual fire.

When examined in the dark, the light is seen to proceed from the last three segments of the insect's body, the under side of which emits it in an uncertain wavering sort of way, the fact of its being handled seeming to alarm the insect. Schultze found that the animal possessed thin whitish plates on the under side of these segments, each plate consisting of two layers—a front one, yellowish transparent and luminous; and a back one, white and opaque from the presence of a great multitude of doubly-reflecting granules which Kolliker supposes to consist of urate of ammonia. He also found that branches of the insect's breathing-tubes (tracheæ) ramify among the cells of the front layer, and end in star-like corpuscles.

So much for the structure of the luminous apparatus; but as to the cause of the luminosity there is a variety of opinions. Some savants hold that it is due to a sort of natural combustion, and it is said that if a glow-worm be placed in oxygen, the light is greatly intensified for a time; but the animal seems either unable or unwilling to continue it. On the other hand, when Matteucci placed it in hydrogen and carbonic acid—gases which do not support combustion—the light still continued to be emitted for thirty or forty minutes. Phosphorescent undoubtedly is its nature, and that is about all that science can at present affirm. As to the object of this display authorities differ. The common idea has always been that it is intended as a signal between the male and his mate.

One naturalist (Ackroyd) writes: 'The light of this little organic lamp illuminates the insect's path, and probably discloses to its minute and sensitive eyes that of which it is in quest, although at times it may be a source of danger, as when it serves as a mark for some voracious bird which, like Cowper's nightingale, is in want of a supper.'

Again, some have thought it is connected with the reproductive faculty, and one scientist affirms, we do not know with what truth: 'As soon as the female has deposited her eggs—which, by the way, shine in the dark—the light disappears in both sexes.' But we are inclined to believe no utilitarian theory will account for this singular development of light from a living insect, and that its phosphorescence was given to it for the same reason that the butterfly's wing glows with many-coloured plumage, and that the rose is dowered with softly tinted petals and rich perfumes.

Not only is this beetle interesting to the entomologist, but it is useful, especially in its larval state, to the farmer. Neither old nor young touch plants as food, but feed on decayed worms and snails, attacking and devouring the latter when still alive, their shells being no protection to the luckless molluscs. The structure of the larva is rather remarkable. In the first place—which is very unusual—it bears a singular resemblance to the imago or perfect female insect; and in the next it is furnished with a peculiar apparatus at the end of the tail, which serves a double purpose—namely, assisting its locomotion, and acting as a brush to remove the slime from its food, and this apparatus can be protruded or withdrawn at will.

SHADE AND SHINE.

AWAY to the Westward the swift ship is sailing,
In cloud-wreath and mist sets the tremulous sun;
From ocean and shore the dim twilight is failing;
The darkness and shadow of night are begun.
Oh sea-birds! sweep on, with your cry wild and wailing;
Break shoreward, oh waves! with your desolate moan;
Away, with the light slowly waning and paling,
My love saileth Westward—my loved one is gone.

Aglow from the sunrise, the gay bark comes dancing;
Red flushes the ocean, the sky blushes bright;
The gleam and the glory of daylight advancing,
Drive backward the shadow and darkness of night.
Oh wave! kiss the shore with caresses entrancing;
Oh bird! catch its music in swift-winged flight;
Right over the laughing sea, glowing and glancing,
He cometh, my loved one—he cometh, my light!

A. S. B.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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TEETH AND TOOTHACHE.

OF teeth it may be said that that man is happiest who is unconscious of them. We do not mean as an ornament. It is true that some peoples, as Montaigne says, 'take great care to black their teeth, and hate to see them white; whilst others paint them red.' Europeans have a taste of their own in the matter, and love to see them white. For proof consult contemporary fiction *passim*, where even the villains have a fine set to show, and know it. Let Herrick sing of the rubies and pearls of his Julia's mouth; teeth for the present purpose are not jewels. They are to be regarded as the 'fons et origo mali,' and that evil is toothache.

Toothache is as old as sin, and as universal. To erring man it might figure as a form of final torture. It must have been part of the punishment of our primeval parents, whose doom we inherit. The first that an infant knows of teeth is pain; from the cradle to the grave they are an active source of annoyance. Some there be, indeed, who say not without pride that they never had a touch of toothache in their lives. But call not a man happy till he is dead. Hereafter writhing in anguish, they shall assuredly repent the premature boast. And there are strong men and the like who misuse their teeth to lift surprising weights, or, emulating that terror of the Spaniards and hero of the *Revenge*, Sir Richard Grenville, chew glasses up without a grimace. 'Blind mouths' (to pervert Milton's phrase), they do not look to the end—the fevered gums, the dull unceasing ache, the shooting spasm, as if a red-hot needle were thrust into the brain. If a man does altogether escape the fell disease, one is tempted to ascribe to him a low order of nervous organisation. He must be 'only an animal, only sensible in the duller parts.' Nay, he is even lower than that, for animals, too, have toothache, and especially such as possess a high degree of intelligence. The dog and the horse are well-known sufferers. On the authority of a quaint old French book on the subject,

we may add the wolf; and the hippopotamus 'endures quite a great pain from its teeth, so that it is constrained to get out of the water to find a remedy.'

This book is one of the earliest modern authorities on toothache that we have discovered. It is scientific, as science went in 1622. Its author, one Maistre Arnould Gilles, was apparently court dentist, for he dedicates his book to Marie Henriette de Bourbon, sister to the reigning king; and it is published at the appropriate sign of the Three Golden Teeth, in Paris. It is remarkable, we may say in passing, that the literature of toothache is so meagre. An ailment of such ancient standing in the world's history might be expected to obtain more frequent and detailed notice. Such modern treatises as exist are purely technical, and undeserving of the name of literature. There is in them nothing historical, nothing human and sympathetic to the view of the sufferer. Even in the ordinary life of to-day there is no disease which gains us so little pity from our friends. It is not fatal, they say, and are apt to be impatient with our groans. And we ourselves, once the attack is over, straightway forget what manner of torture it was, and go unthinkingly about our daily business. Now, this is surely wrong. It may be true that toothache never killed anybody directly; but assuredly, if analogy goes for anything, it has been the cause of crime and death. Imagine an absolute monarch with an obstinate tooth. It would be a grim amusement to him, almost a necessity, to sign a death-warrant. There have been martyrs to toothache in another than the ordinary usage of the term.

But to return to Maistre Arnould. The first thing to note is that he advises the specialisation of dentistry. 'It is very necessary that dentists should have no other vocation.' He has known instances where patients have died from hemorrhage because the ignorant drawer of teeth did not know how to stop the bleeding. The world, he says, by way of peroration, may think the title 'Drawer of teeth' strange, and perhaps

despise it. But Maistre Arnauld glories in it as very useful to the public, 'and does not do, like an infinity of others, who, coming to this town [of Paris], call themselves Grand Operators. He is happy to do his task well, to take the little fee that is given him, and is never ill-content.' It is only lately that in England the Royal College of Surgeons recognised dentistry as a special branch of medicine. Some twenty-five years ago their dental certificate was established. Before that, the craft was confined to tooth-drawing mainly, and had for its professors the local barber, blacksmith, or watchmaker. We are now beginning to see that unlicensed practitioners do a lot of mischief. The ancient Egyptians were before us in this field; for Herodotus tells us that no doctor in Egypt was permitted to practise any but his own peculiar branch, and some attended solely to diseases of the teeth. Proofs of their skill have been found in some mummies at Thebes whose teeth were stuffed with gold.

So much for the disease; but what of the cure? Maistre Arnauld gives several prescriptions, but they are commonplace compared with more ancient remedies. Here are two methods from Pliny: Put your hands behind your back; bite off a piece of wood from a tree which has been struck by lightning, and apply it to the ailing tooth. Or you may fumigate the tooth with the tooth of another of the same sex—how that is done we are not told—and bind the canine tooth of an unburied corpse to it. Habbdarrahman on Egyptian medicine advises that the molar of a dead man—whether buried or not apparently does not matter—be hung over the groaning sufferer, and the pain will abate. Others, again, say: 'Burn a wolf's head and keep the ashes. They are a great remedy.' It is difficult to cap the piquancy of such cures; but Sir Thomas More has done it; and his prescription has the advantage of not requiring such inaccessible materials. 'I have heard it taught me,' he says in 1557, 'for the toothache to go thrice about a churchyard and never think on a fox's tail.' This reminds one in its malicious pleasantry of 'Don't nail his ears to the pump;' for the suggestion of foxes' tails in connection with churchyards, though not very obvious to the common man, must always and inevitably recur to those who tried the cure.

The man in dental anguish sometimes curses with Burns 'the venom'd stang that shoots his tortured gums along.' Sometimes, on the other hand, he prays. St Augustine in his *Confessions* relates how he once suffered from 'dolor dentium' (toothache), apparently in an aggravated form, for he could not speak. Thereupon, he wrote on wax a prayer to God for the other brethren to repeat; and as soon as all were on their knees the pain went. 'But what a pain!' he says—'never since my tender age had I experienced the like.' Southey, in his *Life of John Wesley*, tells of that eminent preacher that when his own tooth ached he prayed, and the pain left him. Unfortunately, ordinary men do not seem to have such efficacious faith. When the excruciation begins they must bear it philosophically; and on Shakespeare's authority toothache finds out just the weak place in the philosopher's armour of patience. In the middle ages the devout who

were racked with pain had a special patron to whom they could call for deliverance. St Apollonia, a martyr under the Emperor Philip, among other cruel indignities had her teeth pulled out. In consequence, she became toothache's tutelary saint, as her emblems—one of which is 'holding a tooth in pincers'—sufficiently testify. And there would seem to have been yet another martyr, St Blaize, who took cognisance of the disease. He was honoured in the little town of St Blazey, in Cornwall, where candles offered upon his altar were supposed to be an infallible cure for toothache.

Perhaps something may be added on the subject of toothpicks. These are said to have been invented in Italy. Certainly they were in common use among the Romans. In Martial's Epigrams there are frequent references to the 'denticulipium,' sometimes reviling its abuse, sometimes praising its use. The particular form of toothpick which Martial preferred was a pointed strip of mastic-wood; but, in default of that, he recommends a quill. Singularly enough, the useful instrument was regarded as an innovation in Queen Elizabeth's time. The Bastard, in *King John*, sneers at

Your traveller—

He and his toothpick at my worship's mess.

Travellers in France and Italy, it seems, brought toothpicks back, and used them ostentatiously; and all those who affected foreign fashions sedulously imitated them. Commonly a case of toothpicks made of wood was carried about by fine gentlemen. A more violent eccentricity of fashion is pointed at by Sir Thomas Overbury, who describes a courtier as walking in St Paul's 'with a picktooth in his hat, a cape cloak, and a long stocking.' Apparently the 'Johnny' of the present day, who is so unremitting in his use of the homely quill, has inherited the toothpick and his flourishing display of it from the coxcombs that thronged the court of the Virgin Queen.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—THE THREE ACCOMPLICES.

ON that same evening the three accomplices—probably on the proceeds of their iniquities—were dining together at the *Savoy*. After dinner they sat on the veranda overlooking the river and the Embankment. 'Tis sweet, what time the evening shades prevail, while one is still in the stage of physical comfort and mental peace attendant upon an artistic little banquet, to view from the serene heights of a balcony at that hotel the unquiet figures of those who flit backwards and forwards below. They—alas!—have not dined so well, or they could not walk so fast, or drag their limbs so hopelessly, or lean over the wall so sadly.

Elsie leaned her head upon her hands, looking down upon this scene, though not quite with these

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thoughts. Young ladies who are quite happy, and are going to be married next week, do not make these comparisons. Happiness is selfish. When one is quite happy, everybody else seems quite happy too—even Lazarus and the leper. We must never be happy if we do not wish to be selfish.

Coffee was on the table. Athelstan had a cigar. They were all three silent. During dinner they had talked gaily, because everybody knows that you cannot talk with strange people listening. After dinner they sat in silence, because it is only when the waiters are gone that one is free to talk.

'Elsie,' said George presently, 'you have something to tell us—something you have discovered. For my own part, since I handed the case over to anybody else, I feel as if I were not interested in it. But still, one would like to know—just for curiosity's sake—when Checkley is to be "run in."'

'Yes,' said Elsie, 'I must tell you. Perhaps I ought to have told you before. Yet there was a reason. Now—you will be greatly astonished, George.'

'Before you begin, Elsie'—Athelstan removed his cigar—'I must tell you that yesterday evening I, too, made a discovery—what the Americans call a pivotal discovery—a discovery that discovers everything. I should have told you last night, but you announced your communications for this evening, and I thought we would expose our discoveries at the same time.'

'You have found out, too!' Elsie cried. 'I see by your face that you have. Well, Athelstan, so much the better. Now, tell your discovery first, and I will follow.'

'It is this. I have discovered Edmund Gray. I have sat with him and discoursed with him, in Freddy Carstone's Chambers. He came in, sat beside me, and conversed for more than an hour.'

'Oh!' said Elsie. 'Then you know all—as much as I know.'

'Observe,' George interposed, 'that I know nothing as yet.'

'Wait a moment, George. Learn that I have myself known Mr Edmund Gray for a fortnight. You will think, perhaps, that I ought to have told you before. Well—but there is a reason—besides, the way, to begin with, did not lie quite clear before me. Now the time has come when you should advise as to the best course to follow.'

'You have certainly been more mysterious than any oracle, Elsie. Yet you will bear witness, if it comes to bearing witness, that I accepted your utterances and believed in them.'

'You certainly did, George.—And now, Athelstan, tell him the whole.'

'In one word, then—Edmund Gray, the man we have been looking after so long, is none other than Edward Dering, of 12 New Square, Lincoln's Inn, Solicitor.'

'I don't understand,' said George, bewildered, 'Say it all again.'

Athelstan repeated his words.

'That is my discovery, too,' said Elsie. 'Now you know all, as you understand.'

'But I don't understand. How can one man be another man?'

'I sat beside one man,' Athelstan added, 'for an hour and more; and lo! all the time he was another man.'

'And still I am fogged. What does it mean?'

'It means, George, what you would never suspect. The one man received me as a stranger. He knew nothing about me: he had never heard my name, even. Yet the other man knows me so well. It was very odd at first. I felt as if I was talking to a sleep-walker.'

'Oh!' cried George, 'I know now. You have seen Mr Dering in a kind of sleep-walking state—I too have seen him thus. But he said nothing.'

'You may call it sleep-walking if you like. But, George, there is another and a more scientific name for it. The old man is mad. He has fits of madness, during which he plays another part, under another name. Now, do you understand?'

'Yes—but—is it possible?'

'It is more than possible; it is an actual certainty. Wait. Let Elsie tell her story.'

Then Elsie began, with a little air of triumph, because it is not given to every young lady to find out what all the men have failed to find.

'Well—you see—I was always thinking over this business, and wondering why nothing was found out about it, and watching you look this way and that, and it occurred to me that the first thing of all was to find out this Mr Edmund Gray and lay hands upon him. At first I thought I would just go and stand outside his door all day long and every day until he came. But that seemed a waste of time. So I remembered how you found his door open, and went in and spoke to the laundress. I thought that I would do the same thing, and sit down there and wait until he should come. But I was afraid to sit in the rooms of a strange man all alone—no, I could not do it. So I just found out the old woman—the laundress—as you did, George, and I gave her money, and she told me that Mr Gray was at his Chambers almost every Saturday afternoon. Very well; if anybody chose to wait for him all Saturday afternoon, he would certainly be found. So on Saturday afternoon I took a cab and drove to Holborn, and got to the place before his arrival. But again, as it was not quite nice to stand at an open doorway in a public Square, I thought I would wait on the stairs. So I mounted—the doors were all closed—nobody was left in the place at all—I thought I should be perfectly safe and undisturbed, when I heard the noise of footsteps overhead—a tramp, tramp, tramp up and down, with every now and then a groan—like a hungry creature in a cage. This kept on for a long time, and frightened me horribly. I was still more frightened when a door overhead opened and shut and the footsteps came down-stairs. They belonged to a man—an elderly man—who seemed as much frightened at seeing me as I was at seeing him. He asked me whether I wanted any one; and when I said I wanted Mr Edmund Gray, he said that he was a friend of Mr Gray's, and that, since I was a friend too, I might act for Edmund Gray and lend him some money. He looked desperately poor and horribly hungry and thin and shabby, the poor old man!'

'So you acted for Edmund Gray. That was old Langhorne. He is a barrister, who lives in the garret, and is horribly down on his luck.—Go on.'

'Poor Elsie!' said George. 'Think of her, all alone on the staircase!'

'When he was gone, there was no sound at all. The place was perfectly quiet. The time passed so slowly—oh! so slowly. At last, however, I heard a step. It came up the stairs. Oh! my heart began to beat. Suppose it should be Mr Edmund Gray. Suppose it was some other person. Suppose it was some horror of a man! But I had not long to wait, because Mr Edmund Gray himself stood on the landing. He stared at me, rather surprised to find a young lady on the stairs, but he showed no sign of recognition whatever. I was a complete stranger to him.'

'And was the man Mr Dering?'

'He was—Mr Dering. There was just the least little change in him. He wore his coat open instead of buttoned. He had no gloves, his hat was not pulled over his eyes, and his face was somehow lighter and brighter than usual.'

'That is so,' said Athelstan. 'Exactly with these little changes he presented himself to me.'

'Perhaps there is another man in the world exactly like him.'

'Futile remark!—Go on, Elsie.'

'Then I guessed in a moment what it meant. I stepped forward and asked him if he was Mr Edmund Gray. And then I followed him into his rooms.—George, there is no manner of doubt whatever. Mr Dering has periods, whether regular or not I cannot tell, when he loses himself and becomes in imagination another man. He is mad, if you like, but there is method in his madness. The other man is just himself turned inside out. Mr Dering believes in the possible wickedness of everybody: the other man believes in the actual goodness of every man. Mr Dering considers Property the only stable foundation of society: the other man considers Property the root of all evil. Mr Dering is hard and jealous: the other man is full of geniality and benevolence. Mr Dering is Justice: the other man is Mercy.'

'Very neatly put, Elsie. There is quite an eighteenth-century balance about your sentences and sentiments. So far'—Athelstan contributed his confirmation—'So far as I could judge, nothing could be more true. I found my man the exact opposite of himself.'

'Can such a thing be possible? If I were to speak to him, would he not know me?'

'You forget, George. You have seen him in that condition, and he did not know you.'

'Nothing is more common'—Athelstan the Journalist began to draw upon the encyclopædic memory which belongs to his profession—'than such a forgetfulness of self. Have you ever been into a Lunatic Asylum? I have—for professional purposes. I have discoursed with the patients, and been instructed by the physicians. Half the time many of the patients are perfectly rational: during the other half they seem to assume another mind with other memories. It is not real possession, as the ancients called it, because they never show knowledge other than what they have learned before. Thus, a sane man who cannot draw would never in insanity become an artist. So Mr Dering,

when he is mad, brings the same logical power and skill to bear upon a different set of maxims and opinions. Said a physician to me at this asylum of which I speak: "There are thousands of men and women, but especially men, who are mad every now and then, and don't know it. Most of the crimes are, I believe, committed in moments of madness. A young fellow steals money—it is because at the moment he is so mad that he even persuades himself that borrowing is not stealing: that he is only borrowing: that he can get it back, and put it back, before it is found out. What is uncontrollable rage but sudden madness? There are the men who know that they are mad on some point or other, and cunningly hide it, and are never found out. And there are the men who are mad and don't know it. In their mad times they commit all kinds of extravagances and follies, yet somehow they escape detection." So he talked; and he told me of a man who was a lawyer in one town with a wife and family, and also a lawyer in another with a different wife and family. But one lawyer never found out the other; and the thing was only discovered when the man got a paralytic stroke and died in a kind of bewilderment, because, when the time came for him to be the other man, he found himself lying in a strange bedroom with a strange family round him. I had long forgotten the asylum. I did the place for my paper three or four years ago, and scored by the description. Since last night I have been recalling my experience and applying it. You see there can never be any physical change. This is no Hyde and Jekyll business. Whatever happens must be conducted with the same body and the same mind. The same processes of mind in which the man is trained remain, but his madness requires a new setting.'

'One cannot understand,' said Elsie.

'No. But then one cannot understand everything. That's the real beauty of this world: we are planted in the midst of things: we can give names to them—Adam began that way, didn't he?—but we can't understand any of them; and most people think that when we have given a name we have succeeded in understanding. Well, Elsie—we don't understand. But we may find out something. I take it that the other man grew up by degrees in his brain, so that there is no solution of the continuity of thought and recollection. The Edmund Gray developed himself. He has been developed for nearly ten years, since he has occupied the same Chambers all the time.'

'But about the forgeries?' George sprang to his feet. 'I declare,' he cried, 'that I had quite forgotten the real bearing on our case.'

'Edmund Gray,' said Elsie, 'says that his own lawyer who manages his affairs is Edward Dering. If he were to write letters while Edmund Gray, he would not impose upon Edward Dering.'

'He cannot write to two men,' said Athelstan. 'There must be a border-land between the waking and the dreaming, when the two spirits of Edmund Gray and Edward Dering contend for the mastery, or when they command each other—when Edmund Gray endorses cheques and Edward Dering writes letters and conducts transfers for his client—his double—himself.'

'I have seen him in such a state,' said George. 'At the time I never suspected anything but a

passing trouble of mind, which caused him to be so wrapped up in his thoughts as not to be able to distinguish anything. He was then, I doubt not now, carrying out the instructions of Edmund Gray, or he was Edmund Gray acting for himself. Checkley whispered not to disturb him. He said that he had often seen him so.'

'I have never tried to understand,' said Elsie. 'But I saw that Edmund Gray was Mr Dering gone mad, and that he himself, and nobody else, was the perpetrator of all these forgeries; and I have been trying to discover the best way—the kindest way to him—the surest way for us, of getting the truth known.—George, this is the secret of my mysterious movements. This is why I have not given you a single evening for a whole fortnight. Every evening—both Sundays—I have spent with this dear old man. He is the most delightful—the most gentle—the most generous—old man that you ever saw. He is full of ideas—oh! quite full—and they carry you out of yourself, until you awake next morning to find that they are a dream. I have fallen in love with him. I have had the most charming fortnight—only one was always rather afraid that he might come to himself, which would be awkward.'

'Well, Elsie, have you found a way?'

'I think I have. First, I have discovered that when he is surrounded with things that remind him of Edmund Gray, he remains Edmund Gray. Next, I have found out that I can, by talking to him even at his office, when he has his papers before him, turn him into Edmund Gray.'

'You are a witch, Elsie.'

'She is,' said George, looking at her in the foolish lover's way. 'You see what she has turned me into—a long time ago, and she has never turned me back again.'

'I have been thinking too,' said Athelstan. 'For our purposes, it would be enough to prove the identity of Edmund Gray and Edward Dering. That explains the resemblance of the handwriting and of the endorsement. My commissioner's recollection of the man also identifies the cheque as drawn by himself for himself under another name. It explains the presence of the notes in the safe. It also shows that the long series of letters which passed between him and the broker were written by himself for himself. Here, however, is a difficulty. I can understand Edward Dering believing himself to be Edmund Gray, because I have seen it. But I cannot understand Edward Dering believing himself to be the Solicitor to Edmund Gray and writing at his command.'

'But I have seen him in that condition,' said Elsie. 'It was while he was changing from one to the other. He sat like one who listens. I think that Edmund Gray was at his elbow speaking to him. I think I could make him write a letter by instruction from Edmund Gray. That he should believe himself acting for a client in writing to the broker is no more wonderful than that he should believe himself another man altogether.'

'Show me, if you can, the old man acting for an imaginary client. Meantime, I mentioned the point as a difficulty. Prove, however, to Mr Dering and to the other concerned that he is Edmund Gray, and all is proved. And this we can do by a host of witnesses.'

'I want more than this, Athelstan,' said Elsie. 'It would still be open to the enemy to declare that George, or you, or I, had made use of his madness for our own purposes. I want a history of the whole case written out by Edmund Gray himself—a thing that we can show to Mr Dering and to everybody else. But I dread his discovery. Already he is suspicious and anxious. I sometimes think that he is half conscious of his condition. We must break it to him as gently as we can. But the shock may kill him. Yet there is no escape. If the forgeries were known only to ourselves, we might keep the discovery a secret; and only, if necessary—but it would not be necessary—keep some sort of watch over him and warn the Bank. But Checkley has told the clerks and the people at the Bank, and there are ourselves to think of, and my mother and Hilda.—No; we must let them all know.'

'And if one may mention one's self,' said Athelstan, 'my own little difficulty presses. Because, you see, I don't know how long I may be kept here. Perhaps to-morrow I might go on to St Petersburg or to Pekin. Before I go, Elsie, I confess that I should like my mother to understand that—that she was a little hasty—that is all.'

'You are not going to St Petersburg, brother.' Elsie took his hand. 'You are not going to leave us any more. You are going to stay. I have made another discovery.'

'Pray, if one may ask'—

'Oh! you may ask. I saw a letter to-day—Mr Dering showed it to me. It was written from the States three or four years ago. It showed where you were at that time—and showed me more, Athelstan—it showed me how you lost the pile of money that you made over that silver mine—you remember, Athelstan?'

He made no reply.

'Oh! do you think that I am going to accept this sacrifice?—George, you do not know. The donor of that great sum of money which Mr Dering held for me—we have often wondered who it was—I have only found out to-day—it was Athelstan. He gave me all he had—for such a trifling thing—only because I would not believe that he was a villain—all he had in the world—and went out again into the cold. He said he dropped his money down a gully or a grating on the prairie—some nonsense. And he sent it all to me, George.—What shall we do?'

'Is this really true, Athelstan? Did you really give up all this money to Elsie?'

'She says so.'

'It is quite true, George. I saw the letter—Mr Dering showed it to me—in which he sent that money home, and begged Mr Dering to take care of it, and to give it to me on the day when I should be one-and-twenty. He cannot deny it. Look at him. He blushes—he is ashamed—he hangs his head—he blows tobacco-smoke about in clouds, hoping to hide his red cheeks. And he talks of going on to St Petersburg, when we know this secret, and have got the money! What do you call this conduct, George?'

'Athelstan—there is no word for it. But you must have it back. You must, and shall. There can be no discussion about it. And there is not another man in the world, I believe, who would have done it.'

'Nonsense. I should only have lost it, if I

had kept it,' Athelstan replied after the Irish fashion.

'You hear, Athelstan. It is yours. There can be no discussion. That's what I like a man for. While we women are all talking and disputing, the man puts down his foot and says: "There can be no discussion." Then we all stop, and the right thing is done. It is yours, brother; and you shall have it, and you shall stay at home with us always and always.' She laid her hand upon his shoulder, and her arm round his neck, caressing him with hand and voice.

The man who had wandered alone for eight years was not accustomed to sisterly caresses. They moved him. The thing itself moved him.

'All this belongs to another chapter,' he said huskily. 'We will talk of it afterwards, when the business in hand is despatched.'

'Well, then—that is agreed. You are to have your money back: my mother is to take her suspicions back: Mr Dering is to have his certificates back and his dividends: Checkley is to take his lies back: Sir Samuel is to have his charges back: George and I are going to have our peace of mind back. And we are all going to live happy ever afterwards.'

'As for Wednesday now,' said George. 'It is not an unimportant day for us, you know.'

'Everything is ready. On Sunday morning my mother is always at home before Church. I will see her then, and acquaint her with the news that the wedding will take place as originally proposed, at her house. This will astonish her very much, and she will become angry and polite and sarcastic. Then I shall tell her to prepare not only for a wedding feast but also for a great, a very great surprise. And I shall also inform her that I shall be given away by my brother. And then—then—if I know my mother aright, she will become silent. I shall do that to-morrow morning.—In the evening, George, you will get your best-man, and I will get your sisters, my bridesmaids, and we will come here, or go to Richmond or somewhere—and have dinner and a cheerful evening.—Am I arranging things properly?'

'Quite properly. Pray go on.'

'Sunday afternoon I have promised to spend with my master—Edmund Gray. He is going to read me a new Paper he has just finished, in which he shows that Property can be destroyed by a painless process.—Athelstan, put all your money into your pocket and keep it there—in less than a twelvemonth, and with it all crime—all sweating, all injustice.—No, Athelstan, he is not mad. When he argues on this theme he is persuasive and eloquent. He convinces everybody. I shall hear him out, and then I shall try to make him write down all that has happened. If we can only get such a confession, it would be better than anything else. But it may be difficult. He does not like being questioned about himself. If I do succeed—I don't know quite what I ought to do next. He must be told. Some time or other he must have the truth. I thought of asking all the people mentioned to meet at his office on Monday morning at noon when Mr Dering is always himself. On Sunday I would not. He has to address his people on Sunday evening. Let him do so undisturbed. I will leave him in happiness that one night

longer. But you two—you will be anxious. Come on Sunday evening—between eight and nine—to the Hall of Science. Then you will hear him and see me. And I will let you know how I have prospered.'

'Sunday evening,' said George. 'Monday comes next, then Tuesday, and before Wednesday, my Elsie, the character of these two convicts has to be completely whitewashed, even to the satisfaction of Hilda herself. Are we not running it pretty close?'

'Unbeliever! Doubter! I tell you that you shall be married with all your friends round you, and that Athelstan shall give me away. And you shall go away on your holiday with a quiet heart and nothing to trouble you. What a foolish boy not to be able to trust his bride even for such a simple thing as getting a confession out of a madman!'

'Do you sport a crest, old man?' asked Athelstan.

'I believe there is some kind of a sort of a thing somewhere around. But crests are foolishness.'

'Not always. Take a new one, George—a real one. Stamp it on your spoons and forks and in your books and on your carriage. Let it be simply the words, "Dux Femina Facti."'

(To be continued.)

THE ENFIELD SMALL-ARMS FACTORY.

SOME little time back we gave in the pages of this *Journal* a short account of Woolwich Arsenal (No. 380, April 11, 1891), where are manufactured ordnance of all sizes and classes, from the light field-gun of the Royal Horse Artillery to the huge monsters known as 'Woolwich Infants,' or by some such fanciful name. But, as every one knows, weapons of this character are quite in a minority as compared with those which are carried by the soldier himself, and form his personal weapons whether as an infantry or cavalry man. It is at Enfield, on the river Lea, some twelve miles down the Great Eastern Railway, that these weapons are manufactured, almost entirely, as required by our army.

Enfield Factory has not, like Woolwich Arsenal, an ancient history of its own. In the days of Henry VIII. and of Elizabeth, of the Duke of York and his faithful secretary, Samuel Pepys, Woolwich was famous for the production both of ships and of guns; but the small-arms factory on the borders of Essex dates only from the early part of this century. Its site seems to have been chosen regardless of any peculiar advantages for manufacturing purposes. It is simply a collection of workshops built in the flat meadows through which run the various branches, natural and artificial, of the lazy Lea; and the nearest town, about a mile and a half distant, is quiet and remote little Waltham, chiefly known for its Abbey Church, the burial-place of Harold, which rises in its midst.

The situation of the Enfield Factory is, however, advantageous in this way: the canals form a safe means of water transit for the gunpowder which is manufactured in the adjacent mills at Waltham, and which is required at Enfield for use in the proving of the barrels of firearms;

while the far-stretching marshes provide an apparently interminable range for carrying out the necessary experiments and trials with regard to the accuracy of the weapons manufactured.

Where one of the canals has been conducted into a square-shaped basin, the older and principal buildings of the manufactory have been located. They form a quadrangle of some extent; and here, too, are situated the offices and the quarters of the executive staff, which is composed partly of civilians and partly of military officers. Behind these, on the east side of the enclosure, and on the banks of one of the canals, are rows of workmen's cottages. Near the entrance gates are situated schools for the workmen's children; and at the other end of this street, as we may call it, is a church, which is served by the clergy of the parish of Enfield. On the west side extend north and south the flat meadows or marshes which form so convenient a spot for the testing and proving of the rifles.

As we have said, all sorts of personal weapons required for the arming of a soldier in the English army are made here, not only firearms, such as rifles and revolvers, but lances, swords, and bayonets, the last having now become a sort of short sword. There is also one class of weapons which occupies a sort of intermediate position between those carried by the soldier himself and those drawn by horses—that of machine guns, as they are called, which, though not carried by men on their shoulders or in their hands, are drawn about by them on small carriages. These machine guns are classed with personal arms, because they are usually employed in connection with infantry; and also because—which is a far more important reason—the ammunition required for them is similar to that used in rifles. In fact, they are in principle only a collection of rifles as used by the infantry, fastened together, or, as we shall see, a single rifle barrel with machinery attached which enables it to discharge with great rapidity.

There is one more general principle which we shall do well to bear in mind before we enter the factory. It is this, that of course the manufacture of small-arms is in as much a condition of uncertainty as that of larger warlike weapons in these days. What we see now may become obsolete in a very short time, and we shall be shown specimens of firearms which formed the universal weapons of the British army only a very few years ago, but are now as much out of date for practical purposes as cross-bows. Remembering this, let us go first when we enter to one of the offices, where we shall see arranged in a rack against the wall, amongst others, specimens of the old Enfield muzzle-loader, of the same weapon converted into a breech-loader, of the Martini-Henry rifle, and of the latest pattern of all, the magazine rifle. While, stored away in some out-of-the-way corner, it is just possible we might come across a specimen of the old smooth-bore or 'Brown Bess,' which formed the weapon of certain English linesmen so late as the beginning of the Crimean War.

The Enfield workshops are of course in appearance much like other workshops. There are the same processes of forging and casting, and the same machinery for hammering and turning and boring and drilling which we see elsewhere. Let

us rather confine our attention to those things which we shall not find in other places. We have come to see the articles which are turned out from here, in the process of their manufacture, rather than the machinery by which they are made.

A rifle, as every one knows, consists of three portions—the wooden stock, the barrel, and the lock. The stock is usually made of walnut wood, and is manufactured in what we should perhaps describe as a carpenter's shop. Formerly, the stock of a rifle was formed out of one long piece of timber; but now the complicated machinery of the breech and lock cannot be contained in a hollow in the wood, as was formerly the case, but has to be enclosed in a steel case, to which the wooden butt and barrel support are screwed. To the rifles of the newest pattern there hangs, just below the lock, the magazine, in which are carried five or, in some cases, ten cartridges, which spring up into place in turn, ready to be discharged. In short, the rifle has become, as regards its rapidity of action, something similar to a revolver pistol. We shall find that a lock has in its manufacture to pass through an almost infinite number of processes, each part having to be forged or beaten out till the whole can be fitted together.

Let us pass on to the barrel-making shop. Rifle barrels are made from a solid round bar of steel, which is at first considerably shorter and stouter than the finished barrel will be. This steel bar is heated red-hot, and is passed between several pairs of rollers, which convert it outwardly into the required form. It has, however, afterwards to be bored and then rifled—that is, furnished with the spiral grooves within, which give the bullet the necessary spin. Of course the barrel is by far the most important portion of a firearm, and the barrels of rifles are, at Enfield, tested and proved in the most ingenious and searching manner. The first proof takes place after the barrel has been bored, but before it is rifled. The barrels are loaded with cartridges of considerably greater weight both in powder and bullet than those which will be used in them when they are ready for service, and are enclosed in a sort of strong box which has one side open. They are then discharged through the open side into a heap of sand, and examined; but it is a rare event to find a barrel that has not been able to bear this test. The second proof, which takes place after the rifling, is of a similar character.

But these proofs are only to test the strength of a barrel; the test of its accuracy is a much more delicate operation. Of course the machinery by which it is bored and rifled works with the most admirable precision; but yet it is necessary to put this machine-work to trial. There are, amongst others, two highly ingenious methods for doing this. In the one case it is placed on a stand which is so constructed that on it the barrel can be made to revolve rapidly. The barrel is pointed towards a window, and in front of it is a fixed sight. The workman looks through it while it is revolving; and if the sight remains steady to his eye, that is a proof that the barrel may be said to be straight. But there is yet another method. The mechanism of this testing apparatus is rather difficult to describe, but is

something of this fashion. The barrel is made to revolve as before; but this time there is inserted in it a spindle, on which is fixed a short arm with a point which touches very lightly the interior of the barrel. If there is any inequality, or if the barrel is not perfectly straight, this short arm is of course shaken, and when this is the case, the motion is further communicated to a long arm at the end of which is an indicator, which is looked at by the workman through a magnifying glass.

Barrel, stock, and lock being at last completed and tested, the rifle is put together; but even then it is subjected to one more trial. This is carried out on the proof-ground in the marshes, and takes the form of an actual discharge of the weapon at a target. The rifle is screwed to a fixed and firm support, and then a certain number of rounds are fired at ranges of five hundred and one thousand yards respectively. In this test the hitting of the centre of the target, or 'bull's-eye,' is not the end in view, as it is in ordinary target practice. That sort of shooting depends of course on the steadiness with which the marksman holds the rifle. In this case, however, the fixed rest may be directed on any portion of the target, and the grip will always be the same. The only object of the test is to see whether the rifle throws the bullet at each round on or near the same spot. A marker at the butt examines the position of each shot, and the smaller the space on which they strike, the better the weapon.

We have not yet spoken of the machine guns. These weapons are, as part of the regular equipment of armies, quite modern, though the idea of binding together a quantity of barrels and then discharging them at once, or with great rapidity one after another, is not altogether novel. Sometimes, instead of a number of barrels, one only is required, and the cartridges are discharged from short barrels or chambers which are brought in turn into position with the longer one. This is the ordinary revolver system; but modern machine guns are a great improvement on this method, and entirely dispense with the necessity of loading separate chambers. Machine guns have succeeded one another with extraordinary rapidity, and a gun seems only to be adopted in order to be superseded. Thus, we have had during the last few years a series of these weapons bearing the names of Gatling, Gardiner, Nordenfelt, and Maxim. We will not stop to examine all these specimens—most of which, as we have already said, may be considered in a way obsolete—but will only remark on the newest and latest. When the revolver system was given up, the idea was how to work with a single barrel and drop in cartridges as required. At first they were dropped in from a hopper or 'feeder,' which was fixed on the top; but by the latest invention the cartridges are supplied from a long belt with pockets, which passes through the breech portion of the gun. Belt after belt can be inserted, as it is a very easy matter to slip the cartridges into the pockets, so that the discharge is continuous as long as there is ammunition. The machinery for picking the cartridges out of the belt, for inserting them in the breech, and for extracting the empty cases, is rather complicated, but almost self-working, the power employed being that of the recoil of the gun. Another highly important invention is that the barrel, to guard against overheating from

the continuous discharge, is enclosed in a cylinder which is filled with water.

As we walk about the factory we see, besides the workmen, here and there groups of men in military uniform. These are armourer sergeants, who attend classes at which they are taught the mysterious mechanism of the breech-loaders and machine guns. In former days, Tommy Atkins could be instructed how to keep his weapon in order, lock and all; but now its complications are beyond the power of his understanding or of his fingers, perhaps of both, and he has to hand over his rifle to a more skilled superior when it is out of order. Truly, military matters, from the movement of the vast army corps of the present day down to the mechanism of the soldiers' weapons, have become a highly technical matter. Dugald Dalgetty, notwithstanding his lengthy practical training, would not have been in it now.

War has indeed become a science in this latter part of the nineteenth century such as it never was before; not, of course, that men can be made to march faster nor horses to gallop more rapidly than they did in former days, but because the weapons which are used are such marvels of mechanical skill. And yet in how few years has this transformation been accomplished. What a short space separates us from the days of smooth bores and 'Brown Bess,' and what a step it is, all at once, as it were, from firearms which were hardly an improvement on those of mediæval days, to the breech-loaders and magazine rifles and machine guns which are turned out in such vast numbers from these Enfield workshops.

And so we leave the said workshops with their clang and their bang, and the throb of great machines, and the whirl of wheels, and the heat and the apparent drive and hurry, though of course there is really order in what seems to us to be confusion; and we pass out across the flat low meadows, and along the banks of the scarcely moving stream. But as we make, it may be, for the old Abbey Church of Waltham, which rises before us, we feel there is one consolation which the sight of these wonderful weapons of war brings to us, and it is this: that modern science has made wars less lasting than they used to be; that as soon as a declaration of war has once been made, or an expedition decided on, the contest will be, though no doubt severe and terrible, yet short and decisive, and must perforce be followed by an interval of peace far longer than the period of fighting.

AN OLD MAID'S MARRIAGE.

By GEORGE B. BURGIN.

MISS MATTIE was in a dilemma. A chill gleam of April sunshine shot across the table and lit dancingly on Miss Mattie's face. Miss Mattie was not averse to sunshine ordinarily, but this intrusive and irresponsible beam annoyed her; besides, it made the flame of the fire look sickly, and disturbed maiden meditations. She put on her spectacles, carefully adjusted her cap, and prepared for the worst. Then she rang the bell for Prudence, her handmaiden, who appeared in Quaker gray and a snowy cap. Little rebellious curls danced out from beneath the cap in a frivol-

ous fashion which nothing could restrain. Even now as she came in she made an attempt to reduce them to order, but in vain.

'Prudence,' said Miss Mattie, 'what did the Doctor's boy say?'

'That worldly youth, Mistress, attempted to pass the time in vain discourse concerning certain maidens who attire themselves in blue raiment and smite a heathen instrument called the tambourine'—

'Yes, yes, Prudence,' interrupted Miss Mattie, 'I daresay. But what did he say about the letter?'

'He said, Mistress, that he was to take back an answer; and I have entreated him to much profitable conversation until the answer be written.'

Miss Mattie looked perplexedly at the grave, serene-eyed, little Quaker maid. 'How old are you, child?' she asked.

'Twenty, Mistress,' said Prudence.

Miss Mattie gazed at the unopened letter on the table, and then at Prudence. 'Prudence, you are young,' she said, 'but wiser than your years. Have you—have you ever had a sweetheart?'

Prudence looked a little unprepared for this remark. But she was conscientious. 'Truly,' she said, 'there is one stalwart youth, a carpenter, who has flattered me many times when going to Meeting, but to whom I have not been drawn.'

'Oh, you—you weren't drawn to him?' asked Miss Mattie.

'Nay, Mistress; whereat he is much provoked, and threateneth to'—

'To what?' asked Miss Mattie.

'To fare forth to foreign lands and forget me,' placidly answered the little maid.

Miss Mattie still struggled with a certain shameful consciousness that she had wavered. What a tower of strength Prudence was! 'Did you—did you—did he ever kiss you?' she asked in a whisper.

Prudence opened her blue eyes widely. 'Surely, Mistress, it is the manner of young men to indulge in such unseemliness unless discouraged.'

'And—and did—you—did you discourage him?' asked Miss Mattie.

A faint colour stole over the pretty little maid's face. She looked distressfully at the carpet. 'The youth was strong, and I but slight,' she answered in confusion; 'and he was about to depart and—and'—

'W-what did he do?' asked Miss Mattie eagerly, still holding the letter in her hand.

'He saluted me, Mistress,' answered Prudence. A faint smile played over her lips at the recollection.

'Sit down, Prudence,' said Miss Mattie. 'I want to ask your advice, child. You know more about men than I do.'

Prudence sat down. Miss Mattie regarded her as a daughter, although Miss Mattie herself was only forty-five. But people in Little Bingleton rather prided themselves on looking old. It was thought to savour of flightiness if folks adopted modern fashions or travelled often to town. Miss Mattie was the only daughter of the late Dr Sewell. Ever since her father's death, which had happened about ten years ago, she had lived in

her own pretty little cottage on the outskirts of the town. People who remembered her fifteen years back said that Miss Mattie was then very handsome. She was still a sweet-faced woman, with rich auburn hair, and placid blue eyes. There had been whispers of a girlish romance a long time ago; but by-and-by people looked upon her as a confirmed old maid. The years passed, and still Miss Mattie lived her quiet uneventful days, until Dr Slurke, the one practitioner in the place, suddenly discovered that Miss Mattie was wasting her life. 'You've a mission to fulfil,' he had said. 'What is it?' placidly demanded Miss Mattie. 'I will go home and write it to you,' retorted the Doctor, attacked by a sudden fit of shyness. His manner had occasioned Miss Mattie some misgivings, but she had concealed them under her usual placid exterior until the arrival of the fatal letter.

The latter lay upon the table. Miss Mattie dared not open it. It seemed as if the occasion demanded a solemn and formal ceremony of some sort—a ceremony with witnesses. 'Open it, Prudence,' she said suddenly, turning to the little maid.

Even Prudence could not conceal something which approached to worldly curiosity. She took the letter in her hand and opened it with her usual deliberation. 'The man has a concern to marry thee, Mistress,' she said, after a steady perusal of the letter.

No woman likes to have a proposal of marriage put before her in so baldly prosaic a manner as in this instance. Miss Mattie felt that the occasion was not being treated with sufficient solemnity. 'Read it aloud please, Prudence,' she said; and Prudence read it:

DEAR MADAM—I never proposed to any one before—haven't had either the time or the inclination—and I have vainly consulted all the literature on the subject. Most of it seems to me to be rubbish. You are a sweet, amiable woman, of rather a melancholy disposition; I am bustling, savage, irritable, loud, and overbearing. Don't you think that we each have what the other lacks? I'm tired of living alone, so must you be also. Couldn't we join forces and travel together? You must be very solitary, and it is always so comforting to have a man in the house in case of burglars or fire or anything of that sort. Will you marry me? If so, kindly return a note in the affirmative by bearer, and I'll come up this evening to talk it over. If my letter is lacking in delicacy, remember that doctors are accustomed to come straight to the point. You want rousing; so do I. Which shall it be? Yes or no? I shall be walking impatiently up and down my garden—an exceedingly rash thing to do in this east wind—until I receive your reply.—Yours very faithfully,
SILAS SLURKE.

'Is that all?' demanded Miss Mattie, who had faint hopes that the missive would be couched in all the long-winded eloquence of Miss Austin's heroines.

Even Prudence seemed to have found it disappointing. She inwardly contrasted it with certain vain but impassioned utterances of the young carpenter, and then rebuked herself for instituting worldly comparisons.

'Is there nothing more in the letter, Prudence? Nothing about love?'

'The letter lacketh worldliness of that kind,' answered Prudence, seriously scanning the page.

Miss Mattie had not lost all sentiment. She recalled that episode of her vanished youth when Reuben Rountree had declared that he worshipped her. Reuben was only a farmer's son—a struggling farmer—and Miss Mattie's exalted position had been declared a fatal obstacle to Reuben's pretensions. Whereupon, Reuben had uttered wicked words, shaken his fist at Mattie's white-haired old father, and departed to lands unknown in search of fortune. He had taken a lock of Miss Mattie's fair hair with him, and she still cherished in secret a little black daguerreotype of the departed swain. All this had happened a quarter of a century ago. At first, the faith of love had kept Miss Mattie's heart warm. But hearts grow cold and faith wavers and dies away when the years pass and absent lovers make no sign.

Miss Mattie drifted placidly adown the stream of Time, distributing little gifts to her neighbours on the banks, and winning the love of all. But she found life rather dull. Her old school-fellows had large families, who called Miss Matilda 'Aunt Mattie,' and confided all their troubles to her sympathetic ears. Miss Mattie also found, to her very great surprise, that men rather disturbed her. She liked her little nap after dinner, her game of backgammon with Prudence in the evening, her regular quiet life. If she had married Reuben, all these things would have become impossible.

Miss Mattie did not like to be hurried. And yet—and yet. As she sat there holding Dr Slurke's letter in her hand, her youth came back. How the poor boy had loved her! She recalled his foolish speeches, his fondness for her yellow locks and blue eyes, and all the thousand-and-one little tricks and jests with which he had beguiled her into loving him. Dr Slurke's letter had unsettled her. Though she felt she could not marry a man who never wiped his boots on the mat, and believed that a congested liver was answerable for all the sorrow in the world—yet there might be hidden depths of love within him. He was a doctor, too. That was another recommendation.

Prudence still waited, the letter in her hand.

Miss Mattie temporised. 'I—I will ask him to tea, Prudence,' she said, as she sat down to her desk and wrote in an elegant Italian hand that she must have further time in which to consider Dr Slurke's flattering proposal. 'And Prudence,' she said, as she sealed the letter—Miss Mattie always used a seal—'see that your pikelets are plentiful and of the best. Nothing comforts a man so much as a good tea.'

Miss Mattie was a little bit ruffled by the events of the day. She went up-stairs and looked long and lovingly at a certain little tin portrait. Then she put on her best lavender silk dress, removed her cap, and went down-stairs to her cosy sitting-room.

A man's step scrunched the gravel outside, and the next moment an unknown voice demanded if Miss Matilda Sewell lived there.

Miss Mattie thrust the daguerreotype into her bosom and went out. 'What is it, Prudence?' she asked.

'A wayfarer from over the seas who would have speech with thee, Mistress,' said Prudence quietly, as she went back to her pikelets.

Miss Mattie felt an odd sensation at her heart. It fluttered and leapt. What if this burly stranger brought her news from the forgotten Reuben!

The stranger held a letter in his hand. 'I've just come down on the cars with a letter from an old friend,' he said.

'On the what?' asked Miss Mattie, in bewilderment.

'On the cars. Oh, I forgot. You call them trains. Can I come in?'

'With pleasure,' said Miss Mattie, in a fluttered, odd little tone. 'May I offer you a dish of tea?'

The stranger seem puzzled. 'We generally drink it in mugs,' he said.

He took off his hat and coat and carefully hung them on a peg in the hall. The passage seemed to shrink when he walked along it, and his head hit against the low little portal as he followed Miss Mattie into her small sitting-room, full of delicate china, and gay with samplers and quaint old mirrors on the walls.

The stranger sat down in an armchair by the fire. He seemed to swell over the sides of it. The cat jumped on to his colossal knee and went to sleep there.

Miss Mattie sat facing the window, and feeling reassured. She trusted that cat's instinct almost as much as she did the wisdom of Prudence. And the cat did not know young carpenters.

As the stranger glanced round the room, the ancient figures on the samplers caught his eye. He studied the impossible peacocks spreading their tails under equally impossible trees, and his eyes twinkled. 'My! Ain't they real pretty!' he said. Then he looked at another sampler. 'I like that picture of Noah and his sons sitting on top of the Ark,' he observed genially.

Miss Mattie felt distressed. She did not like to interrupt his flow of art criticism by admitting that the Ark was meant for the roof of a house, and Noah and his sons were only four ravens perched on the ridge.

'Excuse me,' said the stranger, handing her a letter. 'Won't you read this first, and then we'll talk.'

Hospitality was a sacred rite with Miss Mattie. 'I trust that you will partake of my poor hospitality first, M-Mr—?' she said, with a stately bend of her head.

'Alphaeus P. Winterbottom. I'd be sorry to go away without doing so,' answered the stranger heartily, as Prudence appeared with the pikelets.

'Prudence,' said Miss Mattie solemnly, 'make some more.'

'You're right, Ma'am,' said the stranger, surveying the little dish. 'I was just thinking I could eat the whole lot of those cunning little cakes.'

And Miss Mattie actually laughed. Her tea-parties were usually very solemn and stately affairs. Mrs Pennifather, the Rector's wife, always came in a copper-coloured silk. Miss Twinkleton, too, invariably donned her best old yellow lace ruffles for the occasion. The stranger, however, wore garments of a transatlantic cut, and had a pointed beard. He was

a fine handsome man of about forty-five. As Miss Mattie handed him a fragile cup, the last of the pikelets had disappeared.

'My! Miss Sewell,' he said, 'I'm quite forgetting the little men up there on the walls. There won't be a crumb left for 'em at this rate.'

Miss Mattie laughed again. Another step sounded on the gravel path outside.

'It's Dr Slurke,' she said, uncomfortably. 'I—I had quite forgotten him.'

Dr Slurke opened the door, and recoiled in angry amazement. There was Miss Mattie—*his* Matilda, as he was wont to call her in dreams—when he did dream, which was but seldom—chatting genially away with some foreign ruffian whom he had never before heard of or known to exist. It was indecorous; it was vulgar; it was unfeeling; it was aggravating; it was unprofessional; and the kind of thing which he (Dr Slurke) was not going to put up with from any lady however nice she might be under ordinary circumstances. So he pulled his stubbly beard and glared at the stranger. But, unfortunately for the Doctor, Mr Alphaeus P. Winterbottom was not overwhelmed.

Miss Mattie half rose from her chair. 'Good-evening, Dr Slurke. Won't you come in?' she inquired, with the sugar tongs poised in her white hand.

This was another insult. She was pouring out her best tea and giving it to the man in the chair. Dr Slurke did a very foolish thing—a thing he had often done before, but never without experiencing disastrous results. He lost his temper. He drew himself up to his full height—five feet three—and scowled on the Pirate King in the armchair—this ruffian who stole people's hearts by nursing their objectionable old Persian cats.

'Won't you come in?' tremulously repeated Miss Mattie.

Dr Slurke bowed sarcastically. 'I thank you, no, Madam,' he said. 'I only came in to inform you that I had caught a cold in my garden whilst awaiting your pleasure.'

The other man looked quietly up. 'I guess, you ought to be proud of it,' he said, in his objectionable American way.

Dr Slurke bowed to him with withering irony. 'I—eh—was not aware that I was asking a conundrum,' he said. 'May I inquire who I have the pleasure of addressing?'

The stranger smiled. 'My name's Winterbottom—Alphaeus P. Winterbottom.'

Miss Mattie let fall the sugar from the tongs. 'Oh, Dr Slurke,' she said, with tears in her voice, 'I am so sorry. You see it was rather a difficult question to answer, and'—

'I will thank you to be good enough not to discuss it before this gentleman,' the Doctor ejaculated at a white-heat.

'But I—I really'— And poor Miss Mattie felt inclined to cry.

Mr Winterbottom was moved by Miss Mattie's distress. 'Shall I make him shut the door from the outside?' he asked, quietly caressing the cat. 'I think, Madam, you'd feel more comfortable if this turkey-cock sort of person had gone home to roost.'

'I was not speaking to you, sir,' said the

Doctor. 'My remarks were meant for this lady.'

'I could just drop him into a nice soft flower-bed, if you'd only say the word, Madam,' quietly continued Mr Winterbottom.

'Madam, I take my leave,' said the angry Doctor.—'As for you, Mr Winterbeans, you shall hear from me.'

'Not professionally, I hope,' said the imperturbable stranger. 'Don't distress this lady any more, or I'll really have to come and reason with you.'

The Doctor withdrew, speechless with rage. Poor Miss Mattie began to cry softly into the teapot.

The stranger put the cat down, gently approached the table. 'Madam,' he said, 'that extremely ill-tempered person will be better to-morrow. If he ain't, I guess I'll have to reason with him—near a pond.'

'Oh, please don't,' said Miss Mattie, feeling comforted by the stranger's vast bulk. 'I—I kept him waiting for an answer to—to an extremely delicate matter this evening, and—and he's cross with me.'

The stranger led Miss Mattie to the armchair. 'Now, you sit there, Madam,' he said in his gentle, kindly way. 'I'll brew this tea for you. You just assimilate those cunning little cakes of yours, and you'll feel better. One lump of sugar? Isn't it?'

'Yes,' said Miss Mattie, feeling that support from conscious strength which delights most women.

'And the cream?' said the stranger, holding up the dainty little cream ewer admiringly. 'My! Ain't that little pitcher pretty! And the fire! Beats our stoves hollow.' He handled the dainty tea equipage with jealous care, and waited on Miss Mattie so nicely that all her fears vanished.

'A gentle lady like you didn't ought to be bothered,' the stranger said reflectively, when Prudence had cleared away the things—'didn't ought to be bothered by a grasshopper like that. I daresay he means well, but he don't colluscitate worth a cent. That's what's the matter with him. Now just tell me if you feel downright chipper again, and if so, we'll go into this business, or, if you prefer it, I'll come again to-morrow.'

'I thank you, Mr Winterbottom,' said Miss Mattie, in her simple friendly way. 'It—it was foolish of me to—to be so frightened. The Doctor has been very kind to me.'

'Then I'll let him off the pond,' said Mr Winterbottom, as if making a concession to sentiment. 'You're like one of those pretty wind-flowers we have in our country—you want sheltering from all the storms that blow.'

Miss Mattie smiled a pleased little smile. She had never been compared to a wind-flower before.

Mr Winterbottom took up the letter with his customary deliberation. 'Now, Madam,' he said, 'I'll read it to you, and when I'm bumping over a *cahot*, you tell me to pull up, and I'll drive quietly!'

Miss Mattie did not understand what a *cahot* was. The stranger explained that it was a hole in the road in winter, and that a sleigh had to

glide gently over and not take it flying, for fear of bumping the bottom out.

'Is—is the letter from Mr Rountree?' asked Miss Mattie, with quivering lips.

The stranger looked at her admiringly. 'Now, Madam,' he said, 'I never did see your like for coming straight to the point. You've fine instincts. That's what the widower said when he was telling me about it.'

'The—the—— Did I understand you to say widower? To—to allude to Mr Rountree?' inquired Miss Mattie. She felt crushed. Reuben had not been true to her; he had forgotten his youthful love; all these years she had allowed her heart to remain in the keeping of a man who did not want it.

'I'd better read his letter,' said Mr Winterbottom. 'His wife wished it, you know.'

'I—I don't know,' said Miss Mattie, trembling. 'I don't know. But, oh, Mr Winterbottom, you have been so kind to me, that I would rather hear it in your own words, please.'

Mr Winterbottom looked gratified. 'So you shall, Madam,' he said—'so you shall. You see, Reuben settled down in Ontario five-and-twenty years ago.'

'Yes,' said Miss Mattie.

'And then, when he was doing pretty well, he married old Deacon Tucker's oldest.'

Miss Mattie was but human. 'Was—was Miss Tucker comely?' she asked.

'Sort of apple-cheeked,' said Mr Winterbottom. 'The girls are more like Reube.'

'The—the what?' gasped Miss Mattie.

'The girls.'

'Are—are there many?'

Mr Winterbottom reflected. 'Well, there's Samantha, and Delia, and Lelota, and Theresa, and the Twins.'

Every fresh name made the matter worse. The stranger saw it. 'I can't remember the names of the others,' he said comfortingly; 'but there aren't many—seven or eight, maybe.'

'Is he happy?' inquired Miss Mattie, still clinging to her romance, as only a woman can. She would not be harsh or unjust to Reuben. Whilst she stayed at home and dreamed her life away, he had gone into that vast new country and won a living from the soil. He had worked out the grief from his heart, and—and forgotten her. She might have known that his strong loyal nature could not fail to find an appreciative helpmate. This Canadian girl who had loved him had not stayed to think of social position; she had grasped the substance instead of the shadow. Poor Miss Mattie's tears flowed freely. Perhaps Reuben's grief when his wife had been called away had prompted him to think of her, Miss Mattie.

'Wh—what is his message to me?' she inquired.

Mr Winterbottom came a little nearer to Miss Mattie. 'Well, you see,' he said gently, 'she was kind of jealous of you, Madam. Reube told her you'd always be first in his heart, and so, when she was called away, she asked him to send for you to—to look after him.'

'And—and what did he say?' asked Miss Mattie.

'Well, you see, Reube hadn't the heart to tear you from your old surroundings, even if you'd been willing to come. So he sent me. "Tell

her," he said—"tell her all my life I've turned to her in sorrow and joy alike; all my life she's been my guiding star. In the woods I've seen her walking before me, clearing the way, and everywhere she stepped the corn grew greenly. Tell her," he said, "in all that coarse, rude, rough life, with its struggles and trials and pains and successes, she's never left my side for one moment. She's been the angel of my life, the pure sweet English girl, who I know has been true to me all these years. The"—'

'Stop!' said Miss Mattie, quivering with excitement, as the tears streamed down her cheeks. 'Please stop, Mr Winterbottom—stop. To say this to me means that he was disloyal to her. Don't let me think the man I loved all my life could have been false to us both. Please leave me that. Don't take that away from me. It—it has been the only thing which has sustained me in my loneliness. I have lived a quiet, faithful, uneventful life, keeping and guarding the love which God put into our hearts. Don't tell me that now, after all these years, he could send me such a message as that. It must be some dreadful mistake'—in her excitement she laid her hand upon Mr Winterbottom's arm—'some dreadful mistake. It is natural that he should turn to me now; but he must have loved her while she lived. It is only his sorrow which makes him seem to forget. Tell him I will be a mother to his children—go to them—cherish them; but unsay those words which have destroyed my ideal, the ideal which I have taken to my heart all these years. The sacredness of love must not be broken like this. Tell me!—tell me! Oh, I would rather be the humblest beggar that ever craved charity, than believe the man I loved could win some other woman's heart and profess to have loved me too.'

Mr Winterbottom gently took her hand. 'My dear Madam,' he said—'my dear Madam, I *know* he never loved any woman but you.'

Miss Mattie buried her face in her hands. Disillusioned by both the men who had loved her—disillusioned in one evening! Well, she had had five-and-twenty years of trustful, loving faith and hope, and now she must hide her grief and try to live it down. She wanted to get away to her own room—to be alone—to think over this shock. And all the time she grieved, the stranger's gentle pressure grew firmer still. It comforted her. She experienced a strange thrill—a thrill which she had never expected to feel again. And then she strove to withdraw her hand, and accused herself of immodesty.

'Mattie!' the stranger's voice sounded in her ears—'Mattie, don't you know me? I am Reuben! I have never married—never loved any one but you; and I have come home to stay, to comfort your life, to give you back the years you have spent without me, to guard and love you with the firm strong love of manhood, and to atone to you for all the sorrow of the past. Look up, dear, look up. Say to me'—

She looked up through a mist of happy tears as he caught her to his heart. 'What can I say to you?' she whispered. 'Oh, Reuben, Reuben, I have waited so long! I have doubted the goodness of God. And now He brings you back to me—He brings you back.'

Reuben put his strong arm round her. 'Dear,

forgive me. I wanted to know if you still cared for me. I could not come until I had made money enough to give you a higher position than that of a farmer's wife. And now let us be happy.'

She put her hand in his. 'Ah, Reuben,' she said, 'how often our pride places before it everything else and robs us of the years. I am not the girl you knew and loved—I'm only an old maid.'

But he gazed into her truthful, loving eyes, blue with the blue of heaven, and then he kissed her.

'They will call it an old maid's marriage,' she whispered with a smile upon her lips.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A VERY wonderful engineering work, which has occupied eleven years in its execution, has just been brought to a successful issue in the establishment of a new water-supply for the city of Liverpool. That this is a very wonderful work must be conceded when it is remembered that the water is drawn from a source more than seventy miles away from the city, and that the enterprise has involved the creation of a lake nearly five miles long which drains twenty-three thousand acres of ground. The new lake is situated in the Vyrnwy Valley, which, ten years ago, was a bare region without any particular interest attached to it. No doubt, a lake existed here long ago in the Glacial period, but this fact has been forgotten, except by geologists; and the engineers have now reinstated the Vyrnwy Lake by means of an immense dam of solid masonry. Manchester has for a long time drawn her water-supply from a distant lake, and Birmingham is taking similar steps to supply her need of the first necessary of life. Presently it will be the turn of London itself to provide for its rapidly increasing multitudes by a similar scheme.

The Photographic Convention of the United Kingdom is a useful society, which, like its elder brother, the British Association, meets annually at some large centre for the purpose of reading and listening to papers on different subjects, and refreshing its members by excursions into the surrounding country. This year they met at Edinburgh. Next year, Plymouth is chosen as the scene of their operations; and the following year they will probably meet at Dublin. The Photographic Convention is now in its seventh year of existence, and the rapid increase in its membership proves that its labours and cause are appreciated.

At Barwick, near Ware, stand the premises of the Smokeless Powder Company, the only works of the kind in the kingdom. These works cover no fewer than one hundred and twenty-six acres of ground; and a large company assembled there recently to watch the entire process of manufacture from the raw material to the finished explosive. This new compound differs from the

old black gunpowder not only in its freedom from smoke when ignited, but also in the circumstance that it is unaffected by damp or extremes of temperature. After the works had been inspected, the quality of the new powder was tried with various weapons by expert marksmen, and excellent practice was made. The exhibition concluded with the firing of five hundred rounds from a Maxim gun, when it was shown that far less smoke was produced than with ten shots fired with the old-fashioned gunpowder.

A curious relic of the early days of telegraphy will be shown at the Chicago Exposition by one of the American railway companies—namely, the original apparatus which was employed for laying the first underground telegraph wire, that of Morse. This wire was originally laid from Washington to Baltimore, and the apparatus for laying it in the ground consists of a heavy plough with a reel behind carrying the wire; thus the furrow was made by the plough, the wire laid therein, and covered up again as the plough proceeded on its way. It was soon found that the leakage to earth was so great that some other system must be adopted, and so overhead wires on the familiar telegraph posts became general. This relic of bygone times is to be exhibited in very complete form with wax figures representing Professor Morse and his workmen, while sixteen stuffed oxen will represent the original team which drew the machine over the ground.

Could the pioneers of telegraphy have had a vision of the network of wires both above and below ground which are now so common in our large commercial centres, they would have been incredulous; nor would they have ever guessed that a nefarious industry would arise in the tapping of telegraph wires in order that knaves might listen to messages not intended for them from which they might derive profit. This is now the case in New York, where a gang of wire-tappers, consisting of about twenty-five dishonest telegraph operators, and as many more inferior workmen, make a regular business of tapping the wires over which the returns of horse-races are sent, so that by the news thus obtained they may be able to defraud the book-makers. They carry on their operations in the most impudent manner, often meddling with the wires under the pretext of being workmen who have been commissioned to make repairs, and it is said it is very difficult to stop their depredations.

Of late years we have heard a good deal of drugs, leaves of plants, &c., which have the property of conferring upon mankind power to withstand fatigue. The latest introduction of this kind is described by a correspondent of the *Globe* newspaper as a pastile which is said to take the place of both food and drink. It was lately tested on a company of Roumanian soldiers who completed a march of seventy-five miles in twenty-seven hours, and whose sole food during that time was in the form of these pastiles. First, each man had a pastile every half-hour, and later on, three every hour; at the same time the pastiles dissolved in a small quantity of

water were supplied to the horses which accompanied the troop. At the conclusion of the march, both men and officers declared that they felt no fatigue whatever, and spoke highly of the sustaining powers of the new preparation. The pastiles are said to contain a large quantity of caffeine.

A device for preventing caterpillars from climbing trees has lately been described. It consists of alternate wires of copper, which are wound round the tree trunk at a distance of about half an inch from one another. These wires are in connection with a source of electricity, and when the circuit is completed by the caterpillar bridging the metals with its body, it receives a shock which either destroys it or at anyrate makes it let go its hold. It may be mentioned that a plan has for a long time been common of protecting shrubs and flowers from the incursion of slugs by placing rings of zinc and copper round the root. The two metals when touched by the moist body of the slug develop sufficient electricity to cause the creature to turn back.

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings has for many years been carrying on a very good work. At their last meeting, it was stated that more than one old building in London had recently, by the intervention of the Society, been saved from destruction or restoration, terms which are too often synonymous. At the same meeting there were expressions of regret that the Society had failed to prevent the restoration of St Helen's Church, Bishopsgate, one of the few old buildings in London which escaped the Great Fire of 1666. It may be mentioned here that one building in that neighbourhood—the house of Sir Paul Pindar—the demolition of which was necessary in consequence of street improvement, has been re-erected, so far as its handsome carved front is concerned, in the Architectural Court of the South Kensington Museum.

During a recent tour in Algeria the French Minister of Public Instruction and Fine Arts visited the Arab city of Timgad, which is described as an Algerian Pompeii. Certainly this old Arab city, which is now but a heap of ruins, has seen almost as many vicissitudes as the Italian Pompeii. It was built in the first century of our era, and is situated in the province of Constantine. It was overrun by the Moors in the sixth century, and ultimately destroyed by successive earthquakes. Like Pompeii, it was a place of fashionable resort, and its ruins show remains of handsome pavements, beautiful statues, a theatre, fountains, and baths. One immense temple is dedicated to Jupiter, and this is now being excavated and thoroughly examined. The province of Constantine is very rich in Roman remains; and it is hoped that the visit of the Minister of Fine Arts will result in funds being found for the necessary excavations being carried out, so that we may learn more of this interesting buried city.

It has always been a common idea that cheese is a valuable aid to digestion, hence the invariable custom of concluding the principal meal of the day with a modicum of that toothsome compound. From the recent experiments of a German chemist, it would seem that cheese does not possess the virtues which have been attributed to it in this respect. This chemist placed

various kinds of cheese in an artificial digestive fluid, among the constituents of which was a large proportion of fresh gastric juice. The various kinds of cheese took from four to ten hours before they were dissolved, and as an ordinary meal is digested in from four to five hours, it would appear that cheese must hinder rather than aid the process.

The careless nursemaid who leaves a perambulator upon a sloping footpath unattended, perhaps on a windy day, is responsible for many a sad accident. An attempt to grapple with such disasters is seen in a Safety Perambulator which has just been introduced by a firm in London. In this little vehicle there is a brake which fixes the wheels, except when the handle of the perambulator is grasped by the person in charge, when they are at once released. Close to the handle is a lever bar which is grasped by the attendant with the handle, the lower end of the lever being connected with a strap which passes round a drum attached to the axle of the hind-wheels. By the coiling of this strap round the drum the wheels are effectually locked, and the vehicle cannot be moved.

One of the most beautiful improvements which the Metropolis has experienced of recent years is the creation of the handsome Victoria Embankment, which borders the north side of the Thames. Persons of middle age can remember how on this same site was presented at low tide a vast expanse of black mud. Never does this Embankment look so beautiful as at night, when its curved form between the bridges of Westminster and Blackfriars presents a semicircle of light. It has now been decided that this important thoroughfare shall be lighted by electricity, not for the first time, for about ten years ago experimental electric lights were erected here, and were used with beautiful effect for many months. The system then employed involved so much expense that it had to be abandoned; but now the science of electric lighting is so much better understood that the new installation is sure to be of a more permanent character.

In the last annual Report from the British Vice-consul at La Rochelle, a vivid description is given of the ravages caused by the white ants, which infest that town. It would seem that these destructive insects were introduced about the end of the last century; and the plague might have been stayed if the precaution had been taken of at once burning all timber which had become affected; but this was not done, and the pest is considered to be almost incurable. In many cases, the beams and other woodwork of the houses are so eaten away, leaving a mere shell outside, that they have to be removed and replaced by iron. By this means alone can the houses in many cases be ensured from utter collapse.

A method of preserving wood from the attacks of insect pests and other destructive influences was some years ago introduced by Colonel Haskin of the United States, where it is in extensive use with very satisfactory results. From time immemorial it has been the custom to preserve wooden posts which have to be fixed in the ground by charring them; and although this process is an effectual preservative, it has the drawback of

burning away a certain portion of the wood, and therefore robbing it of some of its strength. Colonel Haskin conceived the idea of doing the work more efficiently by submitting the entire body of the wood to the action of superheated air in closed retorts. Wood treated in this way is said to be 'vulcanised,' and the action of the heat not only preserves it against decay, but confers a strength and hardness upon it which it did not before possess. On the New York elevated railways, vulcanised yellow pine timbers which have been in use for the past six years do not show any sign of deterioration, while untreated wood exposed to the same conditions of weather is in a state of decay. A company is being formed to work this process, which is of an inexpensive character, in this country.

Although we hear so much of illumination by gas and its modern rival electricity, there is no doubt that the majority of householders throughout the world use mineral oil as their chief source of artificial light. In this country alone there are, it is said, more than ten million lamps burning mineral oil in nightly use, and though perhaps some of us hardly realised that the employment of these lamps was so general, we are constantly reminded by the newspaper reports of terrible accidents that the use of such lamps is not only common, but dangerous. At a recent inquest upon a victim of one of these accidents, it was stated that three hundred deaths every year are caused in this country alone by similar disasters; and in one year Captain Shaw, the former Superintendent of the London Fire Brigade, reported one hundred and fifty-six fires caused by the upsetting of lamps in the Metropolis. Many devices have been invented to render these lamps safe, so that should they be accidentally upset, the flame is automatically extinguished; and such devices have from time to time been noticed in these columns; but unfortunately they are not adopted, and probably will remain neglected until legislation is brought to bear upon the subject.

It is a matter of common knowledge that india-rubber goods even of the highest quality are perishable. Although not subject to any great wear and tear, the time comes when the rubber loses its elasticity and becomes soft and rotten. Hitherto, such perished rubber has represented a waste material for which no use could be found; but by a process recently invented, the perished rubber can be made, it is said, once more serviceable. By incorporating the waste rubber with certain hydro-carbons and with a proportion of Trinidad asphalt, by adding to the mixture certain vegetable oils, and submitting the product to heat, there is produced a substance to which the name 'Blandyte' has been given. It can be made hard and dense, or soft and pliable by modifying certain parts of the process; and it seems to be applicable to most of the various purposes for which pure rubber is used. Compared with rubber, vulcanite, or leather, blandyte is a wonderfully cheap material, due, of course, to the fact that its chief constituent has hitherto been of no value. The offices of the syndicate by which the manufacture is now being carried on are at 78 Gracechurch Street, London.

During the dark and foggy days which visit the Metropolis and other large towns in the

winter-time, thousands of extra hands are employed upon our railways, whose duty it is to place detonating signals upon the rails, which supply the place of the ordinary semaphores, which are invisible through the murky atmosphere. This means great expense to the railway companies both in men and material, for each of these fog-signals costs three-halfpence. An improved method of signalling to the drivers of locomotives in thick weather has recently been brought forward. On the locomotive itself is fixed an electric bell, to which is attached a contact device, which operates by means of a movable bar which is associated with each signal-box. When the engine passes such a signal-box, contact is made, and the bell rings; and by the number of beats upon the gong, the engine-driver knows whether to proceed or whether to stop. The apparatus does not interfere with any existing signalling arrangements, and would be quite automatic in action provided that the signalman attended to his levers just as if the weather were clear.

A Lucifer-match factory is about to be established in Calcutta. The promoters of the enterprise are natives who, as soon as they had conceived the idea, collected samples of wood from different parts of the country and submitted them to European experts. Some of these woods have been found very suitable for the purpose of match-making, and it is said that they can be purchased at a very cheap rate. The chemicals required can also, it is said, be made in India; and with the cheap labour there obtainable, the enterprise has every prospect of success.

A few years ago the Phonograph of Edison and the wonderful things that might be expected of it were common topics of conversation, and many have expressed surprise that after so much promise, the performance is so small. 'Why,' they ask, 'is not the phonograph to be obtained commercially?' It was long ago reported that its inventor had perfected it, and it has been exhibited all over the country, in order that the public might be made acquainted with the really marvellous results of which it is capable; but still it cannot be purchased, and no one seems to know the reason why. In France, if a patented article is not produced as a marketable thing within a period measured by so many months, the inventor cannot claim further protection for it; and this being the case, it is possible that some French speculator may flood the world with phonographs which do not bear the name of Edison.

Hitherto it has been thought most dangerous, if not impossible, to discharge shells containing high explosives from ordinary guns, the danger lying in the possible premature explosion of the shell, through the shock communicated to it by the gun. This difficulty seems to have been surmounted by Dr Justin, who has recently conducted a series of experiments with shells charged with explosive gelatine. Dr Justin states that the danger of igniting explosives contained in shells is caused more by the friction induced by the rotary motion of the projectile, than from the shock induced by starting it on its flight, and this friction he reduces by placing the explosive charge in an inner chamber of wood. By discharging heavy shells of this character

against a target of solid rock, the enormous destruction possible with them was made evident. The shells used were fitted with a delayed-action fuse, so that they did not explode until they were buried in the cliff against which they were aimed.

It is with a feeling akin to regret that we learn that the ancient city of Rome is to be modernised by being illuminated by electricity; but such is indeed the case, and the works to supply it with the necessary current were recently inaugurated. These works are at Tivoli, twenty-two miles away; and the motive-power for driving the necessary dynamo-machines is found in a volume of water having a fall of about one hundred and sixty-four feet. The electricity thus generated will be carried from Tivoli to Rome by four copper overhead conductors, and the loss of power in transmission is calculated to amount to twenty per cent.

G A M B I E R.

THERE are perhaps few substances more widely if indirectly used and at the same time less known to those outside the immediate industry concerned, than Gambier. The very name is unfamiliar to the general public; whilst any knowledge of the origin and mode of preparation of gambier is uncommon. Gambier is very extensively employed in the dyeing and tanning industries; and a large number of materials and articles of daily use have in the course of their manufacture been treated with the substance under consideration. Gambier is, moreover, a valuable medicine, and the more carefully prepared qualities are largely used in cases of diarrhoea, dysentery, relaxed throat, &c.

Similar in chemical composition to ordinary catechu, gambier is obtained by boiling the leaves and twigs of the *Uncaria Gambier* plant, a native of the East, and found either wild or cultivated in Malacca, Penang, and Singapore, as well as in Java and Sumatra. *Uncaria Gambier* belongs to the natural order *Rubiaceæ*, in which are also embraced the cinchonas or quinine-yielding plants, as well as coffee. The flowers are small and crowded together, and the plant itself is a strong shrubby climber.

Gambier appears to have been used in India for dyeing purposes from a very remote period; but its introduction into Europe only commenced with the present century.

The manufacture of gambier is still conducted on very primitive lines, and with the crudest appliances. A plantation is generally cropped some eighteen months after being planted; and cropping may be repeated as often as four times a year, the operation being oftentimes conducted with no sparing hand. The remaining process is exceedingly simple, the leaves, twigs, &c., being boiled in a rough caldron until the water in which they are steeped becomes syrupy. The extract is then drawn off, cooled, and stirred until crystallisation commences. The gambier is then cut by hand into cubes, dried either by simple exposure to the air or by smoke, and packed in mats for exportation.

The life of a gambier plantation averages only some ten years; and in fifteen years at latest it is abandoned. The capital required is very small,

and the returns are rapid, hence the favour with which the industry is regarded by the Chinese.

Gambier has a pale brown or yellow colour, with an even earthy fracture, the cubes of commerce being about an inch square. There is much variation in the quality of the gambier offered for sale, and the art of adulteration has penetrated this branch of industry. At one time there are stated to have been eight hundred gambier plantations in Singapore alone; and the amount of gambier imported into Great Britain from the Straits Settlements alone is no less than twenty thousand tons per annum.

Gambier is undoubtedly a valuable commercial product; and with improved appliances for its manufacture, and judicious management of the plantations, can hardly fail to develop largely at no distant period.

F O R E V E R.

Two little streamlets leapt and flowed,
And sang their songs together;
They felt alike the summer rays,
And bore the stormy weather;
The selfsame blossoms decked them both
In colours rich and rare;
And in each stream the song-birds wooed
Their bright reflections there.
And on, and on, and on they danced,
Each leaping toward the river,
And then they met to kiss and part
Forever and forever.

Two human lives, two kindred hearts,
By destiny's decree,
Met in the spring of life, to learn
Its deepest mystery.
They dreamed their morning dreams of hope,
Through fair unclouded weather;
They opened love's bewitching book,
And read it through together;
They saw in one another's eyes
A deep unspoken bliss;
And from each other's lips they took
Love's ever-ready kiss.

And then the fate that crushes all
The sweetest pleasures here,
Turned hope's glad music to a sigh,
Its glory to a tear.
It stepped between them; ah! it mocked
The love it could not kill;
It bade them in its fury live,
And love, and suffer still.
They tried with outstretched hands to span
Fate's wide unyielding 'Never.'
The voice of destiny replied:
'Forever and forever.'

Mine is no wild imagined theme,
No idle fancy flight,
It lives through daylight's busy hours,
And haunts the silent night.
The wail of sorrow fills the air,
It rests, it ceases never;
It wrings some soul, it breaks some heart,
Forever and forever.

LIZZIE BERRY.

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BLOOD ROYAL.

By GRANT ALLEN,

AUTHOR OF 'IN ALL SHADES,' 'THIS MORTAL COIL,' ETC.

CHAPTER I.—PERADVENTURE.

CHIDDINGWICK High Street is one of the quaintest and most picturesque bits of old-town architecture to be found in England. Narrow at either end, it broadens suddenly near the middle, by a sweeping curve outward, just opposite the *White Horse*, where the weekly cattle-market is held, and where the timbered gable-ends cluster thickest round the ancient stone cross, now reduced as usual to a mere stump or relic. In addition to its High Street, Chiddingwick also possesses a mayor, a corporation, a town pump, an Early English church, a Baptist chapel, and abundant opportunities for alcoholic refreshment. The *White Horse* itself may boast, indeed, of being one of the most famous old coaching inns still remaining in our midst, in spite of railways. And by its big courtyard door, one bright morning in early spring, Mr Edmund Plantagenet, ever bland and self-satisfied, stood sunning his portly person, and surveying the world of the little town as it unrolled itself in changeful panorama before him.

'Who's that driving the rector's pony, Tom?' Mr Plantagenet asked of the hostler in a lordly voice, as a pretty girl went past in an unpretentious trap. 'She's a stranger in Chiddingwick.' For Mr Plantagenet, as one of the oldest inhabitants, prided himself upon knowing, by sight at least, every person in the parish, from Lady Agatha herself to the workhouse children.

Tom removed the straw he was sucking from his mouth for a moment, as he answered, with the contempt of the horsey man for the inferior gentry: 'Oh, *she*! she ain't nobody, sir. That lot's the new governess.'

Mr Plantagenet regarded the lady in the carriage with the passing interest which a gentleman of

his distinction might naturally bestow upon so unimportant a personage. He was a plethoric man, of pompous aspect, and he plumed himself on being a connoisseur in female beauty. 'Not a bad-looking little girl, though, Tom,' he responded condescendingly, closing one eye and scanning her as one might scan a two-year-old filly. 'She holds herself well. I like to see a woman who can sit up straight in her place when she's driving.'

Mr Plantagenet's opinion on all questions of deportment was much respected at Chiddingwick; so Tom made no reply save to chew a little further the meditative straw; while Mr Plantagenet, having by this time sufficiently surveyed the street for all practical purposes, retired into the bar-parlour of the friendly *White Horse* for his regulation morning brandy-and-soda.

But the new governess, all unconscious of the comments she excited, drove placidly on to the principal bookseller and stationer's.

There were not many booksellers' shops in Chiddingwick; people in Surrey import their literature, if any, direct from London. But the one at whose door the pretty governess stopped was the best in the town, and would at least do well enough for the job she wanted. It bore, in fact, the proud legend, 'Wells's Select Library:' then by an obvious afterthought, in smaller letters, 'In connection with Mudie's.' An obsequious small boy rushed up, as she descended, to hold the rector's horse, almost as in the days before compulsory education, when small boys lurked unseen, on the lookout for stray ha'pence, at every street corner. Mary accepted his proffered aid with a sunny smile, and went into the shop carrying a paper parcel.

There was nobody in the place, however, to take her order; and Mary, who was a timid girl, not too sure of her position, stood for a moment irresolute, uncertain how to call the attention of the inmates. Just as she was on the point of giving it up as useless, and retiring discomfited, the door that led into the room behind the shop opened suddenly, and a young man entered. He seemed about nineteen, and he was tall and handsome, with deep blue eyes, and long straggling locks of delicate yellow hair, that fell picturesquely though not affectedly about his ears and shoulders. He somehow reminded Mary of a painted window. She didn't know why, but instinctively, as he entered, she felt as if there were something medieval and romantic about the good-looking shopman. His face was almost statuesquely beautiful—a fair frank open face, like a bonny young sailor's, and the loose curls above were thrown lightly off the tall white forehead in a singularly graceful yet unstudied fashion. He was really quite Florentine. The head altogether was the head of a gentleman, and something more than that: it had the bold and clear-cut, fearless look about it that one seldom finds among our English population, except as the badge of rank and race in the very highest classes. Mary felt half ashamed of herself, indeed, for noting all these things immediately and instinctively about a mere ordinary shopman; for after all, a shopman he was, and nothing more: though his head and face were the head and face of a gentleman of distinction, his dress was simply the every-day dress of his class and occupation. He was a son of the people. And as Mary was herself a daughter of the clergy, the eldest girl of a country rector, compelled by the many mouths and the narrow endowment at home to take a place as governess with a more favoured family at Chiddingwick rectory, she knew she could have no possible right of any sort to take any personal interest in a bookseller's lad, however handsome and yellow-haired and distinguished-looking.

'I beg your pardon for not having come sooner,' the tall young man began in a very cultivated tone, which took Mary aback even more than did his singular and noteworthy appearance; 'but the fact is, you opened the door so very softly the bell didn't ring; and I didn't notice there was anybody in the shop, as I was busy cutting, till I happened to look up accidentally from my ream, and then I saw you. I hope I haven't kept you unnecessarily waiting?'

He spoke like a gentleman; and Mary observed almost without observing it that he didn't call her 'Miss,' though she was hardly even aware of the unusual omission, his manner and address were so perfectly those of a courteous and well-bred equal. If she had fancied the customary title was left out on purpose as a special tribute of disrespect to her position as governess, her sensitive little soul would have been deeply hurt by the slight even from an utter stranger; but she felt instinctively the handsome young man had no such intention. He didn't mean to be anything but perfectly polite, so she hardly even noticed the curious omission.

'Oh dear, no,' she answered, in her timid little voice, unfolding her parcel as she spoke with a kind of shrinking fear that she must be hurting

his feelings by treating him as a tradesman. 'I've only just come in; and I, well, I wanted to know whether you could bind this again for me? Or is it quite too old to be worth the trouble of binding?'

The young man took it from her hands, and looked at her as he took it. The book was a *British Flora*, in two stout octavo volumes, and it had evidently seen wear and tear, for it was tattered and dog-eared. But he received it mechanically, without glancing at it for a moment. His eyes, in fact, were fixed hard on Mary's. A woman knows at once what a man is thinking—especially, of course, when it's herself he's thinking about; and Mary knew that minute the young man with the fine brow and the loose yellow hair was thinking in his own head—how exceedingly pretty she was. That makes a girl blush under any circumstances, and all the more so when the man who thinks it is her social inferior. Now, when Mary blushed, she coloured up to her delicate shell-like ears, which made her look prettier and daintier and more charming than ever; and the young man, withdrawing his eyes guiltily and suddenly—for he, too, knew what that blush must mean—was still further confirmed in his first opinion that she was very pretty.

The young lady, however, was ashamed he should even look at her. He was accustomed to that, and yet somehow in this case it particularly hurt him. He didn't know why, but he wanted her to like him. He took up the book, to cover his confusion, and examined it carefully. 'At the time of the French Revolution,' he observed, as if to himself, in a curious far-away tone, like one who volunteers for no particular reason a piece of general information, 'many of the refugees who came to this country were compelled to take up mechanical work of the commonest description. A Rochefoucauld mended shoes—and Talleyrand was a bookbinder.'

He said it exactly as if it was a casual remark about the volume he was holding, or the comparative merits of cloth and leather, with his eyes intently fixed on the backs of the covers, and his mind to all appearance profoundly absorbed in the alternative contemplation of morocco or russia. Mary thought him the oddest young man she had ever met in her life; she fancied he must be mad, and wondered by what chance of fate or fortune he could ever have wandered into a bookseller's shop at Chiddingwick.

The young man volunteered no more stray remarks about the French Revolution, however, but continued to inspect the backs of the books with more business-like consideration. Then he turned to her quietly: 'We could do this for you very cheap in half-calf,' he said, holding it up. 'It's not at all past mending. I see it's a favourite volume; and a book of reference of the sort you're constantly using in the open air ought to have sound stout edges. The original binding, which was cloth, is quite unsuitable, of course, for such a purpose. If you'll leave it to me, I'll do my best to make a workman-like job of it.'

There was something in the earnest way the young man spoke that made Mary feel he took a pride in his work, simple and ordinary as it

was; and his instant recognition of the needs and object of the particular volume in question, which in point of fact had been her companion in many country rambles over hill or moor, seemed to her singularly different from the perfunctory habit of most common English workmen. To them, a book is just a book to be covered. She conceived in her own mind, therefore, a vague respect at once for the young man's character. But he himself was just then looking down at the volume once more, engaged in examining the inside of the binding. As he turned to the fly-leaf, he gave a sudden little start of intense surprise. 'Tudor!' he murmured; 'Mary Tudor! How very curious! Did this book then once belong to some one named Mary Tudor?'

'It belongs to me, and that's my name,' Mary answered, a little astonished, for he was gazing fixedly at her autograph on the blank page of the first volume. Never before in her experience had any shop people anywhere showed the slightest symptom of surprise at recognition of her royal surname.

The young man made a sudden gesture of curious incredulity. 'I beg your pardon,' he said, jotting down something in pencil in the inside of the book; 'do I understand you to mean your own real name is Mary Tudor?'

'Why, yes, certainly,' Mary answered, much amused at his earnestness. 'That's my own real name, Mary Empsom Tudor.'

He looked at it again. 'What a singular coincidence!' he murmured to himself half inaudibly.

'It's not an uncommon name in Wales,' Mary answered, just to cover the awkwardness, for she was surprised the young man should feel any interest at all in so abstract a subject.

'Oh, that's not it,' the yellow-haired lad replied in a hasty little way. 'The coincidence is—that my name happens to be Richard Plantagenet.'

As he spoke, he drew himself up, and met her gaze once more with conscious pride in his clear blue eye. For a moment their glances answered each other; then both dropped their lids together. But Richard Plantagenet's cheek had flushed crimson meanwhile, as a very fair man's often will, almost like a girl's, and a strange fluttering had seized upon his heart well-nigh before he knew it. This was not remarkable. Mary Tudor was an extremely pretty girl; and her name seemed fateful; but who was she? Who could she be? Why had she happened to come there? Richard Plantagenet determined in his own heart that moment he would surely search this out, and never rest until he had discovered the secret of their encounter.

'You shall have it on Wednesday,' he said, coming back to the book with a sudden drop from cloudland. 'Where may I send it?' This last in the common tone of business.

'To the rectory,' Mary answered, 'addressed to Miss Tudor.' And then Richard knew at once she must be the new governess. His eye wandered to the door. He hadn't noticed till that minute the rectory pony; but once he saw it, he understood all; for Chiddingwick was one of those very small places where every one knows every one else's business. And Fräulein had gone back just three weeks ago to Hanover.

There was a moment's pause: then Mary said,

'Good-morning,' sidling off a little awkwardly; for she thought Richard Plantagenet's manner a trifle embarrassing for a man in his position; and she didn't even feel quite sure he wasn't going to claim relationship with her on the strength of his surname. Now a shopman may be handsome and gentlemanly, and a descendant of kings, but he mustn't aspire to acquaintance on such grounds as these with the family of a clergyman of the Church of England.

'Good-morning,' Richard replied with a courtly bow, like a gentleman of the old school, which indeed he was. 'Your books shall be covered as well as we can do them.'

Mary returned to the pony, and Richard to his ream, which he was cutting into sermon-paper. But Mary Tudor's pretty face seemed to haunt him at his work; and he thought to himself more than once, between the clips of the knife, that if ever he married at all, that was just the sort of girl a descendant of the Plantagenets would like to marry. Yet the last time one of his house had espoused a Tudor, he said to himself very gravely, the relative rôles of man and woman were reversed; for the Tudor was Henry of Richmond, 'called Henry VII., of our younger branch;' and the Plantagenet was Elizabeth of York, his consort. And that was how 'the Estates' went out of the family.

But 'the Estates' were England, Wales, and Ireland.

LIGHTHOUSE ILLUMINANTS.

IN the reign of the first Tudor there existed a respectable Company of Mariners in the College at Deptford, having authority by charter to prosecute persons who destroyed sea-marks, &c. Henry VIII., on May 20, 1514, formed them into a perpetual corporation by the style of the 'Master Wardens and Assistants of the Guild or Fraternity of the most glorious and undivided Trinity, and of St Clement, in the parish of Deptford Strond, in the county of Kent.'

The powers and functions of this Society have been much curtailed by succeeding enactments, and within more recent times again in 1854, the year that gave birth to that master-piece of nautical legislation, the Merchant Shipping Act. But still the Trinity Brethren are an influential body, seeing that amongst other responsibilities they are mainly accountable for the lighting of the storm-swept English coasts.

Between the *phari* of the Romans—established either prior to or in the opening years of the Christian era, on Dover cliffs, Flamborough Head, and various other sites around our shores—and the establishment of the North Foreland Lighthouse, the Dungeness fire-tower, there is practically no connecting link. This last-named beacon was instituted for indicating the whereabouts of the dreaded Goodwin Sands. On the summit of the lighthouse there was built an open fireplace or grate, in which were burnt billets of oak-wood, which subsequently were superseded by coal. Modern science smiles

disdainfully at such a clumsy illuminant; but Smeaton informs us that the coal-fire of the Spurn Point Lighthouse, at the mouth of the Humber, had been seen thirty miles off. Coal-fires issued their warning flares from the Isle of May lighthouse, at the entrance to the Firth of Forth, as late as 1810; while oil was first used in the St Bee's Head Lighthouse in 1823. A beacon-tower that guards the rockbound entrance to a certain Swedish fiord is said to still issue a coal-fed light. Such lights as these must fail conspicuously during tempestuous weather, and especially when the wind blows from sea to shore. A sailor has then to encounter the terrible risks of a lee shore without any perceptible warning from the friendly beacon-light.

As Alfred the Great, according to popular tradition, invented a lantern-like arrangement for the protection of his light-giving time-measurers, another benefactor invented a case or lantern in which to enclose the wood or coal fires of our early light-towers, and so to protect them from storm and tempest. About the year 1732 the iron grate or chaffeur of the Forelands Lighthouse was covered with a 'sort of lantern, on account of the great difficulty of keeping up a proper flame in windy or rainy weather.' The 'lantern' had large sash-windows, and the attendants kept the coal-fire alight by means of huge bellows. In 1790 improvements were instituted which made this lighthouse partake somewhat of its present form and character. The only exceptions to the use of fires were the Eddystone Lighthouse, which used to exhibit a chandelier of twenty-four wax candles, five of which weighed two pounds, and the Liverpool lighthouses, which had oil lamps, with rude reflectors.

The introduction of the Argand lamp about 1790 marked an era of great and rapid improvement in the lighting of beacon-towers. Even at the present day the substance most largely used is oil of one description or other, either colza or petroleum. If the latter oil is used, care is taken to ensure that it is of the best possible quality, and that its flashing point is considerably above the temperature at which most of the petroleum oils give off their dangerous vapours. A sample from every delivery by the contracting oil-merchant is taken and subjected to the most thorough tests; and any consignment that fails to reach the standard is rejected. The usual plan adopted in providing rock lighthouses with their liquid fuel is to give them a fifteen months' supply in advance each year, and thus ensure the impossibility of the supply running short.

The following two extracts, taken from advertisements published by the Commissioners of Irish Lights, will show how the oil supplies are obtained:

'RAPE-SEED OIL FOR LIGHTHOUSES.—The Commissioners of Irish Lights hereby give notice that they are desirous of receiving tenders for the supply of about 15,000 gallons of Pure Refined Rape-seed Oil, of the finest quality, to be delivered into their stores at Kingstown, co. Dublin, in such quantities and at such times as may be required during the year ending 31st December 1892. A sample of Five Gallons of the Oil proposed to be supplied should be submitted by the firms intend-

ing to tender; the vessel containing the sample having the trade or the private mark thereon, but not the name of the firm.'

'MINERAL OIL FOR LIGHTHOUSES.—The Commissioners of Irish Lights hereby give notice that they are prepared to receive tenders for the supply of 38,000 gallons of the finest quality of paraffin oil, to be delivered in the quantities named and at the ports specified.'

The same precautions are adopted with regard to ensuring that the bulk supplied shall be according to sample as obtain in the provision of the colza or rape-seed oil. The latter oil is about twice as costly as the paraffin, but it has an advantage over petroleum that renders it of great use in rock lighthouses. A lighthouse that would consume two gallons of colza in a given time would require twice as much paraffin, and so in lighthouses where storage-room is limited colza has an advantage.

The methods employed to utilise the light given out by the burning oil are two—the catoptric and the dioptric systems. The first named of these necessitates the use of a number of small lamps, each with a polished reflector behind it; while the latter employs one central lamp and an adaptation of lenses. Where gas is used in a lighthouse it has of course to be manufactured with the utmost carefulness; and the use of this illuminant at a shore station necessitates a very material increase of the lighthouse staff.

In the year 1865 Mr J. R. Wigham of Dublin introduced his patent gas burner at the Howth-Bailey Lighthouse, near Dublin. The burner consists of five concentric rings of gas jets, the innermost ring having 28, the next 48, then 68, 88, and the outermost 108, burners. The diameter of each ring was 4, 6½, 8½, 9½, and 11 inches. It is stated that the light from twenty-eight gas jets is equal to four wicks where oil is consumed. By manipulating the strength of the flame—that is, bringing more burners into play—the resulting light can be adjusted to suit the condition of the atmosphere. Fog, the most potent of atmospheric light-quenchers, is less able to extinguish the rays of gas-light than those emanating from any other source. It is sometimes urged in objection to gas as a lighthouse illuminant that it is impossible to direct *all* the light, that the well-known gas glare cannot be obviated even with the most perfect dioptric apparatus and its appurtenances. But this is hardly an important objection, after all. The zone of vague illumination, the result of the action of the ex-focal rays, serves to reveal in dense weather the whereabouts of the friendly lighthouse, although the optical opacity of the atmosphere may be such as to quench all the directed rays. The cost of lighthouse gas is said to average about ten shillings per thousand cubic feet. This is, of course, far above the cost of a similar quantity of coal-gas manufactured for domestic purposes. This is accounted for by the small quantity made at each station, and also by the best possible varieties of cannel coal being employed in the process. The relative intensities of this special coal-gas compared with the gas designed for domestic consumption is as thirty-five is to sixteen.

Professor Tyndall thus pronounces upon the merits of gas as a lighthouse illuminant: 'It may be beaten in point of cheapness by mineral oil;

but in point of handiness, distinctiveness, and power of variability to meet the changes of the weather, it will maintain its superiority over all oils.

With regard to the electric light much was expected. Its intensity was such that many asserted it would shine steadily and distinctly through all conditions of atmosphere. But such expectations have met with disappointment. Vivid it is, and searching it may be; but its utter inability to penetrate through a fog of any density, the stranding of the *Eider* well within the zone of St Catherine's electric light most wofully demonstrates. Here was a light which, under clear conditions of weather, shines with almost solar brilliancy, quite powerless to penetrate the layers of partially condensed aqueous vapour that lay between the lighthouse and the German liner. The electric light with its matchless intensity is doomed so far as its reputation as a lighthouse illuminant is concerned.

The Shipmasters' Society, whose members have to do with the practical side of lighthouse economics, thus wrote to Trinity House in March 1891: 'Many members of this Society on active service frequently passing from the Thames to sea, and *vice versa*, have often represented the poorness, sometimes invisibility, of the electric lights during certain conditions of hazy atmosphere, at times when the oil-lights of light-ships, &c., and the gas-lights of seaside towns have been comparatively bright and distinct. Again, complaints have been made of the intense and blinding effects produced on navigators by electric light such as the South Foreland on vessels in its immediate vicinity.' This is the opinion of those mainly concerned in the efficacy of our warning lights, whose very lives depend upon the vividness of the friendly rays emerging from the lantern-towers that line our coasts. This verdict is endorsed by nautical opinion in the United States, where those interested in the question of good lighting have requested that the electric lights be withdrawn.

The French lighthouse authorities are much dissatisfied also with the performance of the electric light as an electric illuminant. The electric arc has served to illumine many of their houses for many years; but the complaints of practical navigators have caused the French engineers of the Lighthouse Department to look out for a suitable substitute.

One service the electric light performs for the mariner in a truly noble manner is that of sky-flash-signals. A beam of light thrown into the upper sky is extremely useful to navigators in determining a ship's position before the true light itself is visible over the convexity of the earth. The value of such a light will be understood by all. Supposing a ship making for shore sights an overhead light, she is enabled to locate her position thereby. If bad weather were now to come on, she would be able to steer in confidence in the direction of the true light, and would come within its range, although, had she not been guided by seeing the overhead light ere the bad weather came on, she would have had to grope her way until well within the zone of the true light. In many conditions of weather, though, the vertical beam would not be of the slightest use, as may readily be imagined. St Catherine's

flash-light has been seen at a distance of forty-nine miles, while sky-flashes of the Hollman Light on the coast of Denmark have been discerned at a distance of fifty-one miles. Creech Point Light, Ushant, has been seen forty-one miles away; and the sky-flash from Calais has been seen thirty-six miles away.

Light is, however, not only thrown from some lighthouses upon the sky, but at many there are subsidiary beams which are used to throw light upon some danger-spot in the immediate vicinity of the lighthouse. Coloured lights are generally employed for this purpose. But their use is attended with so much loss of power, that it is but rarely that they are employed as first-class principal lights. Red is more frequently used than green, and the latter colour is not used as a *main* feature in any lighthouse. If a red beam of light is to produce the same effect at the same distance as a beam of white light, then the quantitative ratio of the lights that produce the beams must be as twenty-one is to nine, the extra amount of light being required for the red beam, to compensate for the light absorbed in passing through the red glass. The importance of the work achieved by these subsidiary beams is exemplified by the Coquet Island Lighthouse, off the coast of Northumberland. The surrounding sea is divided into eight irregular areas, each area being marked in a distinct manner: the main or seaward portion is of course the largest, having an illuminated arc of one hundred and eighty degrees. The other areas are of course much smaller in extent. Vertical strips of variously-coloured glass, through which the light is made to pass, illumine the different areas in a most marked manner, the diversity of characteristics being aided by a tower-light in the same tower twenty-eight feet below the main light.

We have already, in alluding to the introduction of gas into lighthouses, mentioned the work of Mr Wigham. Whatever debt he had laid the British nation under by his researches into the question of lighthouse illuminants will be materially increased by his latest contribution to the practically scientific side of the question. He has recently introduced to the world his 'Giant Lighthouse Lens,' which promises to advance the science of lighthouse illumination far beyond its present limits. In the year 1885 a step in the direction of large lenses was taken by the Commissioners of Irish Lights when they established at Mew Island Lighthouse, Belfast Lough, lenses four feet high by three feet seven inches in width, but still with the 920 millimetre focal distance. Experiments were afterwards made at South Foreland with large lenses; and Messrs Stevenson next obtained the sanction of the Board of Trade to the purchase of a larger lens than that of Mew Island for experimental purposes. The focal distance of this lens was 1330 millimetres. By Messrs Stevenson it was termed a hyper-radiant lens; and it was found, when used in conjunction with large burners, to have practically double the illuminating power of any lens previously made. Finality was now thought to be reached, and it was asserted that by the use of such lenses an amount of light would be obtained equal to that given by the superposition of a number of smaller lenses.

But Mr Wigham went farther, and urged upon the Irish Commissioners the advisability of still increasing the amount of light emitted from light-houses. Messrs Stevenson expressed the opinion that such lenses should be restricted to a single tier of glasses; and the Board of Trade also urged the Irish Commissioners that it was inexpedient to adopt any higher optical power with these lenses than the triform. Mr Wigham's recommendation, however, was acted upon. Not only was the feasibility of manufacturing a larger lens demonstrated, but the best method of adapting it was shown as well. This giant lens has a focal length of two metres. When this splendid triumph of lenticular art is set up in the quadrilateral system, each of the four faces of the apparatus measures ten feet wide by twenty-two and a half feet in height. The axial intensity of the 'giant' lens is eight hundred thousand candles; and when fully equipped, the emergent beam of light from the quadrilateral arrangement is calculated at five million candles. In making this computation, allowance has not been made for the fact that the peculiar spherical form of the lens will return to the flame the whole of the light reflected at the first refracting surface, so as to increase the amount of light emitted directly from the flame towards an opposite panel, which light in the case of an ordinary plane lens is wholly lost. The apparatus in question can easily be accommodated in a lantern of ordinary dimensions, as it is only fourteen and a half feet in diameter, thus requiring a lantern some three feet greater from side to side.

With such a lenticular arrangement as this and a powerful gas flame, the cry of the steamship companies for a light of great power on the Old Head of Kinsale will soon be granted. The fleets of vessels that then 'make' the south-west coast of Ireland, after crossing the Atlantic, will know that human skill and knowledge have provided them with a warning light as perfect and powerful as human ingenuity can devise. Moreover, the ex-focal light will be diffused to a greater extent than it was before; and although no lighthouse illuminant has yet been produced that can satisfactorily penetrate fog, yet this ex-focal light obtained as a useful quantity when gas is burnt, may be relied upon to illumine the fog to some extent, and so show the approximate position of the friendly lighthouse.

Concerning the electric light, it has been a subject of much controversy as to which nation first employed it as a lighthouse illuminant. On December 26, 1863, the South Lighthouse at Cape La Hève in France was lighted experimentally by electricity. But this was nearly two years after its permanent adoption in this country. So far back as 1857, experimental trials were made; and after burning at South Foreland during 1857, 1858, and 1859, it was agreed to replace the oil by electricity at the dangerous point of Dungeness, on the coast of Kent. Some difficulties of detail, however, had to be overcome; and it was not until February 1, 1862, that the electric light shone from the historical tower of Dungeness.

Since that date, the electric light has had a fair trial, and under certain conditions of atmosphere its powerful rays are found to be completely quenched. Now that all authorities are agreed

upon this point, it remains to be seen what impulse the failure of the electric light will give to the development of large lenticular surfaces, and how far coal-gas will be used as the illuminant of the future.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—ELSIE AND HER MOTHER.

'CAN you spare me a few minutes, mother?'

Mrs Arundel looked up from the desk where she was writing a letter, and saw her daughter standing before her. She started and changed colour, but quickly recovered, and replied coldly: 'I did not hear you come in, Elsie. What do you want with me?'

Outside, the bells were ringing for Church: it was a quarter to eleven: Mrs Arundel was already dressed for Church. She was one of those who do not see any incongruity between Church and a heart full of animosities. She was bitter against her daughter, and hard towards her son, and she hated her son-in-law elect with all the powers of her passionate nature. But, my brothers, what an array of bare benches should we see in every place of worship were those only admitted who came with hearts of charity and love!

'Do you wish to keep me long, Elsie? If so, we will sit down. If not, I am ready for Church, and I do not like to arrive late. People in our position should show a good example.'

'I do not think that I shall keep you very long. But if you sit down, you will be so much more comfortable.'

'Comfort, Elsie, you have driven out of this house.'

'I will bring it back with me, then. On Monday evening, mother, I am coming back.'

'Oh! What do you mean, child? Has the blow really fallen? I heard that it was impending. Is the young man—is he—a prisoner?'

'No, mother. You are quite mistaken. You have been mistaken all along. Yet I shall come back on Monday.'

'Alone, then?'

'I shall leave it to you whether I come back alone, or with the two men whom I most regard of all the world—my lover and my brother.'

'You know my opinions, Elsie. There has been no change in them. There can be none.'

'Wednesday is my wedding day.'

'I am not interested in that event, Elsie. After your wedding with such a man, against the opinions, the wishes, the commands of all whom you are bound to respect, I can only say that you are no longer my daughter.'

'Oh! How can you be so fixed in such a belief? Mother, let me make one more appeal to your better feelings. Throw off these suspicions. Believe me, they are baseless. There is not the shadow of a foundation for this ridiculous structure they have raised. Consider. It is now—how long?—three weeks since they brought this charge, and they have proved nothing—absolutely nothing. If you would only be brought to see

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on what false assumptions the whole thing rests !'

'On solid foundations—hard facts—I want no more.'

'If I could prove to you that Athelstan was in America until a month ago.'

'Unhappy girl! He is deceiving you. He has been living for eight years in profligacy near London. Elsie, do not waste my time. It should be enough for me that my son-in-law, Sir Samuel Dering, a man of the clearest head and widest experience, is convinced that it is impossible to draw any other conclusions.'

'It is enough for me,' Elsie rejoined, quickly, 'that my heart tells me that my brother and my lover cannot be such creatures.'

'You have something more to say, I suppose.' Mrs Arundel buttoned her gloves. The clock was now at five minutes before eleven.

'Yes. If it is no use at all trying to appeal to'—

'No use at all,' Mrs Arundel snapped. 'I am not disposed for sentimental nonsense.'

'I am sorry, because you will be sorry afterwards.—Well, then, I have come to tell you that I have made all the preparations, with George's assistance, for Wednesday.'

'Oh !'

'Yes. The wedding cake will be sent in on Tuesday. My own dress—white satin, of course, very beautiful—is finished and tried on. It will be sent in on Monday evening. The two bridesmaids' dresses will also come on Monday. George has arranged at the Church. He has ordered the carriages and the bouquets and has got the ring. The presents you have already in the house. We shall be married at three. There will be a little gathering of the cousins after the wedding, and you will give them a little simple dinner in the evening, which will, I daresay, end with a little dance. George has also seen to the red cloth for the steps and all that. Oh ! And on Tuesday evening you will give a big dinner party to everybody.'

'Are you gone quite mad, Elsie?'

'Not mad at all, my dear mother. It is Sir Samuel who is mad, and has driven you and Hilda mad. Oh ! everything will come off exactly as I tell you. Perhaps you don't believe it.'

'You are mad, Elsie. You are certainly mad.'

'No, my dear mother, I am not mad. Oh ! it is so absurd, if it were not so serious. But we are determined, George and I, not to make this absurdity the cause of lasting bitterness. Therefore, my dear mother, I do not want to be married from my brother's lodgings, but from your house. You will come to my wedding, I prophesy, full of love—full of love'—her eyes filled with tears—'for me and for George—and for Athelstan—full of love and of sorrow and of self-reproach. I am to be given away by my brother—you will come, I say, with a heart full of love and of pity for him.'

Mrs Arundel gazed at her stonily.

'Everybody will be there, and you will receive all your friends after the wedding. I have taken care of the invitations. Hilda will be there too, horribly ashamed of herself. It will be a lovely wedding ; and we shall go away with such good wishes from yourself as you would not in your

present state of mind believe possible.—Go now to Church, my dear mother, prepared for a happy and a joyful day.'

'I sometimes believe, Elsie,' said Mrs Arundel, more coldly still, 'that you have been deprived of your senses. So far from this, I shall not be present at your wedding. I will not interfere with your holding your marriage here, if you like ; you may fill the house with your friends, if you please. I shall myself take shelter with my more dutiful daughter. I refuse to meet my unhappy son : I will not be a consenting party to the tie which will entail a lifelong misery'—

'My dear mother—you will do everything exactly as I have prophesied.—Now, do not say any more, because it will only make our reconciliation a little more difficult. I ought to go to Church on the Sunday before my wedding, if any day in the week. If you would only recover your trust in my lover's honour, I could go to Church with you and kneel beside you. But without that trust— Oh ! go, my dear mother. You will find my prophecy come true, word for word—believe me or not.'

Mrs Arundel went to Church. During the service she felt strange prickings of foreboding and of compunction and of fear, anxiety, and hope, with a little sadness, caused by the communication and the assurances of her daughter. Even in such a case as this, the thinker of evil is sometimes depressed by the arrival of the prophet of good. When Mrs Arundel came away from Church, she became aware that she had not heard one single word of the sermon. Not that she wanted very much to hear the sermon, any more than the First or Second Lesson—all three being parts of the whole which every person of respectability must hear once a week. Only, it was disquieting to come away after half an hour's discourse with the feeling that she did not remember a single syllable of it. She took her early dinner with the other daughter, to whom she communicated Elsie's remarkable conduct, and her prediction and her invitation. It was decided between them that her brain was affected—no doubt, only for a time—and that it was not expedient for them to interfere ; that it was deplorable, but a part of what might have been expected ; and that time would show. Meanwhile, Sir Samuel reported that it had been resolved to get a warrant for the arrest of the man Edmund Gray, who hitherto had eluded all attempts to find him.

'He appears to be a real person,' the knight concluded—'an elderly man, whose character, so far as we can learn, is good. It is, however, significant that nothing has been discovered concerning his profession or calling. That is mysterious. For my own part, I like to know how a man earns his daily bread. I have even consulted a person connected with the Police. Nothing is known or suspected about him. But we shall see as soon as he is before the magistrate.'

'And Wednesday is so close ! Oh ! my dear Sir Samuel, hurry them up. Even at the last moment—even at the risk of a terrible scandal—if Elsie could be saved !'

'Well,' said Sir Samuel, 'it is curious—I don't understand it—we had arranged for the application for a warrant for Friday morning. Would you believe it ? That old donkey Checkley won't

go for it—wants it put off—says he thinks it will be of no use. What with this young man Austin at first, and this old man Checkley next, we seem in a conspiracy to defeat the ends of justice. But to-morrow I shall go myself to my brother. It is time this business was finished.'

'Yes—yes,' said Mrs Arundel. 'And my dear Sir Samuel, before Wednesday—let it be before Wednesday, I implore you, for all our sakes!'

'My dear Madam, it shall be to-morrow.'

At noon, Elsie returned to Half Moon Street, where George was waiting for her.

'I have made one more attempt,' she said, with tears; 'but it was useless. Her head is as hard about you as ever it was about Athelstan. It is wonderful that she should have so little faith. I suppose it comes of going into the City and trying to make money. Edmund Gray would say so. I would have told her all, but for the old man's sake. He knows nothing: he suspects nothing; and I want to make the case so complete that there shall be no doubt—none whatever—possible in the minds of the most suspicious. Even Checkley must be satisfied. I shall finish the work, I hope, this afternoon.—Oh! George—is it possible? Is our wedding day next Wednesday—actually next Wednesday? And the hateful cloud shall be blown away, and—and—'

For the rest of this Chapter look into the Book of Holy Kisses, where you will very likely find it.

CHAPTER XXXV.—PLENARY CONFESSION.

Early on Sunday afternoon Elsie started upon her mission. She was anxious, because she was entering upon a most important business, and one requiring the greatest delicacy in the handling. It was enough—more than enough—that her witnesses should be able, one after the other, to identify Mr Dering with Mr Edmund Gray: but how much more would her hands be strengthened if she could produce a full and complete narrative of the whole affair, written by the hand which had done it all! To get that narrative was her business with the Master that afternoon. But she was hopeful, partly because she knew her power over the philosopher; and partly because, like every woman who respects herself, she had always been accustomed to get exactly what she wanted, either by asking, coaxing, flattering, or taking.

The Master was waiting for her—one should never keep a Master waiting—and she was a little late: he was impatient: he had so much to talk about and to teach: one point suggested another in his mind: so much to say: he grudged the least delay: he walked about the room chafing because the hour appointed was already five minutes in the past: he would scold her: she must really learn to be punctual: they had only about five short hours before them for all he had to say. Was this the zeal of a student? But at that point she opened the door and ran in, breathless, smiling, eager, holding out both her hands, a dainty delicate maiden all his own—his disciple—his daughter—the daughter of the New Humanity—and he forgot his irritation, and took her hands in his and kissed her forehead. 'Child,' he sighed, 'you are late. But never

mind. You are here. Why, you have grown so precious to me that I cannot bear you to be a minute late. It is such a happiness—such a joy in the present—such a promise for the future—that I have such a disciple! Now sit down—take off your bonnet. I have put a chair for you at the window—and a table for you to write. Here is your note-book.—Now—you have thought over what I taught you last?—That is well. Let us resume at the point where we left off—the rise of the co-operative spirit, which is the rise of the New Humanity.'

He talked for two hours—two long eloquent hours: he walked about the room: or he stopped before his disciple emphasising with the forefinger of admonition—repeating—illustrating by anecdote and memory—he had a prodigious memory. The Scholar listened intelligently. Sometimes she asked a question: sometimes she made notes. You must not think that she was a sham Scholar: her interest in the Master's system was not simulated. Above all things, she loved to hear this enthusiast talk—who would not love to hear of the New Jerusalem? Always he made her heart to glow with the Vision that he conjured up before her eyes of a world where there should be no more sorrow nor crying nor any more pain, nor any of the former things. He made her actually see—what others only read of—the Four-square City itself with its gates open night and day, its jasper walls, and its twelve foundations of precious stones.—'Why,' he said, 'the gates are open night and day because there is no Property to defend; and the walls are of jasper because it is the most beautiful of minerals, and because it can be polished like a mirror, so that the country around is reflected on its surface, which shows that it all belongs to the City; and the precious stones are the twelve cardinal virtues of Humanity, on which the Order of the Future shall rest—namely, Faith, Brotherly Love, Obedience, Patience, Loyalty, Constancy, Chastity, Courage, Hope, Simplicity, Tenderness, and Industry. It is an allegory—the whole book is an allegory—of Humanity.' And she saw, beside the City, the river of life, with the tree of life for the healing of all nations.

Then she clean forgot the purpose for which she had come: she was carried away: her heart beat—her cheek glowed. Oh! Lovely Vision! Oh! Great and glorious Prophet! He made a Heaven, and placed it on this earth. Now the mind of man can conceive of no other happiness but that which humanity can make out of the actual materials found upon this earthly ball. The Heaven, even of the most spiritual, is a glorified world: the Hell, even of the most gentle, is a world of fleshly pain: no other Heaven attracts: no other Hell terrifies: there is no promise, or hope, or prospect, or inheritance that man desires or poet can feign or visionary can preach but an earthly Heaven: it must be a Heaven containing sunshine and shower, kindly fruits in due season, love and joy and music and art, and men and women who love each other and labour for each other. Such a world—such a New Jerusalem—the Master drew every day; he loved it, and lingered over it; he painted over and over again this splendid Vision. He was never tired of painting it, or his hearers of gazing upon it. But to-day, he spoke with greater fullness,

more clearly, more brilliantly, more joyously than ever. Was the Prophet really a man of seventy years and more? For his mind was young—the enthusiast, like the poet, never grows old. His voice might have been the voice of a boy—a marvellous boy—a Shelley—preaching the glories of the world when Property should be no more.

He ceased. And the Vision which he had raised quickly faded away. They were back again in the dingy old Inn: they were among the solicitors and the money-lenders and the young fellows who have their Chambers in the place. The Inn is about as far from the New Jerusalem as any place under the sun: it is made over bodily and belongs—every stair—every chamber—to the interests of Property.

He ceased his prophecy, and began to argue, to reason, to chop logic, which was not by any means so interesting. At last he stopped this as well. 'You have now, dear child,' he said, 'heard quite as much as you can profitably absorb. I have noticed for the last two or three minutes your eyes wandering and your attention wearied. Let us stop—only remember what I have just said about the diseases of the Body Politic. They are akin to those that affect the human body. By comparing the two we may learn not only cause, but also effect. We have our rheumatisms, gouts, asthmas, neuralgias, colds and coughs, fevers and other ills. So has the Body Politic. Whence come our diseases? From the ignorance, the follies, the vices, the greed and gluttony of our forefathers. So those of the Body Politic. Take away Property and you destroy greed. With that, half the diseases vanish.'

Elsie heard and inclined her head. It did occur to her that perhaps Property in the Body Politic might be represented by food in the Body Human, but she forbore. The Master was one who did not invite argument. Nearly all the great Teachers of the world, if you think of it, have conveyed their wisdom in maxims and aphorisms.

He took out his watch. 'It is nearly four,' he said. 'Shall we go on to the Hall?'

'Not yet. There is no need for us to be there before six. We have two good hours before us. Let us use them more pleasantly than in sitting alone in the Hall—you must own that it is stuffy. We will talk about other things—about ourselves—not about me, because I am quite an insignificant person, but about you, dear Master.' She was now about to enter upon her plan of duplicity. She felt horribly ashamed, but it had to be done. She strengthened herself: she resolved: she suppressed the voice of conscience.

'About me?' asked the Master. 'But what is there to talk about?'

'Oh! there is ever so much.' She took his right hand in her own and held it, knowing that this little caress pleased and moved him. 'Master—what a wonderful chance it was that brought me here! I can never sufficiently wonder at it. I have told George—George Austin—my lover, you know: and Athelstan—he is my brother.' She looked at him sharply, but there was no sign of recognition of those two names. Edmund Gray had never heard of either. 'I have told them about you and of your great work, and how you are teaching me and everything. But when they ask me who you are,

where you have lived, and all about you, I can tell them nothing. Oh! I know it matters nothing about me and my own friends; but, my dear Master, we have to think of the future. When the Cause has spread, and spread, and spread, till it covers the whole world, people will want to know all about the man who first preached its principles. Who will be able to tell them? No one. You are alone: you have no wife or children. Your name will remain for ever attached to the Cause itself. But you—you—the man—what will you be? Nothing. Nothing but a name. You ought to write an autobiography.'

'I have sometimes thought I would do so'—his face became troubled; 'but—but'—

'But you are always occupied with working for the world. You have no time, of course. I quite understand that; and it worries you—does it not?—to be called upon to turn your thoughts from the present back to the past.'

'Yes—yes; it does—it does. Elsie, you exactly express the difficulty.'

'And yet—you must own—you must confess—it is natural for the world to want to know all about you. Who was the great Edmund Gray? Why, they will want to know every particular—every single particular: where you were born—where you were educated—who were your masters—what led you to the study of Humanity and its problems—where you lived: if you were married and to whom—what you read—who were your friends. Oh! there is no end to the curiosity of the world about their great men.'

'Perhaps.' He rose and looked out of the window. When men are greatly pleased they must always be moving. 'I confess that I have never thought of these things at all. Yet, to be sure—you are right.' He murmured and purred.

'No, but I have thought of them, ever since I had the happiness of being received by you. Master, will you trust me? Shall I become your biographer? You cannot find one more loving. You have only to give me the materials. Now—let me ask you a few questions just for a beginning—just to show you the kind of thing I shall want to know.'

He laughed and sat down again. 'Why, my life has not got in it one single solitary incident, or episode, or adventure. There are no misfortunes in it. There is not such a thing as a disease in it. I have always been perfectly well. There is not even a love episode or a flirtation in it. There are not even any religious difficulties in it. Without love, ill-health, misfortune, religious doubts—where is the interest in the life, and what is there to tell?'

'Well, a life that has no incident in it must be the life of a student. It is only a student who never falls in love.'

'Or,' said the Philosopher, 'a money-getter.'

'Happily, there are not many students, or we women should be disconsolate indeed. Do you know, Master, that you can only be excused such a dreadful omission in your history by that one plea? Sit down again, Master,' for again he was walking about restlessly, partly disturbed by her questions, and partly flattered and pleased by her reasons. She opened her note-book and began to ask questions about himself—very simple

questions, such as would not introduce any disturbing points. He answered readily, and she observed with interest that he gave correctly the facts of his own—Edward Dering's—history.

He was born, he said, in that class which upholds Property—the Better Class—meaning the Richer. His father was a wealthy solicitor, who lived in Bedford Row. He was born in the year 1815—Waterloo year. He was the eldest of a family of five—three daughters and two sons. He was educated at Westminster. On leaving school, his father offered him the advantage of a University course, but he refused, being anxious to begin as early as possible his life's work—as he thought—in the defence of Property. He was therefore articled to his father; and at the age of twenty-two he passed his examination and was admitted.

'And then you were young—you were not yet a student—you went into society. You saw girls and danced with them. Yet you never fell in love, and were never married. How strange! I thought everybody wanted love. A man's real life only begins, I have always been taught, with love and marriage. Love means everything.'

'To you, my child, no doubt it does. Such as you are born for love,' he added gallantly. 'Venus herself smiles in your eyes and sits upon your lips. But as for me, I was always studious more or less, though I did not for long find out my true line. I worked hard—I went out very little. I was cold by nature, perhaps. I had no time to think about such things. Now, when it is too late, I regret the loss of the experience. Doubtless if I had that experience I should have gained greatly in the power of persuasion. I should have a much more potent influence over the women among my hearers. If I were a married man I should be much more in sympathy with them.'

'No—no—no.' Elsie hesitated a little. 'Perhaps women—especially the younger kind—get on better with unmarried men. However, you were not married.'

'At first, then, I was a solicitor with my father. Then—presently'—His face put on the troubled look again.

'You continued,' Elsie interrupted quickly, 'to work at your profession, though you took up other studies.'

'No—no—not quite that.'

'You began to take up Social problems, and gradually abandoned your profession.'

'No—no—not that either—quite.'

'You found you could not reconcile your conscience any longer to defending Property.'

'No—I forget exactly. It is strange that one should forget a thing so simple. I am growing old, I suppose.—Well—it matters not. I left the profession. That is the only important thing to remember. That I did so, these Chambers prove. I came out of it. Yes, that was it. Just at the moment, my head being full of other things, I cannot remember the exact time, or the manner of my leaving the profession. I forget the circumstances, probably because I attached so little importance to it. The real point is that I came out of it and gave myself up to these studies.'

She noted this important point carefully and looked up for more.

'There, my dear child, is my whole life for you.

Without an incident or an episode. I was born: I went to school: I became a solicitor: I gave up my profession: I studied social economy: I made my great discovery: I preached it. Then—did I say my life was without an episode and without love? No—no—I was wrong. My daughter—I have at last found love and a child—and a disciple. What more have I to ask?'

'My Master!' No daughter could be more in sympathy with him than this girl.

'It is all most valuable and interesting,' she said, 'though the facts are so few. Books will be written, in the future, on these facts, which will be filled out with conjecture and inference. Even the things that you think of so little importance will be made the subject of comment and criticism. Well—but my Biography of you will be the first and best and most important. I shall first make a skeleton life out of the facts, and then fill in the flesh and blood and put on the clothes, and present you, dear Master, just as you are.'

'Ask me what you will, but not too often. It worries me to remember the past. My dear, I am like a man who has made himself—who has risen from the gutter. He cannot deny the fact, but he doesn't like to be talking about it; and he is insulted if any one charges him with the fact or alludes to it in any way in his presence. That is my case exactly. I have made myself. I have raised myself from the gutter—the gutter of Property. I actually worked in defence of Property till I was sixty years old and more. Now I am rather ashamed of that fact. I do not deny it—you must put it into your Biography—but I do not like talking about it.'

'You were once a solicitor, and you are now a Prophet. What a leap! What a wonderful leap! I quite understand. Yet sometimes, now and then, for the sake of the curious impertinent world, look back and tell me what you see.'

'I suppose it is because I am so absorbed in my work that it is difficult for me to remember things. Why, Elsie, day after day, from morning to evening, I sit here at work. And in the evening I remember nothing of the flight of time. The hours strike, but I hear them not. Only the books on the table show what has been my occupation. And you want me to go back, not to yesterday, but ten, twenty, thirty years ago. My dear child, I cannot. Some of the past is clear to me—a day here and there I remember clearly—all my evenings at the Hall of Science: my lessons with you: those I remember. But to recall days passed in meditation and absorbing study is not possible. No—no—I cannot even try.'

He spoke with a little distress, as if the very thought of the necessary effort troubled him.

'Believe me, my dear Master,' said Elsie, 'I would not vex you. Only for some of the things which you do remember. For instance, the world always wants to know about the private fortunes of its great men. Your own affairs, you told me once, are in the hands of a—Mr—Mr—what is his name?'

'Dering—Dering. A very well known solicitor. His office is in New Square, Lincoln's Inn—he manages my money matters. I am, I believe, what the world calls wealthy.'

'That gives you independence and the power of working for Humanity, does it not?'

'It does,' said the Scourge and Destroyer

of Property, unconscious of the incongruity. 'Dering, my solicitor, is, I believe, a very honest man. Narrow in his views—wedded to the old school—quite unable to see the advance of the tide. But trustworthy. He belongs to a tribe which is indispensable so long as Property is suffered to exist.'

'Yes—only so long. Property and lawyers will go out hand in hand.'

'And magistrates,' he added with enthusiasm. 'And Courts of Justice and prisons. And criminals, because the chief incentive to crime will be destroyed. What a glorious world without a law, or a lawyer, or a policeman!'

'Mr Dering, is it? Why, my dear Master, I know something about Mr Dering. My brother Athelstan was articled to him. He became a managing clerk for him. Then there was trouble about a cheque. Something was wrong about it. He was unjustly blamed or suspected, and he left the House. I wonder, now, whether you could throw any light upon that business of the cheque?'

'I, my dear child? A single solitary cheque at a lawyer's office? How should I possibly know anything about it?'

'Oh! but you might remember this cheque, because, now I think of it, your own name was connected with it. Yes—it was. I am certain it was. The cheque was drawn in March in the year 1882—a cheque for seven hundred and twenty pounds, payable to your order—the order of Edmund Gray.'

'A cheque for seven hundred and twenty pounds? In March 1882? That must have been: yes—yes—that was about the time. Now, this is really most remarkable, child, most remarkable that you should actually hit upon a cheque—one of thousands issued from that office—which I should remember perfectly. Life is full of coincidences—one is always hearing odd things said, meeting faces which one knows.—Well, it is most remarkable, because I received a cheque for that very amount at that very time from Dering. Oh! I remember perfectly. It was when I had a scheme—I thought it then, being younger than I am now—a very good scheme indeed. It was intended for the gradual destruction of Property. I did not understand at that time so fully as I do now the rising of the tide and the direction of the current which is steadily advancing to overwhelm Property without any feeble efforts on my part. Yet my scheme was good so far as it went, and it might have been started with good effect, but for the apathy of the workers. You see, they were not educated up to it. I had already begun upon my scheme by advancing to certain working men sums which should make them independent of their employers until they should have produced enough to sell directly, without the aid of an employer, at their own co-operative stores. Unfortunately, most of them drank the money: the few who used it properly, instead of backing up their fellow-workmen, became themselves employers, and are now wealthy. Well, I thought I would extend this method. I thought that if I got together a chosen band—say, of seventy or so—and if, after teaching them and educating them a bit, I gave them, say, ten pounds apiece, to tide them over the first few weeks, that I

might next open a distributive and co-operative store for them, and so take the first step to abolishing the middle-man—the man of trade.'

'I see; and so you drew the money for that purpose?'

'Yes. But, as I told you, I was obliged to abandon my scheme. The men were not sufficiently advanced. They listened: they professed great willingness to receive the money; but they gave me no encouragement to hope that they would carry out my plan. So it fell through. And the men remain to this day with their employers. And so—you see—I never used the money. I remember that I had the cheque cashed in ten-pound notes for the purpose.'

'What became of the notes?'

'I don't know. They are in the Bank, I suppose—wandering about the world. I gave them back to Dering.'

'Oh! my dear Master'—Elsie sprang to her feet and laid a sheet of paper on the table—'this is most Providential! I cannot tell you what a dreadful cause of trouble this cheque has been to us. It has half ruined my brother's life. For Heaven's sake, write it all down for me. Quick! quick! before you forget it all.'

AUSTRALIAN SHARK TALES.

In a previous page of this *Journal* (p. 540), in an article on 'Australian Snake Yarns,' the writer referred shortly to the most common members of the snake family in Australia. In the present number I may be permitted to refer to the Sharks which frequent our coasts and harbours. We have plenty of fine fish here; and fishing is a pastime that is thoroughly enjoyed along our coastal towns. The shark is the pest of the fisherman. He eats the bait. He catches himself on the hook, and the fisherman has a hard and dirty fight to kill the shark and to remove the hook. He makes boating dangerous, and sea-bathing to be avoided, so far at least as the open sea is concerned. In offering this contribution, I do not pose as a naturalist. My knowledge of sharks is not greater than that of any newspaper reader. I have been informed that they are warm-blooded, with seven rows of erectile teeth, and that they are very voracious. I have heard that they will not eat a black man, but that they are particularly attentive to a white one if he happens to get into the water. What I wish my readers to understand is that I have a friend and neighbour who is by trade a diver. The following tales come directly from his lips to my ears. My friend the diver is passably educated, sober, hard-working, intelligent, and observant. His duties are varied and various. At one time he is engaged on a sunken ship; at another at a sunken rock. He may be deepening a channel, enlarging a harbour, or laying the foundation of a bridge. He may possibly be engaged in 'jumping' a hole in the solid rock, and then inserting a charge of dynamite. The dynamite is discharged by electricity, the diver having taken care in the meantime to remove himself sufficiently from the scene of action.

It is not necessary here to do more than to refer to the diver's dress. There are weights on the feet by which the diver can move about at the bottom; there is a helmet upon the head. The hands are bare, the sleeve of the dress being confined at the wrist by an elastic band. Air is pumped down from a boat on the surface, and the respired air escapes by a valve. The wages of my friend the diver are twenty shillings per day. This sum is probably larger than the wages of one who follows a similar occupation at 'home.' The reason of the difference is not hard to ascertain. In Australia, the reward of labour is higher generally, and the dangers of this particular profession are considerably greater than those attending divers around the coast of Great Britain and Ireland. First, in fancy at all events, among these dangers are those attributable to sharks. And here I draw upon the observation and address you in the language of my friend the diver:

Sharks are very common all along the coast of Australia. They become more numerous, larger, and more voracious the nearer we go to the equator. Passengers who make ocean voyages may often see them from the deck of their ship; but I see them in their native element. A day seldom passes when I am at work that I do not see some of these creatures. They do not seem to recognise a diver when clad in his diving dress as something which is good to eat. Probably he is mistaken for some other great sea-monster, with whom the shark would just as soon not measure his strength. At all events sharks rarely give us any active annoyance. At first, when we go into a new country, they exhibit some curiosity. They sometimes come and inspect us and our work, moving slowly around us without perceptible motion, and smelling at us like great dogs. It gives one a very horrible 'feeling of insecurity,' I assure you, when one of these monsters of twelve or fourteen feet long runs his nose around your body, and without even a solitary 'wag' of his tail to indicate good-fellowship. The shark will swim away right enough when he has finished his inspection—at least, he always has done so with me—and although annoying, I can stand it now. Sometimes, when you go down of a morning, you will find half-a-dozen big and little sharks who have evidently selected the site of your operations as a camping-ground. This is awkward. Perhaps they have observed the disturbance at the bottom of the sea, and like marine constables they 'are waiting for the fellow who made it, to run him in.' This is an awkward experience, for these sharks do not clear off and admit your claim. They say all animals have a fear of man; but sharks cannot recognise a man in a diver's costume. They neither oppose nor assist us in our operations; they simply ignore us. We have to be very careful, then, walking round about these lazy pigs without disturbing them. I have occasionally used a small crowbar as a weapon, and struck a small shark on the nose when he was annoying me with his persistency. The shark will then turn and go off with a rush. I would not, however, like to try my crowbar on a shark ten feet long.

After his rush away, he might return for further investigation.

I have had many nasty adventures with sharks when pursuing my occupation; I recollect one that gave me a considerable shock. I had been engaged blowing up a reef of rocks so as to enlarge a little harbour on the coast. It was my duty to make the hole and put in the charge of dynamite. The charge was exploded in the evening after we left off work. On going down every morning I was accustomed to go over to a certain ledge which was always a good resting-place for lobsters. Morning after morning I had invariably found a pair or more of these crustaceans, which I sent to the surface in a basket. On the morning to which I now refer, I walked straight to the ledge and ran my hand carefully along its lower side. I was surprised to find my hand scraping what I took to be the rock; but I was surprised still more when I observed my hand groping within a foot of the mouth of a great shark which had retired to rest in this cavity. The shark must have been as much alarmed as I was, for it made one spring from its resting-place and disappeared in the dark wall of ocean. The shock to me was greater than I could have believed, and even yet I do not care to think about it much. It is hardly necessary to say that I did not return to that ledge for lobsters for some time.

On another occasion, a big fellow came alongside me where I was working. I stopped, of course, and stepped back quietly to let him pass. But he did not. He came nearer. I then thought he was curious, but soon found that another feeling than curiosity was moving him. As I retreated he still advanced, until I found myself jammed up against the rock. I could retreat no farther, and yet the brute came on determinedly. But instead of approaching me with his long nose—for you don't see his jaws—he turned his side and began to rub up against me. I had a small 'jumper' in my hand, which I held with the point outwards against his skin, as I did not wish to have his rough skin scoring along my dress. It was something like what a cow would be rubbing against you. The iron on his skin was, however, the very thing he wanted, as he soon gave me to understand. I was kept there at least half an hour scratching that monster with the sharp iron. He took it like a pig, bending his body and turning over on his side so as to present a fresh surface to the jumper. I suppose he must have felt easier for the operation, for after a time he moved away. I had one or two further visits from him on following days, on each of which I was obliged to scratch him for a time. I think he must have recognised me as a kindly and effectual scratcher. I imagine he was suffering from some parasitical or skin disease, to which he may have fallen a victim. Otherwise, I might be in that scratching billet still.

One of the boys who worked in the boat once inserted a charge of dynamite in a sheep's head; the charge was of course attached to the battery by wire. After we had 'knocked off,' he threw in the sheep's head. In about ten seconds the head was 'taken in' by a small shark. In ten seconds more there was an explosion, and fragments of shark were abundant. In certainly less

than a minute afterwards the sea was almost alive with sharks contending for a relic of their deceased kins-shark. This experience was, however, obtained from the surface, and what I pride myself most on is that I see these creatures from below.

I remember once I had the good fortune to see a battle between a pair of sharks, although at the time I did not by any means think the fortune 'good.' It happened in this way. I was 'down' at the wreck of a ketch off the Illawarra Coast, in New South Wales. The boat was above me, as usual, keeping me supplied with air. I remember I was working with a crowbar, prising asunder the timbers of the broken vessel, which had sunk in such a position that it menaced vessels passing in and out of the harbour. All of a sudden something fell into the water above me. I did not know what it was at the time, but I learned afterwards that it was a waistcoat belonging to one of the men. It is wonderful when you are down in the water how plainly you can see anything above you—I mean in the water. You are covered with light upwards, and anything dark catches the eye. Even a comparatively small fish makes a shadow which will attract attention. I saw the waistcoat almost as soon as it had touched the water. Quick as lightning, three or four sharks converged in towards that waistcoat. I hadn't been thinking of them, and did not believe there was a shark within a mile of me. I was staggered for a second. At one moment there was no sign of them; at the next, the sea seemed to be alive with these hideous creatures, curling and twisting above my head in the clear water. The pocket of the waistcoat contained a big silver watch, and this helped to sink the garment. However, before it had been well wetted, a big fellow of nine or ten feet long turned over and took in the waistcoat and the watch. He then sunk leisurely to the bottom and lay quietly, looking upwards. There was no chewing; waistcoat and watch were alike bolted. Then I thought the adventure was over, and I was about to resume my work. But I was destined to see more. I observed that two of the other and smaller sharks had suddenly engaged in combat. They rolled, they worried, they dodged. Sometimes they were above me in the water; at other times they had descended till on a level with my head. There was no sound that I could hear; there was no disturbance in the water that I could perceive. Encased as I was in my diving dress, I would not have expected either to have heard sounds or felt vibration. Still the contest was terrific. The rolling of the animals in the still water was frightsome. In the conflict they moved farther and farther away from the place where I stood, until they disappeared in the great opaque wall of water which marks the horizon of the diver. As to the rest I can only conjecture. I presume one of them was killed, for I noticed the big fellow who had swallowed the waistcoat, and several other sharks, slide over in the direction which the combatants had taken. They had gone, I hoped, to pay their last respects to one of their friends—perhaps to bury him in their capacious maws.

My friend the diver related many other tales, and imparted to me many curious circumstances

of his life under the sea, to which at some other period I may be permitted to refer. Enough has been said to give us a glimpse of shark-life which it is not permitted for every man to see.

THE DECK HAND.

BY CHARLES KING.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

It was a feature of Herringbourne that the people always wanted something to lean against. As individuals they leant against walls; as a community they were held up by the Church, the Brewery, and Hurley's Fleet. When the Church had done its 'teas' and the Brewery its malting, the Fleet was a strong supporter.

On a November afternoon, when the branches of the trees on the quay were black and bare, the water in the harbour a mud colour, and the blocks on the rigging of the moored ships stood out like warts against a cold gray sky, Genth Hurley, the Fleet owner, was doing what all owners do—he was paying a smack's crew their poundage. The smack had just come up, and the crew, in duffels, guernseys, and sou'-westers, were scattered about the office. They were a stalwart set of men, with basin-cropped heads and shaved necks. Some had brought their shifting bags ashore, and, with the cheerful ease of men who had not washed for eight weeks, sat on the tops of them. One big fellow, seated thus, nursed on his sea-boots a boy so small and black that he looked as if he had just dropped down a flue. He was the cook.

'Well, skipper,' said Genth, as he put first one and then another little pile of money on his desk, 'what sort of weather have you had?'

'Well, owner,' said the skipper, who was feeling about his head for a chew of tobacco, which he had dabbed at his sou'-wester and lost in his hair. 'I'll speak the truth. It wos b'isterus. A tree reeved sail an' the little jib nearly all the time, an' mount'ins o' sea on the Dogger. Also a most unfortunate sarcumstance: a comin' home, poor Billy Dabbs nearly had his bows stove in with the mainsail bume.'

'I see,' said Genth, 'you are a man short. I'm sorry about poor Billy. Perhaps one of you will take him his poundage? You'll have to ship another man, Holmes.—Here's your money, my lads.'

He laid the last little pile of money on his desk. One by one the crew claimed their own. When all were paid, and the sound of the last pair of sea-boots had died on the pavement, Genth started to put the books right. He was about eight-and-twenty, with dark hair, dark eyes, and a plain earnest face. Before he had finished, the soft illumination of the setting sun had tinted the muddy water that eddied against the bridge. When the red-tiled roofs on the opposite side were a glowing orange he heard a knock. 'Come in!' he cried.

The invitation met no prompt response. There was a fumble with the handle, a fatiguing wiping of feet on the flags, then as if by electricity the door flew open.

'Well?' said Genth. 'What is it?'

'I have come,' said the visitor, 'about a berth—on a smack.'

'It's no use coming to me, my man,' said Hurley. 'You must go to the skippers. I don't ship any one.'

'The skippers,' said the other; 'why, they'd laugh at me. I don't believe they'd have me for ballast. Yet they'd have given something for a nod from me once. I had no need then to come like a beggar to the Fleet—not I. You know that, Hurley.'

For the first time Genth looked up. His pen dropped from his fingers and made a great blot on the neatly ruled page. 'Tom Harrington!' he exclaimed.

'All that is left of him,' said the arrival with a smile, that seemed to court some sort of praise for the remains: 'rather shady, down at the heel, pockets empty, shorn of his splendour, but Tom Harrington still.'

Genth surmised as much. Tom Harrington was the son of a Herringbourne solicitor. The old lawyer had worked hard to save money; his son, to spend it. In three or four years Tom Harrington had spent the accumulations of thirty or forty. Yet he had been more fortunate than Genth Hurley, for he had won from Genth the woman he loved. As Genth looked at Harrington, the change in the latter startled him. There still existed the cut of the man, trimness, jauntiness. His hands were still small and white, his face handsome. But the fire in the shifty blue eyes burnt low; they were encircled by dark hollow rims, and the full red lips were a shade blue and tremulous. He was Genth's age, but looked older. He had lost a lot of health in the shearing process.

'I was told,' said Hurley, 'you were going the pace. But I never thought it was so bad as this. I'm sorry'—

'Don't—don't preach; I get enough of that at home.'

Genth's dark eyes unconsciously hardened. 'How were you brought to this?' he asked.

'Cs and Bs—Cards and Billiards, and, incidentally, Bs and Ss. In my time I have backed many horses. If they'd won I shouldn't have been here. Understand, I'm not the only one—plenty have been broke besides me. In gentlemanly games, too. All of us love sport. It is the backbone of England. I can't see it's my fault; it's the old man's.'

Genth looked at him inquiringly.

'If the old man didn't mean me to live like a gentleman, why did he make a gentleman of me? Why did he send me to a tip-top school, give me first-class ideas, and then die and not leave me enough money to develop these first-class ideas? That puzzles me. Now, if I hadn't been a soft fool; if I had married a woman who had got a bit'—

Genth's eyes grew harder. He picked up his pen and slowly drew a sheet of blotting paper over the ink-blot. 'How is your wife?' he said abruptly.

'Oh, Nell is all right. She takes in a bit of dress-making and millinery. She was always a handy girl with her fingers. But somehow trade has fallen off with her; so I'm forced to do something.—Oh, you needn't look at me like that! I have tried before. I tried once for a place as billiard-marker; but some other fellow got there before me, and I had all the trouble for nothing. But when it comes to your last loaf'—

'My good!'—

'It's time to wake up; so I thought of the Fleet. When there is nothing else doing, every one thinks of the Fleet; and if you have a berth ready for me to jump into, why, I'm your man.' He had suddenly set more than a ballast value on himself. It showed that Harrington was still mercurial.

'Well,' said Genth, 'a vessel came in this afternoon, the *Comet*. One of the men, a deck hand, was injured by the boom. You can go in her, if you like.'

Harrington looked by no means elated. It was evident that one of the last things he expected was to be taken at his word. He had hoped for something better; an easier job, perhaps a loan. 'I'm sure,' he said, 'I don't know whether I'm strong enough. I could try it.'

'You could,' said Genth grimly. 'If you give this note to John Holmes, the skipper of the *Comet*, he'll take you.'

'Thankee,' said Harrington, but by no means gracefully. Then he stood a moment, fidgeted, and coughed.

'Yes,' said Genth, who easily read these tokens, 'I'll advance you a month's pay. Here is half; the rest I'll send to your wife. If she wants more while you are at sea, she shall have it.'

'Why can't I take the lot?' asked Harrington querulously. 'Can't you trust me?'

'I'm afraid not.'

'Good-afternoon,' said the budding smacksman, and he turned on his heel.

'Stop a minute,' said Genth. 'Take the money. I thought you might be tempted.—And now listen, Tom. If you do go, I wish you luck. Make one trip, and directly your foot again touches Herringbourne quay, I will find you something better. Here is my hand on it.'

The angry flush on Harrington's face died away; the shifty look in his eyes vanished, and his form suddenly straightened—for a time only. Then the old expression came back, his shoulders drooped, and muttering something, he shambled out. When he was gone, Genth restlessly paced the office. His successful rival had come to this! He thought of a little house on a hill and a garden overlooking the sea, where old Ned Hall, the retired master of a floating light, had eked out his pension and his life. And sweet Nelly Hall of the laughing blue eyes and chestnut hair! Were those eyes now dim, the cheeks careworn, the fingers?—With a sigh he closed his books, put the key in the office-door, and paler than usual, stepped out upon the pavement.

PROVERBS IN CHAUCER.

Is it not Lord Chesterfield who declares that it is an indication of low breeding for one to cite proverbs or familiar sayings? Nothing could be farther from the truth. Many a proverb, as old perhaps as intelligent mankind, and known alike to Greek and barbarian, Jew and Gentile, contains more wisdom or wit than may be found in the whole series of the over-estimated Chesterfield Letters. There is a directness in proverbs and apothegms which is admirably calculated to carry conviction to the most ordinary mind, while elaborate disquisitions usually fall flat and

are disregarded. In order that they should be readily retained in the memory, they are frequently alliterative or in the form of jingling rhyme, as, for example, in the proverbs, 'Wilful waste makes woful want,' and

'Great cry and little woo','

As the sutor said when he scrapit the soo.

Sometimes they have had their source in fables or popular tales, as in the saying of 'Dog in the manger' and 'Who will bell the cat?' One of the most entertaining features of the ever-fresh romance of *Don Quixote* is honest Sancho's happy use of the proverbs for which his country is pre-eminent. Chaucer, the Father of English poetry—who was certainly a well-bred gentleman—was very partial to proverbs, and employs them very freely in all his writings; and Mr Willibald Haeckel, of Leipzig, has recently published his 'inaugural dissertation' on the proverbs cited by Chaucer, which he wrote as a candidate for the degree of Ph.D. from the university of Erlangen. Mr Haeckel treats the proverbs under thirteen headings, such as, 'Love and Friendship,' 'Fortune and Misfortune,' 'Poverty and Riches'; and his references to corresponding sayings in different countries are fairly representative, though he seems to have confined himself to European gnomologists. He might with great advantage have extended his researches to collections of Asiatic proverbs, such as Gentius's translations of the aphorisms of Sa'di, the illustrious Persian poet and philosopher (thirteenth century); the fourteenth chapter of Sir William Jones's admirable Commentaries on Asiatic Poetry, where the several Persian gnomologists are enumerated and many beautiful sentences are cited; the learned Burckhardt's Arabic proverbs; and a number of other works.

But even well-known European collections of proverbs have been passed over: the *Havarnaal*, ascribed by the *Edda* to Odin; Howell's *Paræmiographia*, the oldest English assemblage, which, however, has been popularly superseded by Ray's Proverbs, first printed in 1672, which is a somewhat fuller though not a very choice collection; Bland's rendering of the *Adagia* of Erasmus (1814), illustrated by examples from the Spanish, Italian, French, and English languages.

Two things will probably surprise any ordinary person who may chance to read this brochure—namely, the number of proverbs current at the present day which were also in vogue in the days of Chaucer, and the identity of the familiar sayings of all European peoples. Thus, our proverb, 'Many men, many minds,' is cited by Chaucer, 'As many hedes, as many wittes been' (*Squire's Tale*); 'A boaster and a liar are cousins-german' is thus expressed in *Troilus*: 'A vauntour and a lyar, al is oone'; 'Every Jack will have his Jill' (or, 'Like draws to like');

Ne noon so gray a goos goth in the lake,

As sayest thou wol be withouten a make [mate].

Prol. to Wife of Bath's Tale.

Not infrequently our poet cites the same proverb in different poems, as in the case of 'The more haste, the less speed,' which is thus variously expressed:

The proverb saith, in wikked haste is no profyt.

Tale of Melibæus.

Wikked haste doth no profyt.—*Parson's Tale.*

Hastif man ne wanteth nevere care.—*Troilus.*

Mr Haeckel strangely omits the Latin proverb, 'Festina lente,' in connection with 'He hastith wele that wisly can abyde' (*Mel.*), which reappears in *Troilus*. Our familiar saw that 'There are as good fish in the sea as ever came out of it' was in Chaucer's time, 'There ben moo [more] sterres, God wot, than a paire' (*Parl. of Foules*); while 'Every man knows best where his own shoe pinches' is in the *Merchant's Tale*, 'I woot best wher wryngeth me my scho.' The Latin proverb, 'Bis dat qui cito dat,' is in *Prol. to Legend*:

Whoso yeveth a yifte, or dooth a grace,

Do it bytime, his thank ys wel the more.

One of Chaucer's finest passages, the first line of which Mr Haeckel cites as a proverb, with little justification,

Love wil not ben constreyned by maystrie;

Whan maystrie commith, the god of love anon

Beteth his winges, and farewel, he is gone—

Franklin's Tale,

has been boldly stolen—'convey, the wise it call'—by no less a poet than Edmund Spenser (*Faerie Queene*):

Ne may love ben compeld by maistry;

For soone as maistry comes, sweet Love anon

Taketh his nimble winges, and farewel, away is gone.

Following either Spenser or Chaucer, the witty author of *Hudibras* has thus amplified the thought:

Love, that's too generous t' abide

To be against its nature tied;

For where 'tis of itself inclined

It breaks out when it is confined,

And, like the soul, its harbourer,

Debarred the freedom of the air,

Disdains against its will to stay,

But struggles out and flies away.

The plagiarisms of Pope are by no means few; but he was generally careful to lay obsolete or obscure poets under contribution. This is how he has filched from Chaucer:

Love, free as air, at sight of human ties,

Spreads his light wings and in a moment flies.

The proverb, or truism, that 'Fortune is changeable' (*Knight's Tale*) Mr Haeckel parallels from Hazlitt's collection: 'Fortune is variant, ever turning her wheel;' and 'Women, wind, and fortune are ever changing,' from Le Roux, Kadler, and many other gnomologists. The unfortunate King James I. of Scotland has a fine passage on the mutability of Fortune in his *King's Quair* (or Book):

For sothe it is, that, on her tolter quhele,

Every wight cleverith in his stage,

And failyng foting oft quhen her lest lele,

Sum up, sum down, is non estate nor age

Ensured more the Prynce than the page;

So uncouthly her wurdres [destinies] she divideth,

Namely in youth, that seildun ought provideth.

In the old play of *The Triumph of Honour* we read that

She but jests with man as in mischance,

Abhors all courtesy, flouting him still

With some small touch of good, or seeming good,

Midst of his mischief; which vicissitude

Makes him straight doff his armour and his fence

He had prepared before to break her strokes.

And Defoe, in a scathing letter to Lord Haversham: 'Fate makes footballs of men; kicks some up-stairs and some down; some are advanced without honour, others suppressed without

infamy; some are raised without merit, some crushed without crime; and no man knows by the beginning of things whether his course shall issue in a peerage or a pillory.'

The anonymous author of the oldest extant Hindu drama, *Mrichichati*, anticipated Defoe by more than two thousand years:

Fate views the world

A scene of mutual and perpetual struggle,
And sports with life as if it were a wheel
That draws the limpid water from the well.
For some are raised to affluence, some depressed
In want, and some are borne awhile aloft,
And some hurled down to wretchedness and woe.

Again: 'O Fate! thou sportest with the fortunes of mankind like drops of water trembling on the lotus leaf.'

The twenty-first proverb cited by Mr Haeckel, from *Troilus*—

It is seyde men maketh oft a yerd [a staff]
With which the maker is hymself ybeten—

may be compared with 'He who diggeth a pit for another may fall into it himself;' while Nos. 22 and 22a, 'Joy aftir woo, and woo aftir gladnesse' (*Knight's Tale*), and 'Aftir woo, I rede us to be mery' (*Ibid.*), have parallels in most countries, and recall the comforting scriptural passage (Ps. xxx. 5), 'Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.'

In the section on Poverty and Riches we have this saw (*Man of Law's Tale*):

If thou be pore, thy brother hateth thee,
And alle thy frendes fleeth fro thee.

So, too, saith the Persian proverb, 'A man without money is fatherless;' and again, 'The sun never shines auspiciously on the man without money.' And with reference to the quest of riches, we have the saying, so characteristic of Chaucer's time, when falconry was the all-engrossing pastime: 'With empty hond men may noon hawkes lure' (*Prol. Wife of Bath's Tale*), which is exactly paralleled in Erasmus's *Praise of Folly*: 'Vacuis manibus non facile falcones revocantur.' The Spaniards have the analogous proverb, 'He that would gain the wealth of the Indies must take with him the wealth of the Indies.' And Samuel Rowley, in his quaint tract, *The Search for Money* (1609), says: 'Think ye to catch fish with an unbaited hook, or take a whale with a purse-net? Then may ye return with a bare hook and an empty purse.'

Our poet often cites the proverbs ascribed to the sage Hebrew king, as in the *Tale of Melibeus*: 'Solomon saith, that al thinges obeyen to money;' which has its very echo in Shakespeare: 'If money go before, all ways do lie open;' and L'Estrange says: 'Money does all things; for it gives and it takes away, it makes honest men and knaves, fools and philosophers, and so forward, *mutatis mutandis*, to the end of the chapter.' A Persian writer, Nakhshabi (c. 1326), calls money 'the traveller who understands all languages.' And Aristophanes divertingly hits off the interested respect paid to the possessors of wealth:

Why, what a plague friends are on these occasions!
One hatches them in swarms when one gets money.
They nudge my sides and pat me on the back,
And smother me with tokens of affection;
Men bow to me I never saw before,

And all the pompous dawdlers in the square
Find me the very centre of attraction.

The apostle Paul's dictum that 'the love of money is the root of all evil' is cited by Chaucer in the Prologue to the *Pardoner's Tale*, in *Melibeus*, and in the *Parson's Tale*. Sa'di says: 'Covetousness sews up the eyes of cunning, and brings both bird and fish into the net.' The well-worn saw, that 'The fool's bolt is soon shot,' thus finds expression in the *Romance of the Rose*:

Every wise man, out of drede,
Can kepe his tunge til he se nede;
And fooles can not holde her [their] tunge;
A fooles belle is soone runge.

Another proverb cited by our poet, 'A fool may ek a wyse man oftē gyde' (*Troilus*), recalls the lines in the fine old ballad of King John and the Abbot of Canterbury:

Now cheer up, Sir Abbot; did you never hear yet
That a fool he may learn a wise man wit?

And there is a corresponding saw, 'A knave may help an honest man.'

We have seen that undue haste is condemned by the proverbial lore of most countries; but it does not appear that Chaucer employs any saying directly in favour of patience, a virtue which Oriental sages are never weary of recommending. The Persians have a pretty proverb, 'Patience is bitter, but it bears sweet fruit;' and the Turks, 'Mid bitter sorrows patience show, for 'tis the key of gladness.' Our poet makes use of the saw, 'To make a virtue of necessity,' in the *Knight's Tale*, the *Squire's Tale*, and *Troilus*. It is also used by Rabelais, Shakespeare (*Two Gentlemen of Verona*), and Dryden (*Palamon and Arcite*).

The virtue of contentment has been a favourite theme of philosophers in all ages. Chaucer has (*Romance of the Rose*):

Suffisaunce alle oonly
Makith man to lyve richely,

which has its parallels in Le Roux: 'Car suffisance fait richesse, et convoitise fait povresse,' and 'Contentement passe richesse.' Selman, a Persian sage, says: 'I asked an experienced elder who had profited by his knowledge of the world, "What course should I pursue to obtain prosperity?" He replied: "Contentment—if you are able, practise contentment."'

THE TOUCH OF PAIN.

SPRING laughs for gladness of her buds upcured,
Her myriad songs and hues and odours rare,
And, faint for utter bliss, Summer's noon air
Lies hushed; the loud winds in their dances whirled
Shout Autumn's glee, until the force far-hurled
Of Winter's keen delight over the bare
And bending forests flies; all seasons share
The joy that wells from out the heart o' the world.

So dream young souls, unsmitten of sharp years,
Till in the way uprises One, and lays
The magic of his touch on eyes and ears,
And Spring laments, and Summer swoons to dying,
And wailing Autumn leads where Winter frays
The heaven and shakes the earth with frenzied
crying.

B. M. F.

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ON SILENCE.

MUCH has been written and said of the advantages of golden Silence over silver speech; and people break silence continually to recommend that it should remain unbroken, which is as though one should demonstrate the advantages of darkness by showing a light. In fact, silence has so many sides to it—it is now admirable, now detestable, now useful, and now criminal—sometimes awful, and sometimes ridiculous—that we dare not commend it unconditionally. At any rate, we are not struck dumb with admiration of it. The eloquent silence of innocence suffering under unmerited reproach and persecution is indeed beautiful. Admirable is the modest silence of youth listening to the teachings of wise old age; and silence is the fullest answer to questions that are either impertinent or unanswerable.

The stillness—as of a silence that may be felt—of a starlit sky on a frosty night, or of a pine-bordered lake at sunset, when ‘not a breath creeps through the rosy air’—such a silence, if not in itself beautiful, at least enhances in a high degree the loveliness existent in the scene; just as the power and sweetness of music—such as the song of a nightingale, for instance—are heightened by the silent darkness of a summer night. Yet the same silence brooding over a desert is gloomy and dismal; and if there be cause to fear an enemy shrouded in the silence, it becomes more than desolate—terrifying.

Silence is nearly always useful when work is going on; it is a great fellow-worker: bees buzz in their hives, but are silent in the bosoms of flowers, where their harvest is richest. How solemn is the silence, when the last bell ceases on a Sunday morning, to the listening shepherd far away on the hill-side! How peaceful the silence when Friends sit in silent meditation, and no one is moved to utter even good words, and all are communing with their own hearts and are still. How treacherous is silence when we allow a neighbour to approach, unwarned, a

danger perceptible to us but not to him. How shameful is it when we keep it unbroken, listening to his calumniators when they bring forward an accusation we know to be groundless!

Although we have said silence is useful to the worker, as every check takes something from his power either of concentrated attention or execution, still it must be owned that errors in thought and workmanship are sometimes avoided by work being talked about. Most wild doctrines have been hatched in silence and solitude: had they been discussed, they would probably have never been brought before the world. And although silent thought should precede words and actions—for without it they are as leaves and blossoms without root—still it is not good to be all root, and allow no one but ourselves to profit by our meditations. It is not merely that silence bestows no wisdom on its fellows; it has not perhaps any superfluity to dispense; but a silence that is occupied with preserving itself, its own ease, safety, and dignity—granting that it does all this—must yet always want the sacred splendour of beneficence. For though we may have no wisdom to bestow, we have all of us at least kindness and courtesy at our command. Half the world does not know their own strength, their power to give good cheer and sympathy, simply because they have never tried it. And yet the next best way of breaking silence—after praising our Maker—is by comforting our neighbour, not as Job’s neighbours comforted him, however, by exhortations, ‘lengthened, sage advices,’ following on a seven days’ silence.

And if silence occasionally confirms us in errors of thought and workmanship, how dangerous are some of its immediate children; for it breeds misconception, misunderstanding, jealousy, distrust, envy. How many hearts have ached in a silence, which, broken by a few kind, hearty, generous words, would have glowed with happiness and gratitude; how many lives have been clouded by the proud or cowardly silence which, dispelled by a candid acknowledgment of mistake or misconduct, would have left them bright and

contented. Of all the penalties the solitary mind pays for its silence, sure the deepest and bitterest, the most lasting, because most unavailing, is the too late conviction that silence has been preserved at the expense of justice, at the cost of happiness to others or to ourselves. Mischievous as are sour and unkind words, appallingly tedious as are trite and inept observations 'leading nowhere,' we doubt if they are so mischievous or so tedious as a stony or contemptuous or mocking silence. If the tongue is a fire which has kindled war and misery time out of mind, it is also a generous flame that has lighted a living spark of fiery courage, lofty self-denial, unswerving devotion in the souls of the whole human race!

A philosophical writer has observed that men often treat their dogs with greater kindness than their womankind; and supposes they do so because the former do not bore their masters with advice, reproach, or expostulations, as the latter too frequently do. It may be so; yet we cannot help thinking this reflects on the judgment of the selector of the said womankind, who has, unfortunately for himself, chosen one not wise enough to be aware that discretion in speech is worth more than eloquence.

Some minds run in such grooves—unhappily for their friends, not silent ones—that no sooner is a subject introduced than the whole home circle knows what to expect. The inevitable anecdote, the unfailing reflection, the threadbare morality, are dragged in by the head and shoulders, like Mrs Wickham's sister's Betsey-Jane, quenching all talk save its own bald disjointed chat, and leaving the listeners sighing for a golden silence; for, observe, it is always other people's silence that is sighed for. It is a truism that many folks gain and maintain a reputation for wisdom by saying and doing little or nothing with overpowering solemnity. They call themselves 'serious-minded;' in their presence, quips and cranks die away like flowers in frost; they cannot distinguish between bitterness and salt, and so are continually taking offence where none was meant. A joke, to them, unless it is thoroughly time-honoured, is execrating; it has not got the stamp of authority; it is not current coin; they will none of it; and a pun is worthy of penal punishment. Silence is their Moloch, to which their children, friends, and servants are daily sacrificed. By remaining silent sometimes about what they know, they are enabled to take credit for a great deal of which they are ignorant. If they by chance get hold of an idea, they treat it as careless or wicked nurses do their bantling charges—smother it in silence. They account all suspicions true, yet bridle them as false, and feed on them, rather than question of them with those who could and would dispel their dismal doubts. Every question has its two sides, yet they are content silently to know their own only. That Plato's dialogues were cast in that form in order the better to sift their subject, teaches them nothing. They will never so winnow their notions. Try to get at their opinions, and straightway, with a pride that apes humility, they will take refuge in the vaunted poverty of their endowments. They are not clever, they say, with an air and emphasis which clearly proclaims that they could be if they chose, but they hope they know better.

Contrasted with this self-imposed and affected silence, how tranquil is the soothing stillness of a library! Here our friends upon the shelves, upon whom we have turned our backs this many a day, are always ready to return good for evil—benefits for neglect; to give counsel, wisdom, amusement, and delight for contemptuous disregard. To such a well-peopled solitude, such eloquent silence, it is good now and again to repair, remembering that this temporary withdrawal from our fellows will one day be continual.

How dreadful is silence when it is the sole answer to a cry for help, a prayer for forgiveness, a petition for love! Silence, temporary silence, full of breath-holding expectancy, as when a storm is gathering and the 'whole orb lies hushed,' a pin-dropping silence when a great orator, or preacher, or actor, pauses to emphasise his point: the strained silence that succeeds to a cry of agony; and that last, deepest silence when the labouring breast heaves no more!

Noise is said ere now to have killed men—notably the artist John Leech, by the insidious undermining of the power of endurance; and we have recently known a case where the hearing having been restored by an operation, after a seven years' silence, the nerves had become so acutely sensitive that any ordinary noise, such as the sudden closing of a door or passing by of a carriage, threw the patient into an ecstasy of tremulous agitation which threatened to end in downright insanity. We all know by experience how disagreeable is the shock or jar producing an involuntary start and quickening of the heart's action, which a sudden and unexpected explosion of sound will cause to the strongest nerved; but very few, fortunately, have to endure that far worse tension of the nerves, when only the striking of the heart against the ribs, the rush of blood through the head, fill up the long hours, days, and weeks of those whose insubordination has brought upon them that most ghastly form of human misery, solitary confinement.

Such is the dreadful power of continuous silence, that hardly any sound, however disagreeable in itself, but would be hailed with rapture, in place of the aching void, the huge, superincumbent, intolerable burden of a silence that is absolute.

BLOOD ROYAL.

CHAPTER II.—THE HEAD OF THE HOUSE.

MR EDMUND PLANTAGENET'S residence in Chiddingwick High Street was less amply commodious, he often complained in the bosom of the family, than his ancestral home at Windsor Castle. But as Mr Plantagenet himself had never inhabited the home of his forefathers, he felt the loss of his hereditary domains less keenly than might perhaps have been expected from so sensitive a person. Still, the cottage at Chiddingwick, judged even by the less exalted standard of Mr Plantagenet's own early recollections, was by no means unduly luxurious. For Edmund Plantagenet had been well brought up, and received in his day the education of a gentleman.

It was a sad history, and alas! a very common one. Thirty years before, when Edmund Plantagenet, not yet a believer in his own real or pretended royal descent, went up to London from Yorkshire to seek his fortune in literature, he was one of the handsomest and most popular young men in his own society. His name alone succeeded in attracting attention; we are not all of us Plantagenets. The admirable Lady Postlethwaite, arbiter in her day of literary reputation, gave the man with the royal surname the run of her well-known *salon*; editors accepted readily enough his inflated prose and his affected poetry; and all the world went well with him for a time—while he remained a bachelor. But one fine day Edmund Plantagenet took it into his head, like many better men, to fall in love—we have done it ourselves, and we know how catching it is—and not only to fall in love, but also, which is worse, to give effect to his feelings by actually getting married. In after-life, Mr Plantagenet regarded that unfortunate step as the one fatal error in an otherwise blameless career. He felt that with a name and prospects like his he ought at least to have married rank, title, or money. Instead of which, he just threw himself away: he married only beauty, common-sense, and goodness. The first of these fades, the second palls, and the third Mr Plantagenet was never constructed to appreciate. But rank and money appeal to all, and persist unchanged after such skin-deep attractions as intellect or good looks have ceased to interest.

From the day of his marriage, then, Edmund Plantagenet's downward career began. As a married man, he became at once of less importance in Lady Postlethwaite's society—he was so useful for dances. Editors found out by degrees that he had only affectation and audacity in place of genius; work fell short as children increased; and evil days began to close in upon the growing family. But what was worst of all, as money grew scarcer, a larger and larger proportion of it went each day to swell the receipts, at first of his club, and afterwards, when clubs became things of the past, of his nearest public-house. To make a long story short, before many years were over, Edmund Plantagenet, the young, the handsome, the promising, had degenerated from a dashing and well-bred fellow into a miserable sot of the sorriest description.

But Mr Plantagenet's present ostensible means of gaining an honest livelihood was by no means a regal one. He kept, as he was wont to phrase it gently himself, a temple of Terpsichore. In other words, he taught the local dancing-class. In his best days in London, when fortune still smiled upon him, he had been famed as the most graceful waltzer in Lady Postlethwaite's set; and now that the jade had deserted him to his lowest depth, he had finally settled down as the Chiddingwick dancing-master. Sot as he was, all Chiddingwick supported him loyally, for his name's sake: even Lady Agatha's children attended his lessons. It was a poor sort of trade, indeed, for the last of the Plantagenets; but he consoled himself under the disgrace with the cheerful reflection that he served, after all, as it were, as his own Lord Chamberlain.

On this particular night, however, of all the year, Mr Plantagenet felt more profoundly out

of humour with the world in general and his own ancestral realm of England in particular, than was at all usual with him. The fact was, his potential subjects had been treating him with marked want of consideration for his real position. Kings in exile are exposed to intolerable affronts. The landlord of the *White Horse* had hinted at the desirability of paying arrears on the score of past brandies and sodas innumerable. The landlord was friendly, and proud of his guest, who 'kept the house together;' but at times he broke out in little fits of petulance. Now Mr Plantagenet, as it happened, had not the wherewithal to settle this little account off-hand, and he took it ill of Barnes, who, as he justly remarked, 'had had so much out of him,' that he should endeavour to hurry a gentleman of birth in the matter of payment. He sat by his own fireside, therefore, in no very amiable humour, and watched the Mother bustling about the room with her domestic preparations for the family supper.

'Clarence,' Mr Plantagenet said, after a moment of silence, to one of the younger boys, 'have you prepared your Thucydides? It's getting very late. You seem to me to be loafing about doing nothing.'

'Oh, I know it pretty well,' Clarence answered with a nonchalant air, still whittling at a bit of stick he was engaged in transforming into a home-made whistle. 'I looked it over in class. It's not very hard. Thucydides is rot—most awful rot. It won't take five minutes.'

Mr Plantagenet, with plump fingers, rolled himself another cigarette. He had come down in the world, and left cigars far behind, a fragrant memory of the distant past; but as a gentleman he could never descend to the level of a common clay pipe. 'Very well,' he said blandly, leaning back in his chair and beaming upon Clarence: a peculiar blandness of tone and manner formed Mr Plantagenet's keynote. 'That may do for me, perhaps—but it won't do for Richard.' After which frank admission of his own utter abdication of parental prerogatives in favour of his own son, he proceeded very deliberately to light his cigarette, and stare with placid eyes at the dilatory Clarence.

There was a minute's pause; then Mr Plantagenet began again. 'Eleanor,' he remarked in the same soft self-indulgent voice to his youngest daughter, 'you don't seem to be doing anything. I'm sure you've got some lessons to prepare for to-morrow.' Not that Mr Plantagenet was in the least concerned for the progress of his children's education; but the deeper they were engaged with their books, the less noise did they make with their ceaseless chatter in the one family sitting-room, and the more did they leave their fond father in peace to his own reflections.

'Oh, there's plenty of time,' Eleanor answered with a little toss of her pretty head. 'I can do 'em by-and-by—after Dick comes in. He'll soon be coming.'

It was part and parcel of Mr Plantagenet's silent method of claiming royal descent that he called all his children with studious care after the earlier Plantagenets, his real or supposed ancestors, who were kings of England. Thus his first-born was Richard, in memory of their distinguished predecessor, the mighty Cœur-de-Lion: his next was Lionel Clarence, after the

second son of Edward IV., the particular Prince upon whom Mr Plantagenet chose to affiliate his family pedigree: and his third was Henry, that being the Plantagenet name which sat first and oftenest upon the throne of England. His eldest girl, in like manner, was christened Maud, after the foundress of his house who married Geoffrey Plantagenet, and so introduced the blood of the Conqueror into the Angevin race: his youngest was Eleanor, after the wife of Henry II., 'who brought us Poitou and Aquitaine as heirlooms.' Mr Plantagenet, indeed, never overtly mentioned these interesting little points in public himself; but they oozed out for all that by lateral leakage—and redounded thereby much the more to their contriver's credit. His very reticence told not a little in his favour. For a dancing-master to claim by word or deed that he is *de jure* king of England would be to lay himself open to unsparing ridicule; but to let it be felt or inferred that he is so, without ever for one moment arrogating to himself the faintest claim to the dignity, is to pose in silence as an injured innocent, a person of most distinguished and exalted origin, with just that little suspicion of pathos and mystery about his unspoken right which makes the thing really dignified and interesting.

Hardly, however, had Mr Plantagenet uttered those memorable words, 'Dick's late to-night; I wonder what keeps him,' when the front door opened, and the Heir Apparent entered.

Immediately some strange change seemed to pass by magic over the assembled household. Everybody looked up, as though an Event had occurred. Mrs Plantagenet herself, a weary-looking woman with gentle goodness beaming out of every line in her worn face, gave a sigh of relief. 'Oh, Dick,' she cried, 'I'm so glad you've come. We've all been waiting for you.'

Richard glanced round the room with a slight air of satisfaction. It was always a pleasure to him to find his father at home, and not, as was his wont, in the *White Horse* parlour; though, to say the truth, the only reason for Mr Plantagenet's absence that night from his accustomed haunt was this little tiff with the landlord over his vulgar hints of payment. Then he stooped down and kissed his mother tenderly on the forehead; patted Eleanor's curly head with a brotherly caress; gave a kindly glance at Prince Hal, as he loved to call him mentally; and sat down in the easy-chair his mother pushed towards him.

For a moment there was silence; then Dick began in an explanatory voice: 'I'm sorry I'm so late; but I had a piece of work to finish to-night, mother: rather particular work, too; a little bit of book-binding.'

'You get paid extra for that, Richard, don't you?' his father asked, growing interested.

'Well, yes,' Dick answered, rather grudgingly; 'I get paid extra for that; I do it in overtime. But that wasn't all,' he went on hurriedly, well aware that his father was debating in his own mind whether he couldn't on the strength of it borrow a shilling. 'It was a special piece of work for the new governess at the rectory. And mother, isn't it odd? her name's Mary Tudor!'

'There isn't much in that,' his father answered,

balancing his cigarette daintily between his first and second finger. "'A' Stuarts are na sib to the king," you know, Richard. The Plantagenets who left the money had nothing to do with the royal family—that is to say with *us*,' Mr Plantagenet went on, catching himself up by an after-thought. 'They were mere Sheffield cutlers, people of no antecedents, who happened to take our name upon themselves by a pure flight of fancy, because they thought it high-sounding. Which it is, undoubtedly. And as for Tudors, bless your heart, they're common enough in Wales. In point of fact—though I'm proud of Elizabeth, as a by-blow of the family—we must always bear in mind that for *us*, my dear boy, the Tudors were never anything but a distinct *mésalliance*.'

'Of course,' Richard answered with profound conviction.

His father glanced at him sharply. To Mr Plantagenet himself this shadowy claim to royal descent was a pretty toy to be employed for the mystification of strangers and the aggrandisement of the family—a lever to work on Lady Agatha's feelings; but to his eldest son it was an article of faith, a matter of the most cherished and the profoundest belief, a reason for behaving one's self in every position in life so as not to bring disgrace on so distinguished an ancestry.

A moment's silence intervened; then Dick turned round with his grave smile to Clarence: 'And how does Thucydides get on?' he asked with brotherly solicitude.

Clarence wriggled a little uneasily on his wooden chair. 'Well, it's not a hard bit,' he answered, with a shamefaced air. 'I thought I could do it in a jiffy after you came home, Dick. It won't take two minutes.' It's just that piece, don't you know, about the revolt in *Corcyra*.'

Dick looked down at him reproachfully. 'Oh, Clarry,' he cried with a pained face, 'you know you can't have looked at it. Not a hard bit, indeed! why, it's one of the obscurest and most debated passages in all Thucydides!—Now, what's the use of my getting you a nomination, old man, and coaching you so hard, and helping to pay your way at the grammar-school, in hopes of your getting an Exhibition in time, if you won't work for yourself, and lift yourself on to a better position?' And he glanced at the wooden mantel-piece, on whose vacant scroll he had carved deep with his penknife his own motto in life, *Noblesse oblige*, in Lombardic letters, for his brother's benefit.

He spoke with a seriousness that was above his years. To say the truth, Mr Plantagenet's habits had almost reversed their relative places in the family. Dick was naturally conscientious, having fortunately inherited his moral characteristics rather from his mother's side than from his father's; and being thrown early into the position of assistant bread-winner and chief adviser to the family, he had grown grave before his time, and felt the weight of domestic cares already heavy upon his shoulders. As for Clarence, who had answered his father with scant respect, he never thought for a moment of disobeying the wishes of his elder brother. He took up the dog-eared Thucydides that had served them both in turn, and the old Liddell and Scott that was

still common property, and began conning over the chapter set before him with conspicuous diligence. Dick looked on meanwhile with no little satisfaction, while Eleanor went on with her work, in her chair in the corner, vaguely conscious all the time of meriting his approbation.

At last, just as they sat down to their frugal supper of bread and cheese and water—for by Dick's desire, they were all, save one, teetotalers—Dick sprang a mine upon the assembled company by saying out all at once in a most matter-of-fact voice to his neighbour Clarry: 'No, I shan't be able to help you very much in future, I'm afraid—because, next week, I'm going up to Oxford—to try for a Scholarship.'

A profound spell of awed silence followed this abrupt disclosure of a long-formed plan. Mr Plantagenet himself was the first to break it. He rose to the occasion. 'Well, I'm glad at least, my son,' he said, in his most grandiose manner, 'you propose to give yourself the education of a gentleman.'

'And therefore,' Dick continued, with a side-glance at Clarence, 'I shall need all my spare time for my own preparation.'

CHAPTER III.—DISCOUNTING IT.

Mrs Plantagenet looked across the table at her son with vague eyes of misgiving. 'This is all very sudden, Dick,' she faltered out, not without some slight tremor.

'Sudden for you, dear mother,' Dick answered, taking her hand in his own; 'but not for me. Very much otherwise. I've had it in my mind for a great many months; and *this* is what decided me.'

He drew from his pocket as he spoke a small scrap of newspaper and handed it across to her. It was a cutting from the *Times*. Mrs Plantagenet read it through with swimming eyes. 'University Intelligence: Oxford.—Four foundation Scholarships will be awarded after public examination at Durham College on May 20th. Two will be of the annual value of One Hundred Pounds, for Classics; one of the same value for Natural Science; and one for Modern History. Application to be made, on or before Wednesday the 19th, to the Rev. the Dean at Durham College, who will also supply all needful information to intending candidates.'

The words swam in a mist before Mrs Plantagenet's eyes. 'What does it all mean, dear Dick?' she inquired almost tearfully.

'It means, mother,' Dick answered with the gentlest tenderness, 'that Durham is the only college in the university which gives as good a Scholarship as a hundred a year for modern history. Now, ever since I left the grammar-school, I haven't had it out of my mind for a day to go, if I could, to Oxford. I think it's incumbent upon a man in my position to give himself, if possible, a university training.'

He said the words without the slightest air of conceit or swagger, but with a profound consciousness of their import; for to Richard Plantagenet the myth or legend of the ancient greatness of his family was a spur urging him ever on to make himself worthy of so glorious an ancestry. 'So I've been working and saving ever since,' he went

on, 'with that idea constantly before me; and I've looked out for twelve months or more in the *Times* every day for the announcement of an exam. for the Durham Scholarship.'

'But you won't get it, my boy,' Mr Plantagenet put in philosophically after a moment's consideration. 'You never can get it.—Your early disadvantages, you know—your inadequate schooling—so many young fellows well coached from Eton and Harrow!'

'If it had been a classical one, I should agree with you: I couldn't, I'm afraid,' Richard responded frankly, for he was by no means given to over-estimate his own abilities; 'but in history it's different. You see, so much of it's just our own family pedigree and detail of our ancestry. That acted as a fillip—gave me an interest in the subject from the very first; and as soon as I determined to begin reading for Oxford, I felt at once my best chance would lie in modern history. And that's why I've been working away at it as hard as ever I could in all my spare time for more than a twelvemonth.'

'But have you been reading the right books, Dick?—that's the question,' his father put in dubiously, with a critical air, making a manful effort to recall the names of the works that were most authoritative in the subject when he himself last looked at a history: 'Sharon Turner, Kemble, Palgrave, Thierry, Guizot, and so forth?'

Richard had too deep a respect for the chief of the Plantagenets, miserable sot though he was, to be betrayed into a smile by this belated catalogue. He only answered with perfect gravity: 'I'm afraid none of those would be of much use to me nowadays in a Scholarship exam.: another generation has arisen which knows not Joseph. But I've got up all the books recommended in the circular of the Board of Studies—Freeman, you know, and Stubbs, and Green, and Froude, and Gardner. And I've worked especially at the reigns of the earlier Plantagenets, and the development of the towns and guilds and all that sort of thing, in Brentano and Seeböhm.'

'Jones tertius has a brother at Oxford,' Clarence put in very eagerly: 'and he's a howling swell; he lives in a room that's panelled with oak from top to bottom.'

'And if you get the Scholarship, Dick,' his mother went on wistfully, 'will you have to go and live there, and be away from us always?'

'Only half the year, mother dear,' Richard answered coaxingly; for he knew what she was thinking—how hard it would be for her to be left alone in Chiddingwick, among all those unruly children and her drunken husband, without the aid of her one help and mainstay. 'You know, there's only about five months of term, and all the rest's vacation. In vacation, I'd come home, and do something to earn money towards making up the deficit.'

'It's a very long time, though, five months,' Mrs Plantagenet said pensively. 'But, there!' she added after a pause, brightening up—'perhaps you won't get it.'

Grave as he usually was, Richard couldn't help bursting into a merry laugh at this queer little bit of topsy-turvy self-comfort. 'Oh, I hope to goodness I shall,' he cried with a twinkle, 'in spite of that, mother. It won't be five months all in a lump, you know; I shall go up

for some six or eight weeks at a time—never more than eight together, I believe—and then come down again. But you really needn't take it to heart just yet, for we're counting our chickens before they're hatched, after all. I mayn't get it, as you say; and indeed, as father said just now, when one comes to think how many fellows will be in for it who have been thoroughly coached and crammed at the great public schools, my chance can't be worth much—though I mean to try it.'

Just at that moment, as Dick leaned back and looked round, the door opened, and Maud, the eldest sister, entered.

She had come home from her singing lesson; for Maud was musical, and went out as daily governess to the local tradesmen's families. She was the member of the household who most of all shared Dick's confidence. As she entered, Harry looked up at her, full of conscious importance and a mouthful of Dutch cheese. 'Have you heard the news, Maudie?' he asked all breathless. 'Isn't it just ripping? Dick's going up to Oxford.'

Maud was pale and tired from a long day's work—the thankless work of teaching; but her weary face flushed red none the less at this exciting announcement, though she darted a warning look under her hat towards Richard, as much as to say: 'How could you ever have told him?'

But all she said openly was: 'Then the advertisement's come of the Durham Scholarship?'

'Yes, the advertisement's come,' Dick answered, flushing in turn. 'I got it this morning, and I'm to go up on Wednesday.'

The boys were rather disappointed at this tame announcement. It was clear Maud knew all about the great scheme already. And indeed, she and Dick had talked it over by themselves many an evening on the hills, and debated the pros and cons of that important new departure. Maud's face grew paler again after a minute, and she murmured half regretfully, as she unfastened her hat: 'I shall miss you if you get it, Dick. It'll be hard to do without you.'

'But it's the right thing for me to do,' Richard put in almost anxiously.

Maud spoke without the faintest hesitation in her voice. 'Oh yes, it's the right thing,' she answered. 'Not a doubt in the world about that. It's a duty you owe to yourself, and to us—and to England. Only, of course, we shall all feel your absence a very great deal. Dick, Dick, you're so much to us! And I don't know,' she went on, as she glanced at the little ones with an uncertain air—'I don't know that I'd have mentioned it before babes and sucklings—well, till I was sure I'd got it.'

She said it with an awkward flush; for Dick caught her eye as she spoke and read her inner meaning. She wondered he had blurted it out prematurely before her father. And Dick, too, saw his mistake. Mr Plantagenet, big with such important news, would spread it abroad among his cronies in the *White Horse* parlour before to-morrow was over!

Richard turned to the children. 'Now, look here, boys,' he said gravely: 'this is a private affair, and we've talked it over here without reserve in the bosom of the family. But we've talked it over in confidence: it mustn't be re-

peated. If I were to go up and try for this Scholarship, and then not get it, all Chiddingwick would laugh at me for a fellow that didn't know his proper place, and had to be taught to know it. For the honour of the family, boys—and you too, Nellie—I hope you won't whisper a word of all this to anybody in town. Consider what a disgrace it would be if I came back unsuccessful, and everybody in the parish came up and commiserated me: "We're so sorry, Mr Dick, you failed at Oxford. But there, you see, you had such great disadvantages!"'

His handsome face burned bright red at the bare thought of such a disgrace; and the little ones, who after all were Plantagenets at heart as much as himself, every one of them, made answer with one accord: 'We won't say a word about it.' They promised it so earnestly, and with such perfect assurance, that Dick felt he could trust them. His eye caught Maud's. The same thought passed instinctively through both their minds. What a painful idea that the one person they couldn't beg for very shame to hold his tongue was the member of the family most likely to blab it out to the first chance comer!

Maud sat down and ate her supper. She was a pretty girl, very slender and delicate, with a fair pink-and-white skin, and curious flashing eyes, most unusual in a blonde, though she was perhaps just a shade less handsome and distinguished-looking than the Heir Apparent. All through the meal, little else was talked of than this projected revolution, Dick's great undertaking. The boys were most full of it—our Dick at Oxford! It was ripping, simply ripping! A lark of the first dimensions! Clarence made up his mind at once to go up and see Dick, his very first term, in oak-panelled rooms at Durham College; they *must* be oak-panelled: while Harry, who had feasted on *Verdant Green* for weeks, was anxious to know what sort of gown he'd have to wear, and whether he thought he'd have ample opportunities for fighting the proctors. 'Twas a foregone conclusion. So innocently did they all discount 'Our Dick's' success, and so firmly did they believe that whatever he attempted he was certain to succeed in!

After supper, Mr Plantagenet rose with an important air and unhooked his hat very deliberately from its peg. His wife and Dick and Maud all cried out with one voice: 'Why, surely, you're not going out to-night, father!'

For to go out, they knew well, in Mr Plantagenet's dialect, meant to spend the evening in the *White Horse* parlour.

'Yes, my dear,' Mr Plantagenet answered, in his blindest tone, turning round to his wife with apologetic suavity. 'The fact is, I have a very particular engagement this evening.—No, no, Dick, my boy: don't try to detain me. Gentlemen are waiting for me. The claims of social life, my dear son—so much engaged—my sole time for the world—my one hour of recreation! Besides, strangers have been specially invited to meet me; people who have heard of my literary reputation! 'Twould be churlish to disappoint them.' And, brushing his son aside, Mr Plantagenet stuck his hat on jauntily just a trifle askew with ponderous airiness, and strolled down steps as he adjusted his Inverness cape on his ample shoulders, with the air of a gentleman seek-

ing his club, with his martial cloak around him.

He strolled out, all smiles, apologetic, but peremptory. As soon as he was gone, the three remaining elders glanced hard at one another with blank surmise in their eyes; but they said nothing openly. Only, in his own heart, Richard blamed himself with bitter blame for his unwonted indiscretion in blurring out the whole truth. He knew that by ten to-morrow morning all the world of Chiddingwick would have heard of his projected little trip to Oxford.

When the younger ones were gone to bed, the three still held their peace and only looked at each other. Mutual shame prevented them from ever outwardly commenting on the father's weaknesses. Maud was the first to break the long deep silence. 'After this, Dick,' she said decisively, 'there's no other way out of it. You've burnt your boats. If you kill yourself to do it, you must win that Scholarship!'

'I must,' Dick answered firmly. 'And what's more, I will. I'll get it or die for it. I could never stand the disgrace, now, of coming back empty-handed to Chiddingwick without it.'

'Perhaps,' Mrs Plantagenet suggested, speaking boldly out the thought that lurked in all their minds, 'he won't say a word of it.'

Maud and Dick looked up at her with incredulous amazement. 'Oh mother!' was all they could say. They knew their father's moods too well by far to buoy themselves up with such impossible expectations.

'Well, it seals the business, anyhow,' Dick went on, after a moment's pause. 'I *must* get it now, that's simply certain. Though, to be sure, I don't know that anything could make me try much harder than I'd have tried before, for your sake, mother, and for Maud's, and the children's, and the honour of the family.'

'I wish I had your faith, Dick, in the honour of the family,' Mrs Plantagenet sighed wearily. 'I can't feel it myself. I never could feel it, somehow. Though, of course, it's a good thing if it makes you work and hold your head up in life, and do the best you ever can for Maud and the children. Anything's good that's an incentive to exertion. Yet I often wish, when I see how hard you both have to toil and moil, with the music and all that, we didn't belong to the royal stock at all, but to the other Plantagenets, who left the money.'

Both Richard and Maud exclaimed with one accord at these painful words: 'Oh, don't, dear mother!' To them, her speech sounded like sheer desecration.

At the very same moment, indeed, in the cosiest corner of the *White Horse* parlour, Mr Plantagenet himself, the head of the house, was observing complacently, in a mellifluous voice, to an eager little group of admiring listeners: 'Yes, gentlemen, my son Richard, I'm proud to say, will shortly begin his career at Oxford University. I'm a poor man myself, I admit; I might have been richer but for untoward events: and circumstances have compelled me to submit in my old age to a degrading profession, for which neither my birth, my education, nor my literary habits have naturally fitted me. But I trust I have at least been a good father to my children. A good—father—to my children. I have given

them the very best education this poor town can afford; and now, though I know it will sadly cripple my slender resources, I mean to make a struggle, my friends, a manful struggle, and send my boy Richard up to Oxford. Richard has brains, undoubted brains; he's proud and reserved, as you all know, and doesn't shine in society; he lacks the proper qualities: but he has undoubted brains, for all that; and brilliancy, I know to my cost'—here he heaved a deep sigh—'is often a pitfall to a man of genius. Richard hasn't genius; but he's industrious and plodding, and possesses, I'm told, a remarkable acquaintance with the history of his country. So I've made up my mind to brave the effort and send him up to our ancestral university. He may do something in time to repair the broken fortunes of a respectable family. Gentlemen,' Mr Plantagenet went on, glancing round him for confirmation of his coming statement, 'I think you'll all bear me witness that I've never boasted or bragged about my family in anyway: but you'll all admit, too, that my family is a respectable one, and that the name I bear has not been wholly undistinguished in the history of this country.—Thank you, sir; I'm very much obliged indeed to you for your kindness: I don't mind if I do.—Brandy, if you please, as usual, Miss Brooks—and a split soda.—Gentlemen, I thank you for your generous sympathy. Misfortune has not wholly deprived me, I'm proud to notice, of appreciative friends. I will drain this sparkling beaker, which my neighbour is good enough to offer, to an appropriate toast—the toast of Success to Richard Plantagenet of Durham College, Oxford.'

TOUCH AND TASTE IN ANIMALS.

No one doubts that animals have sense, but most of us know comparatively little about their senses. Is sight a universal gift? Do animals recognise each other, and if so, how? Can all creatures, even those low in the scale of creation, hear and taste and smell? What is the meaning of the variety of sounds, with all their curious inflections, often so unpleasant to our ears, that are made by animals? These and many similar questions can now be at least partially answered; for both American and English naturalists have been lately working at this subject, and with their help we propose to try to find out what are the senses that various animals possess; although, as Fabricius, the pupil of Linnæus, said many years ago, 'nothing in natural history is more abstruse and difficult than an accurate description of the senses of animals.'

By a sense we mean that certain special nerves, on receiving an appropriate impulse, convey it to the brain, where it is translated (how, is as yet unknown) into its special sensation. We usually speak of ourselves as having five senses—smell, taste, touch, sight, and hearing.

With two senses—Touch and Taste—direct contact is necessary before a sensation is excited; these two we will therefore consider first, more especially as touch has been called 'the mother of all the senses,' and appears to exist, though in a varying degree, in the whole animal kingdom.

Touch is simply a sense of pressure or a sense of force as distinguished from the sense of heat,

which, though usually included under the same name, is really quite a different sensation. Thus we have certainly six senses, and possibly others, such as the magnetic sense, as yet unrecognised. Animals may have this sense of warmth in a more highly developed degree than man, and there is no doubt that it is a source of keen enjoyment to many. One or two curious facts have been noticed in connection with this sense: a cold body feels heavier than a hot one of precisely the same weight; our left hand is more sensitive than our right; and if our elbow be dipped into a very cold fluid, while the cold is felt at the elbow, pain is felt at the tips of the fingers!

We have no separate nerves for pain; it is probably only an intense pressure or irritation of the nerves themselves—not of the end-organs of touch—this, carried beyond a certain point of intensity, causes pain. Perhaps that is why pain and pleasure are so closely allied; for if the ordinary nerves of touch convey both sensations, and the difference is mainly one in degree of intensity, it would naturally be difficult to draw any boundary-line: a slight pressure may cause pleasure; a greater one, pain; and we do often actually find that a sensation of pleasure merges insensibly after a time into one of pain. We have many indefinite sensations—not on the surface nor of any particular locality—such as a feeling of general comfort and well-being, or one of *malaise* and discomfort, of horror, &c., caused by the excitation of various nerves.

Man has the greatest number of sensory nerves; they become fewer as we descend in the scale of creation, and some of the lower invertebrates apparently have none, hence they can have little or no sense of pain. Even in the higher creatures pain appears often deadened, possibly by some hypnotic influence exerted by means of the eyes of beasts of prey, or Nature may not after all be so cruel as she sometimes appears. A camel when shot was observed to go on calmly chewing the cud, taking no notice of its bleeding wound. The same indifference has been observed in the reindeer, and even in the horse. A lobster will voluntarily deprive itself of its great claws if startled; and a crab goes on eating while being itself devoured. A fish, though torn by the hook, still returns to the bait; and a blindworm or sand lizard, if seized, snaps its body in two, and glides away unharmed to reproduce at leisure the lost part.

The sense of touch in man is most highly developed on the skin; but mucous or serous surfaces are also capable of conveying tactile impressions. Some parts of the body are more sensitive than others, and are usually devoid of hairs, as the tip of the tongue, the ends of the fingers, and the lips. It will be noticed that these are so situated as to keep us conveniently informed of what is going on around us.

Some of our most important organs—for instance, the heart, the brain, and the lungs—are, strange to say, quite insensible to touch; thus showing that not only are nerves necessary for the sensation, but also the special end-organs. This curious fact was noticed with the greatest astonishment by Harvey, who, while treating a patient for an abscess that caused a large cavity in his side, found that, when he put his fingers into this cavity, he could actually take hold of

the heart without the patient being in the least aware of what he was doing! This so interested Harvey, that he brought King Charles I. to the man's bedside that 'he might himself behold and touch so extraordinary a thing.' In certain operations, a piece of skin is removed from the forehead to the nose; and it is stated that the patient, oddly enough, feels as if the new nasal part were still in his forehead, and may have a headache in his nose!

In the lower organisms, as the molluscs, the whole outer skin is sensitive; but some have also specialised organs of touch; these are usually hair-like processes. Thus, jelly-fish shoot out numerous threads, when touched, which enable them to attack the body pressing them. In fishes, touch is usually limited to the lips, parts of the fins, and to special organs called 'barbels;' these are long pieces of skin. Fish may sometimes be seen gently touching strange objects with the sides of their bodies, as though thus becoming acquainted with them. Blind cod are quite able to continue foraging for themselves—probably by means of touch aided by smell.

The skin of crustaceans and of insects is more or less horny, or, as has been said, the bee wears its skeleton outside; but even this armour-like surface is sensitive to touch, owing to little hairs or projecting rod-like bodies seated on the coat, from the base of which a nerve-fibre passes through into the body. These little hairs are very numerous on the antennæ of insects; and are evidently sense-hairs of some kind, some of touch, others of other senses. The sense of touch is marvellously developed in spiders.

Bats have an extremely keen sense of touch, probably the most delicate of any creature, and are guided in their flight chiefly by this sense. They have been purposely blinded for the sake of experiment, and then let loose in a room where an intricate network of string had been arranged. This network was never once touched by the bats during their flight. In other experiments, it was noticed that they wisely gave a wider berth to such things as a man's hand or a cat's paw than to harmless pieces of furniture. They can also fly along underground and quite dark passages, avoiding the sides, even when a turn or twist comes. The wings and other membranous expansions are peculiarly sensitive to touch, but these expansions are comparatively small in the fruit-eating bats; for it is the insect-eating bats, who have to be on the alert in order not to starve, who need this excessive keenness of the sense of touch. Sight is useless in the gloom, and it appears to be by the minute changes of pressure in the atmosphere that they recognise the approach of their prey.

There is a similar wonderful sensitiveness to changes of pressure in those whales which prey upon herrings and mackerel, and therefore need both a keen sense and the ability to swim swiftly in order to obtain a meal. It seems odd to us that it should never have occurred to these nor to other strong creatures to employ the weaker creatures to hunt for them and feed them, while they take their ease; but, though their life appears to be one of constant toil and warfare, the mere pursuit of their prey must give pleasure. No caresses nor allurements of dainty food will beguile a cat from its hunt for a mouse; though

the mouse is often not eaten, even when caught. Is the love of sport in man a survival of this instinct, and will it be eradicated as the higher instincts of nature are developed? To return, however, to our whales. Some slight change in the movement or impulse of the water appears sufficient to indicate to them the approach of shoals of fish, or even of sunken rocks. Whale-fishers also state that when they attack a whale, others, even when some miles away, become, in a way quite mysterious to our coarser perceptions, aware of the struggle, and hurry off to the rescue. It is almost impossible to believe that the vibrations of the water could be sufficient to warn them of their comrade's danger at so great a distance.

Sometimes the chief tactile organ is the tongue, as in snakes; sometimes it is the foot, as in climbing reptiles, birds, and even some insects. The tails of monkeys are also keenly sensitive; while in cats and other feline creatures the whiskers have the most delicate sense of touch, and in rabbits the long hairs on their lips, owing to the nerve filaments at their base. Seals and walruses, too, have similar sensitive strong whiskers, which are as useful to them as a staff to a blind man.

Many birds have special tactile organs round the root of the bill; these are doubtless useful to the bird, as it probes the ground to hunt for its dinner of worms, grubs, &c., and may also be of use in nest-building. Ducks and geese have similar special bodies. Hoofed quadrupeds, to complete this brief summary, have somewhat sensitive hoofs, enabling them to test the firmness or otherwise of the ground; though the most sensitive parts in horses and most animals are the lips, and in the elephant the end of the trunk.

Taste, though the most limited in range of the senses, serves a special and useful purpose; for unless we, in common with other living creatures, took pleasure of some kind in our food, we might cease to eat, and die of starvation; or, if food had no taste, we might unconsciously eat what is unsuitable, or even poisonous. Probably the whole creation has this sense of taste in a varying degree; certainly insects have, and with them, as with man, it develops and increases during life: some young insects will eat poisonous food that older ones refuse to touch. This is also said to be the case with lambs, which, if left to graze in a field without their mothers, often die from eating poisonous herbs. In man, as we all know, taste can be educated; as, for example, with tea and wine tasters, who can detect differences of quality quite inappreciable to others.

A singular development of this sense is seen in those insects which eat different food when in the larval and when in the perfect condition: the butterfly or moth, for instance, would not touch the leaf on which it lays its egg; yet this forms the right food for the grub that will emerge from the egg. It is not to be supposed that the butterfly remembers its early existence, and reasons from this as to the probable food that its young will require; so, in a happy tone of satisfaction, we call this 'instinct,' and think our explanation complete. But is not that word merely used to cover our ignorance; for, after all, what is instinct?

Who can define it, or say where instinct ends and reason begins?

Many experiments have been made in order to find out what and where the organ of taste is in the lower creation; but it is easier to say where it is not. Crayfish and worms seem to have very decided preferences in the matter of food, though no special taste-organ has yet been found. Lobsters like decaying food: the crab is more dainty in its diet. Snails and slugs show a decided preference for certain kinds of food, as garden-lovers know to their cost; peas and cabbages, dahlias and sunflowers, are great favourites; but they will not touch the white mustard. Some prefer animal food, especially if rather high! Spiders have only a slight sense of taste; flies soaked in paraffin seem quite palatable to them; though one species, the diadema, is somewhat more particular, and refuses to touch alcohol in any form whatever. The antennæ of insects do not appear to contain any organ of taste, for wasps and ants quite readily took into their mouths poisonous and unpleasant food, even swallowing enough to make themselves ill; while some bees and cockroaches fell a prey to the temptation of alum, Epsom salts, and other nauseous foods placed in their way. These substances were not, however, swallowed, but were soon spat out, the creatures spluttering angrily, as if disgusted with the taste. The proboscis of the fly and the tongue of bees and ants are furnished with numerous delicate hairs set in minute pits; these are perhaps connected with the organ of taste; but though the exact locality of this sense in insects is uncertain, we know that groups of cells in the tongue of animals, called taste-bulbs, form, in part, the ends of the organ of taste. These vary in number, increasing in the higher animals; they are very close and exceedingly numerous in man, while the tongue of even the cow has some thirty-five thousand taste-bulbs. It would be interesting to know, but I have never seen the question discussed, whether each special taste excites a special group of nerves, and that only—thus corresponding to the auditory nerves.

These taste-bulbs were discovered in 1867. Each one consists of two kinds of cells, one set forming an outer protective covering, through an opening in which project from five to ten of the true taste-cells. Though important, they are not apparently an essential part of the organ, for birds and reptiles have none; but neither have they a keen sense of taste—except perhaps the parrot. A boa-constrictor that was nearly blind was once found to be contentedly swallowing a blanket for dinner, instead of a rabbit, which was also within reach; and it was only with great difficulty that she was forced to disgorge this singular article of food. A snake's tongue is therefore not an organ of taste, nor is it, as many think, a sting; it is more probably a delicate organ of touch. Professor Lloyd Morgan in his fascinating book, *Animal Sketches*, mentions the very curious effect that nicotine has upon snakes. Even a drop of the oil from a foul pipe, if placed in the mouth of a snake, will cause it to become perfectly rigid; if more be given, it will die. Possibly, as has been suggested, it may be in some such way, or by mixing opium or other narcotic with the saliva, and then spitting into the snake's mouth, that Indian charmers

effect some of their wonders with even poisonous snakes, such as apparently turning them into sticks and so on.

A special organ on the edge of the beak appears to serve as an organ of taste in ducks; while fish and tadpoles have goblet-shaped sense-organs on their skin and scales, and though their purpose is somewhat uncertain, they are similar to taste-bulbs; and fish certainly have some, though only a slight, sense of taste. Some fish repeatedly rejected certain molluscs given them as food; while others appeared to owe their safety to their colouring; thus showing that fish can see and recognise markings, and also that they do exercise some choice in the matter of food.

A very sad account is given by Sir J. E. Tennent and Mr F. Day as to the habits of certain frugivorous bats—the so-called ‘flying fox’ of Southern Asia. Not only are they very quarrelsome and selfish, fighting over their food, and each one trying to get the most shady spot to sleep in; but they are sadly dissipated; and although strict vegetarians, very intemperate. They frequently pass the night in a sort of drunken carouse, returning home—unless too stupefied to stir—in the early morning quite intoxicated and more quarrelsome than ever. Instead, therefore, of saying that a man who drinks to excess behaves like a beast—which is quite untrue, by the way—we might more truly say that he is like a bat.

But we must leave this branch of our subject after one more remark. The sense of taste protects the alimentary canal, so preserving us to some extent, at all events, from swallowing poisonous food. Only substances that are soluble in the mouth produce a distinct sensation of taste; others merely exciting a sensation of touch or of temperature; and these substances must come into *direct* contact with the special nerve-endings.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—PLENARY CONFESSION (continued).

‘I SHALL not forget it. Nevertheless, Elsie, if a statement of the facts can be of any use to you—he changed his seat and took up the pen—‘certainly I will write it for you.’

‘I am requested,’ he wrote, ‘by Miss Elsie Arundel, my Scholar, to state what I know of a certain transaction which took place in March 1882. The facts are as follows: I had need of a sum of seven hundred and twenty pounds. For certain purposes I wanted it in ten-pound notes. I asked my agent, Mr Dering, to give me a cheque; and as I thought that I should want the money immediately, perhaps in an hour or so, I asked him to make it payable to my order, and not to cross the cheque. He drew the cheque and gave it to me in his office. I then went to the hotel where I was stopping—a place in Norfolk Street, Strand, and sent a commissionaire to the Bank for the money. He brought it, as I had requested, in ten-pound notes. In a few

days I discovered that my plan could not be even commenced without the greatest danger of defeating its own object. I therefore took the notes to Mr Dering’s office and placed them in his safe. I suppose that he has long since returned them to the Bank.’

‘There, child,’ he said, reading this statement aloud. ‘That is what I recollect about this matter.’

‘Sign it.’ Elsie gave him the pen again. ‘Sign it, dear Master.—Oh! thanks—thanks a thousand times! You don’t know—oh! you will never know or understand—I hope—how precious this document will be for me,’—she folded the paper in an envelope and placed it in her hand-bag—‘and for my people—my brother and all. Oh, my dear Master!’ She stooped and kissed his hand, to hide the tears in her eyes. Athelstan’s name was safe now whatever happened. He would be completely cleared at last.

‘Why, my dear Scholar—my dear daughter.’ Mr Edmund Gray was moved himself almost to tears at this unexpected burst of feeling. ‘As if there was anything I would not do for you if I could. I, who have never loved any woman before, love one now. She is my daughter—my grandchild.—So your brother will be helped by this little reminiscence—will he? Actually, your brother! I wonder if there is anything more that I could remember for you in this uneventful life of mine.’

‘Oh no!—that would be too much to hope. Yet there is a chance—just a chance. I wonder if I may tell you. There is still time before us. If we are at the Hall by six we shall do very well. It is no more than half-past four. Shall I tell you the trouble? Oh! But it is a shame. And you with this great work laid upon you! No—no—I must not.’ Oh, Delilah! oh, Circe! for she looked as if, in spite of her unwilling words, she wanted to tell it very badly indeed.

‘Nay, my dear. You must, and you shall.—What? You are in trouble, and you will not tell me what it is. You—my Scholar—my clear-eyed disciple, who can see what these dull creatures of clay around us can never understand—you are in trouble, and you hesitate to tell me?—Fie! fie! Speak now. Tell me all.’

‘I have told you that I have a lover, and that I am engaged to be married.’

‘Yes—yes. His name, too, you have told me. It is George—George Austin. There were Austins once—I seem to remember—but that does not matter.’

‘We are to be married on Wednesday.’

‘So soon? But you have promised that I shall not lose my pupil.’

‘No, dear Master. As soon as we come back from our holiday, I will come and see you again and learn of you. Do not doubt that. I can never again let you go out of my life. I shall bring my—my husband with me.’

‘If I thought your marriage would take you away from me, I should be the most unhappy of men. But I will spare you for a month—two months—as long as you please.—Now, tell me what is on your mind.’

‘George was one of Mr Dering’s managing clerks—your Mr Dering, you know.’—Mr Edmund Gray nodded gravely.—‘He had no money when we were engaged, and we thought that we

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were going to be quite a poor and humble pair. But a great piece of good fortune happened to him, for Mr Dering made him a Partner.'

'Did he? Very lucky for your friend. But I always thought that Dering ought to have a Partner. At his age it was only prudent—necessary, even.'

'So we were made very happy; and I thought we were the luckiest couple in the world. But just then there was a discovery made at the office—a very singular discovery—I hardly know how to describe it, because it is not quite clear to me even yet. It was concerned with the buying or selling or transfer of certain stocks and shares and coupons and that kind of thing. Mr Dering seems not to remember having signed the papers concerned. There is a fear that they are in wrong hands. There is suspicion of forgery, even. I am ashamed even to mention such a thing to you, but my lover's name has been connected with the business; and Dering's clerk, Checkley—you know Checkley?'—

'Certainly—Dering's old servant.'

'Has openly charged George—on no evidence, to be sure—of having forged the letters, or of having assisted in the forgery.'

'This is very serious.'

'It is very serious; but we do not intend to let the thing interfere with our wedding. Only, unless I can remove the last ray of suspicion before Wednesday, we shall spend our honeymoon at home, in order to watch the case from day to day.'

'Buying or selling stocks? Dering would be constantly doing that.'

'It appears that these transactions were the only things of the kind that he has done this year. That is to say, he denies having done these.'

'Well—as for these having been the only transactions of the kind, he managed a good bit of such business for me this last spring.'

'Did he? Do you remember the details of that business?'

'Clearly. It was only yesterday, so to speak.'

'Was it the purchase or transfer of stock or shares?'

'Certainly. To a very large amount. I have told you about my Industrial Village, have I not? The Village where all are to be equal—all are to work for a certain time every day, and no longer—all are to be paid in rations and clothes and houses, and there is to be no private property—my Ideal Village.'

'I know. A lovely Village.'

'It was early in the spring that I finished my designs for it. Then it occurred to me that it would be well if, instead of always going to my lawyer for money, I had a large sum at my command lying at my Bank. So I instructed Dering to transfer to my name a great quantity of stocks lying in his name. He was a trustee or a—well—it is rather unusual, but I like having all my business affairs managed for me, and—But this will not interest you—this with the look of irritation or bewilderment which sometimes passed over his face. 'The important thing is that it was done, and that my Bank received those transfers, and has instructions to receive the dividends.'

'Oh! And has all the papers, I suppose?'

'It had them. But I thought that perhaps my old friend might think it looked like want of confidence if I left them there, so I sent for them, and took them to his office. They are now in the safe. I put them there myself with my own hand; or he did with his own hand—I forget. Sometimes—it is very odd—when I think of things done at that office, I seem to have done it myself; and sometimes I think that he did it. Not that it matters.'

'Not at all. The papers are actually in the safe again?'

'Certainly. I—that is—he—he or I—put them there.'

'Oh! my dear Master'—Elsie clapped her hands—'this is even more important than the other. You do not know—you cannot guess—what mischiefs you are able to stop. If I had only been able to talk to you about these things before! The paper you have already written is for my brother. Now sit down, my Master, and write another that will do for me.'

'I will do anything you ask me—and everything. But as for this, why not ask Dering? His memory never fails. His mind is like a box which holds everything and can never be filled. Perhaps he would not like these private affairs—as between solicitor and client—to be talked about.'

'We cannot go to Mr Dering. There are certain reasons which would not interest you. All we want is a clear, straightforward statement, an exact statement, of what happened. Sit down now and write me a full account of each transaction.'

'Certainly; if it will be of the least use to you.'

'Early in the present year,' he began, 'I found that my plan of an Industrial Village if it was to be carried into effect would want all the money I could command. It occurred to me that it would be well to transfer a certain sum from the hands of my agent and to place it in my own Bank ready to hand. I began then, in March, with a sum of six thousand pounds, which Dering, by my instructions, handed over to my Bank in the form of shares and stocks. I believe they were transfers of certain stocks held by him in his own name, but forming part of my fortune—my large private fortune. The Bank was instructed to receive the dividends in that sum. A month or so later I obtained from Dering other stock to the value of twelve thousand pounds, the papers of which were also given to my Bank. And after that I took out papers representing twenty thousand pounds; so that I had in my hands, ready to be sold out and used at a moment's notice, no less than thirty-eight thousand pounds. All this money I intended to devote to my Industrial Village. The scheme is still one in which I put my whole confidence. But it has not yet been carried into effect, in consequence of the difficulty of finding working men equal to the situation. They understand working for the man who has the money; they do not understand working for the man who has none, that is for each other and for themselves. For my own part I could only find working men of that stamp. Perhaps I am too much in the study. I do not go about enough among working men. There must be some advanced to my stage

of development.—Well, for want of men, I could not start my Village, and I have not used the money. As for the papers, I have taken them out of the Bank and placed them in Dering's safe.'

Elsie looked over his shoulder, reading every word. 'The letters which Mr Dering wrote to the stockbroker in accordance with your instructions. They were written for him—perhaps—by you. It is unusual, but'—

'I told you,' he replied sharply. 'What is the use of saying things twice? There are some things which confuse a man. I wrote them—he wrote them—he acted for me—or I acted for myself. What matter? The end is as I have written down for you.—Now, will this paper be of any use to you?'

'Of the greatest use. Please sign it, dear Master.'

He obeyed, and signed 'Edmund Gray.'

'There is one thing more.' Elsie saw in his face signs of disquiet, and hastened on. 'You have got your Bank book here?'

'Yes. The Manager sent it here with an impertinent note about references, which I have sent on to Dering.—What do you want with the Bank book? It is in one of those drawers. See—here it is—cheque book too.'

'If I were you, Master, I would have no more trouble about the money. You have given Mr Dering the transfers and papers—why not give him back the money as well? Do not be bothered with money matters. It is of all things important to you to be free from all kinds of business and money matters. Who ever heard of a Prophet drawing a cheque? You sit here and work and meditate. You go to the Hall of Science and teach. It is the business of your friends to see that all your necessities are properly supplied.—Now, if you will in these minor matters suffer your friends to advise.'—

'Surely. I ask for nothing else.'

'Then, dear Master, here is your cheque book and here your Bank book. Draw a cheque payable to the order of Edward Dering for all the money that is lying here—I see it is seven hundred and twenty-three pounds five shillings and threepence.—I will take care of the cheque—so.—Oh! you have signed Edward Dering—careless master! Draw another—now sign it Edmund Gray.—That will do—And you had better at the same time write a letter to the Bank asking the Manager in future to receive the dividends for the account of Mr Dering. I will write the letter, and you shall sign it. Now—no—no—not Edward Dering—Edmund Gray. Your thoughts are wandering.—There!—Now, dear Master, you are free from everything that might trouble you.'

The Master pushed back the blotting pad with impatience, and rose from the chair. Elsie took possession of the signed cheques, the cheque book, the Bank book, and the letter. She had all—the statement in Edmund Gray's own handwriting—all—that was wanted to clear up the business from the beginning to the end. She put everything together in her handbag. She glanced at her companion: she perceived that his face was troubled. 'I wish,' he said fretfully, 'that you had not worried me with those questions about the past. They disturb me. The current of my

thoughts is checked. I am full of Dering and his office and his safe—his safe—and all'—

Elsie trembled. His face was changing—in a minute he would have returned to Mr Dering, and she would have had to explain. 'Master,' she cried, laying her hand upon his arm, 'think. We are going to the Hall of Science—your Hall of Science—yours. The people are waiting for their Prophet. You are to address them. To-night you must surpass yourself, because there are strangers coming. Tell us—once again—all over again—of that world where there is no crime, no suffering, no iniquity, no sin, no sorrow—where there are no poor creatures deprived by a cruel social order of liberty, of leisure, of comfort, of virtue, of everything—poor wretches born only to toil and to endure. Think of them. Speak for them. Plan for them. Make our hearts burn within us for shame and rage. Oh Master'—for his face was troubled still and doubtful, as if he was hovering on the border-land between himself and his other self—'no one can speak to them like you: no one has your power of speech: make them feel that new world—make them see it—actually see it with their earthly eyes—make them feel it in their hearts.'

'Child'—he sighed; his face fell back into repose—'you comfort me. I was falling—before you came to me I used often to fall—into a fit of gloom—I don't know why. Something irritates me: something jars: something awakens a feeling as if I ought to remember—remember—what? I do not know.—I am better now. Your voice, my dear, at such a moment is to me like the sound of David's harp to Saul. It chases away the shadows. Oh! I am better already. I am well. If you want to ask any other questions, do so. As for those transactions—they are perfectly correct in form and everything. I cannot for the life of me understand why Dering, who is a practical man'—

'Never mind Dering, my dear Master—or those transactions. Think only of the world of the New Humanity. Leave the transactions and the papers to me. I hope that you will never find out why they were wanted, or how they were to be used.—Now let us start. We shall be in excellent time.'

The Hall of Science was half full of people—the usual gathering—those who came every Sunday evening and took the simple feast of fraternity. The table was spread with the white cloth, on which were laid out the toast and muffins, the ham and shrimps, and bread and butter and watercresses; and on the appearance of the Chief, the tea was brought up, and they all sat down. Now, it had been observed by all that since the adhesion of this young lady the Leader's discourses had been much more confident, his manner had been clearer, his points more forcibly put. This was because, for the first time, he had had an opportunity of discussing his own doctrines with a mind able to follow him. Nothing so valuable to a teacher of new things as a sympathetic woman for listener and disciple. Witness the leading example of the Prophet Mohammed. Also, their leader had never before been so cheerful—so hopeful—so full of life and youth and spring. He was young again: he talked like a young man, though his hair was gray. This was because

he loved a woman, for the first time in his life : he called it paternal affection : whatever kind of love it was, it worked in him the same miracle that love always works in man—young or old—it gave him back the fire of youth.

This evening he sat at the head of the table dispensing his simple hospitality with a geniality and a heartiness unknown before the arrival of this young lady. He talked, meantime, in the lofty vein, above the style and manner common to his hearers, but not above their comprehension : he spoke of a higher life attainable by man at his best, when the victory over nature should be complete, and every force should be subdued and made slave to man, and all diseases should be swept away, and the Perfect man should stand upon the earth at last, Lord and Master of all—Adamus Redivivus. When that time should come, there would be no Property, of course ; everything was to be in common ; but the new life would be full of love and joy : there would be long-continued youth, so that none should be made to rise from the feast unsatisfied : nay, it seemed to this Dreamer that every one should continue at the feast as long as he pleased, till he was satiated and desired a change. Long-continued youth : all were to be young and to keep young : the girls were to be beautiful and the men strong : he pronounced—he—the hermit—the anchorite—the celibate who knew not love—a eulogy on the beauty of women : and he mourned over those men who miss their share of love.

The hearts of those who heard were uplifted, for this man had the mesmeric faculty of compelling those who heard him to feel what he wanted them to feel. Most of them had been accustomed to regard their Leader as a man of benevolent manners but austere principles. Now he was tender and human, full of sympathy even with those weak vessels who fall in love, and for the sake of love are content to be all their lives slaves—yea, even slaves to Property.

After tea, the tables being cleared, the Chief pronounced his weekly address or sermon. It was generally a discourse on the principles, which all professed, of equality and the abolition of Property. To-night, he carried on the theme on which he had spoken at tea-time, and discoursed on the part which should be played by Love in the New Humanity. Never before had he spoken so convincingly. Never had orator an audience more in sympathy with him.

Shortly after the beginning of the address, there arrived two gentlemen, young and well dressed, who sat down modestly just within the door and listened. The people turned and looked at them with interest. They were not quite the kind of young man peculiar to the street or to the quarter.

When the lecture was over and the audience crowded together to talk before they separated, Elsie slipped across to the new-comers and led them to the lecturer. 'Master,' she said, 'this is my brother Athelstan.'

Mr Edmund Gray shook hands with him. 'Why, Elsie,' he said, 'your brother and I have met already in Gray's Inn.'

'And this is my friend George Austin, Partner of Mr Dering.'

'Mr Austin,' said Mr Edmund Gray, 'I am

glad to meet the man who is about to enter into the most sacred of all bonds with one whom I venture to love, sir, as much as you yourself can do, though I love her as my daughter, and you love her as your bride. You will be the happiest of men. Take care, sir, that you deserve your happiness.'

'This day,' said Elsie, 'you have rendered us all such a service as can never be acknowledged, or repaid, or forgotten. Yet we hope, and pray that somehow you will never understand how great it is.'

WHEAT-THRESHING IN NORTH-WEST CANADA.

THE harvest of 1891 in North-west Canada was the largest Canada has ever had, and it was at the same time the most disappointing. The frost and the smut combined have made a good yield and promising-looking crop almost profitless to the settler. It has also been the crop we have worked the hardest to save. The harvest was late and labour scarce ; a couple of men did the cutting, setting-up, and stacking on most farms in this district. Of course, this without self-binders would have been impossible ; very often each man of such a couple would be the owner of sixty or seventy acres of wheat ; and they would join together to put up the harvest of both farms. In some cases, some isolated bachelor was farmer, labourer, cook, and housemaid all in one ; he, if any one, could appreciate that song where some individual introduces himself as being the 'boat-swain bold and crew of the captain's gig,' besides covering a lot of other persons in his one skin. In this part of Assiniboia the stacking was not finished till the beginning of November, and then the snow came and covered the shocks of several belated ones. After the snow the threshing-machines came ; and from then till the beginning of March they kept steadily at their work, and still there are stacks left, till seeding is finished, whose owners could not get a threshing outfit who had time to come to them. The way in which threshing is carried on in this as in most places round here is on the 'bee' system, but which is likely soon to be replaced by each machine taking a gang of men with it.

But at present when an engine and machine come on to a farm, the settlers for six miles round who have grain to be threshed meet there, bringing their pitchforks with them. The married men, who have cows and pigs, &c., at home to be attended to, come with their teams and wagons, and go home at night. The bachelor turns all his live-stock adrift for forage for themselves, mounts his pony, taking his fork and toilet apparatus—which last is represented by a pipe and plug of tobacco in most cases—with him, and possibly an ox-hide and blanket. He camps in every house he threshes at, if the house belongs to a fellow-bachelor. A corner—the farthest from the door for choice—is bedded down with an armful of straw ; on this, covered with blanket and hide, he sleeps as soundly as he does in the bed which the farmer's wife provides for him when the threshing reaches that kind of a farm.

A shanty twelve by fourteen feet is large

enough to accommodate six men at night, and to cook for and feed twice that number during the day. With the thermometer down in the zeros, there is no complaint about stuffiness. A knot-hole in the wall not big enough to shove your finger through is amply sufficient to keep the air of the house thoroughly pure, and to allow a few cubic feet of snow to trickle through on to the floor or the sleepers below.

As soon as the engine has got up steam—a difficult matter on a cold day—and enough hands have arrived, a start is made. The machine sits between two stacks, which are threshed together; three men get on to each stack, or, as a general thing, the whole crowd get on each, and pretend to ignore the fact that the straw-carriers or grain-spout require any human attention whatever. This little oversight is pointed out to them by the machine-men; and after all have claimed to have mounted the grain-stack before any one else, some of the most good-natured sorrowfully climb down, to submit to a martyrdom on the straw, for which they look only for the public's anathema if they fail to keep the straw away and let the carriers 'bung.' As for any reward for hard work in the way of praise, they know too well that it is the peculiar attribute of that part of the machine that, although hard work and all the dirt come that way, the men on the straw need not look for praise.

With three men on each grain-stack, two more men standing one on each side of the feeder, to cut the bands of the sheaves and pass them to him along the feed-table; and three men on the straw, who stand in line one behind the other, passing the straw from man to man, piling it up anyhow as long as they can keep the mouth of the carriers free; and when the grain-spout runs into a large bin, one hundred bushels an hour is only an ordinary average when the grain is good. But when, as in this last threshing, there are only two on the grain, and that only on one side, and two on the straw, the above average might be divided by five.

The most unpleasant part about the machine is the part of the men on the straw; this is especially so when the grain is smutty; then they are wrapped in an ink-black cloud, which clogs up all the passages to the lungs, all the more distressing from the soft deep footing of the newly-threshed straw, which helps to rob them of their breath, by keeping them continually climbing to avoid being buried, and so forcing them to inhale the smut in large quantities. These men come off at dinner-time from the straw with a crust of black as thick as a dollar over their faces, their eyes streaming and bloodshot, an itching smarting skin, and a feeling as of a tremendous cold in the head. But in spite of all, every one seems to keep his appetite; and the food at a threshing is always splendid; 'as good as threshing-grub' is a well-known saying to describe anything in the line of good victuals.

Dinner is generally beefsteak, as often as you like to reach for it, with turnips and potatoes; besides which, cakes of various and curious kinds; and pies of apple and apricot wander from hand to hand about the table. The teacups are kept full, and you catch the milk and sugar for yourself, and fix your tea as you think it

should be fixed. Towards the end, a large plate of plum-duff is given each man; and as soon as that is finished, there is a general dive into trouser-pockets and the pipes fished up and filled; and all leave the table cautiously, and avoiding all chance of a collision, or anything that might jar the system; then, on the chairs and floor farthest from the table the crowd sit down to smoke and debate over many things amongst each other. A subject is usually chosen in which all are comfortably out of their depth, and then while the women-folk wash the dishes, and we wait for the engine's whistle, the subject is argued over in all its bearings, some of which probably were never suspected before to have any relation whatever to the question in hand; and it is not at all uncommon for an argument that started in politics to be hunted all through religion, and only escape death in astronomy by the whistle sending all the keen hunters into their overcoats, fur caps, and mittens, and hurrying them out to their places round the machine.

Many days of this last winter, threshing was carried on though the thermometer marked thirty below zero, and the day was not the beginning and end of work; for often, as it grew dark, a man would be told off to keep a straw bonfire going, and then work would be carried on by its light three hours after dark. It is a curious sight for any one, after a long tramp across the still prairie in the darkness, to come suddenly to the bank of a creek or valley-edge and see a threshing outfit in full blast at the bottom, as once I did after about an hour's walk. The night was dark and thick with a haze of frost; even the snow hardly showed bright underfoot. I had felt the absolute silence and loneliness of the prairie all the more from being uncertain whether I was walking in the direction of home, or only just wandering around, and I suspected myself of the latter. There were no stars or wind to guide me; suddenly, a faint hum of a threshing-machine caught my ear. I followed it; and after some twenty minutes I came to the brink of the steep bank of a creek, and there in the bottom, in a blaze of red and yellow light, was a threshing outfit hard at work. It looked like a living picture let into an eternity of darkness and silence, as though it was one little spot where all the life that remained in this world had met, and made a small kingdom of light in the middle of an eternity of darkness and space. The haze was so thick that the snow, one hundred paces from the straw fire, did not reflect the light; but the snow round the stacks shone brilliantly, and lit up the smoke that curled in heavy billows and columns above the men's heads with a bright yellow glare; while the red-hot heart of the fire itself, and the raked-out ashes of the engine that was spluttering away in the half-light of the background, coloured the smoke and steam above them a deep red, which gave a warm look to the whole—a look only, for many were complaining of freezing fingers. I was not sorry I had lost my way. I was in time for supper, and supper is much on the same lines as dinner at a threshing.

But although the yield was from thirty to sixty bushels the acre, the wheat, in spite of smudges against frost, and blue stone against

smut, is both frozen and smutty, and in many cases the farmer would have been both money and labour to the good if he had sown no wheat at all. Wheat unfrozen, plump, and sound, and hard, gets only one shilling and twopence a bushel from the local buyers of the big firms if ever so slightly discoloured at the tip of the kernel by smut, 'tagged' as it is called. That is, the settler who has not enough grain to make a car to ship east only gets that; if he can do that, some say there is an astonishing difference in the price, enough to almost reconcile him to his loss by smut; but I can't speak from my own experience, as I had not enough to try.

THE DECK HAND.

CHAPTER II.—CONCLUSION.

CONTRARY to Genth Hurley's expectations, Tom Harrington took the berth offered him. A week after the interview in the office, he sailed in the *Comet* for the fishing-grounds of the North Sea. Eight weeks, long and dreary to those at sea, soon pass ashore. To Genth, in the office, time flew. The morning the *Comet* was due again found him nervously pacing the quay. He had made his plans. This trip would prove Tom's salvation. He had found a desk for him in the office, and under his own eye Harrington should commence the new life. Though Genth's mind was busy, his eyes kept straying down the harbour; and at last he heard the pant, pant, pant of a tug, and saw her red-banded funnel passing the lower ferry. Astern was a dandy-rigged trawler. Scores of smacks and luggers were already moored at the quay-side, and what with scandalised sails, masts, shrouds, and dangling halliards, it was a minute or two before he could make her out. When the snake-like coil of the towrope was cast off and the tug sheered out, Genth saw the newcomer was the *Comet*. He made a step forward, then stopped as if he had been shot. His eyes were glued to her rigging. She was flying her flag half-mast high! It was not the first time Genth had beheld that ominous sign, but now it turned him faint. In his mind ran one thought—suppose it was flying for Tom Harrington! He stood for a minute fascinated, then walked gloomily back to the office. He sat there with his face buried in his hands, when the opening of the door, the sound of sea-boots, and the voice of Holmes, aroused him. 'I ken see, owner,' he said, 'you ha' been on the quay.'

'Tell me,' said Genth with dry lips, 'whom you have lost?'

The skipper of the *Comet* passed a large hand through his oakum-textured hair. 'Well, owner,' he said slowly, 'I'll speak the truth. 'Twor this way: the wind were east'—

'In God's name!' cried Genth, 'who is it?'

'To sail straight to the pint, owner, 'tis the new deck chap.'

Genth looked at him helplessly. Harrington! He had made all his little plans, and a greater Hand than his had swept them away. 'When did this take place?' he asked.

'The night afore larst. We wor acomin'

home,' said Holmes, directing his gaze to a nautical almanac, and telling his tale to it as it hung on a nail, 'wi' the wind east-nor'-east; I had jest fixed the port an' starboard lights, an' was taking a spell at the tiller. All of a sudden I sees a great green sea acomin', which I knew we'd ship, an' I sung out to the chaps to keep below. Jest as the werds passed my lips, some one popped out o' the hoodway [companion]. The sea an' him must ha' touched the *Comet's* deck at the same time; an' afore I could clutch him, he was swept over the starboard rail. I hulled a belt at him, an' put the tiller up. A'most as sune as we gat about, our boat was launched, an' the chaps were in her. They pulled like madmen; but you know, owner, how fast a drowndin' man drifts to windward. They could never git nigh him; an' when I picked the crew o' the boat up, they wor done for. They couldn't ha' pulled another stroke for the Indies. An' the deck chap was gone. All we picked up was this'—he held up a soiled sou'-wester.

'You must report it,' said Genth heavily—'it's all you can do now.'

Holmes nodded, and slouched away. When he was gone, Genth went to his desk and drew from it a sheet of note-paper; on it was written the number of a 'row.'

'And I must break the news,' he said.

On a bleak January afternoon, two years later, a man came through the tollgate. To save a mile or so, he had reached Herringbourne by a cheerless, treeless cut called the New Road. He was thin and bearded. His clothes were shabby, and his steps uncertain. As he tendered the halfpenny toll his fingers burnt like fire. The sun went down as he came through the gate, and the traveller shivered. An easterly wind was blowing. It lay in wait for him as he rounded a corner, and a roaring gust brought him up gasping for breath. But still he wearily plodded on. At last he stopped before a 'row,' went up it, and then stopped again, in front of a house with the shutters closed. On them was chalked—'To Let.' In a dazed sort of way he looked at the letters, then made his way to the quay. Here he halted at the office of Hurley's Fleet. With a trembling hand he tried the door. It was locked. Then, indeed, he seemed to lose heart, and sat a moment on the doorstep. He was looking at the black bough of a tree that flapped noisily against a lighted lamp, when a smacksman came past. The weary object stopped him and asked him where Hurley lived. He was told; and with a sigh went on again, this time towards the Drive. The sky grew darker, and it began to snow, first in light flakes, that he feebly tried to brush away, then faster. Soon he heard the roar of the angry sea, and saw the flaming eye of the Floating Light as it rocked inside the Scroby. Here the wind blew fiercer: it gathered the white flakes together and hurled them into his face till they blinded him. Staggering, clutching at iron rails, and turning his face to them when the strong gusts swept off the sea, he went on till he reached the gate of a house where the blinds were parted and the room illumined by gas jets and a merry leaping fire. By that fire

a man sat reading. It was Genth Hurley. The stranger outside opened the gate; the wind drove him up to the door, and he pulled the bell. It was answered by a servant, who gazed at him curiously. He asked if he could see the smack-owner.

'Of course you can,' she said sharply. 'But shake some of that snow off!'

He tried, but his fingers seemed numb. She impatiently beckoned him in, and left him on the mat while she informed her master a man wanted him. Before she could speak, the visitor had stolen up behind. As she drew back, he and Genth came face to face. The attitude of the shabby figure was humble, and his knees shook.

'Come in,' cried Genth cheerily—'come in, my man. You wanted to see me?'

In a hesitating way the other stepped forward; particles of snow had melted on his beard and hung in glistening drops.

'Don't you know me, Hurley?' he asked, in a trembling tone. 'I wonder if Nell will know me? I'm Tom Harrington!'

With a strange, gurgling cry Genth fell back and clutched at the mantel-piece. He seemed turned to stone. The visitor looked wistfully at the bright fire, and caressed his thin hands as if he were warming them. 'No, no!' gasped Genth hoarsely, 'not him!—not Tom Harrington! He was drowned at sea.'

'Not drowned,' said the other; and his voice sounded so gentle, so unlike the Harrington of old, that there was plenty of room for mistaking his identity; 'but picked up by a schooner, when he had lost all hope. I was carried to a strange place, and I had the fever.' He drew a little nearer the fire, and put his hand on the back of a chair; then, with a smile, he looked at Genth. Hurley's face wore an awful frozen look. He appeared cowering back.

'I'm very tired,' said the wanderer feebly. 'May I sit down? I have been to some strange places, but I'm home now; and I want to find Nell. I have been to the old house, but she was not there. But you'll help me to find her, won't you? You'll tell me where she is?'

His voice was eager, and again he looked at Genth. The door of the room was only partly closed, and through it there came a faint cry; then a soothing sound; then a cry louder than the first. The rescued man pricked his ears.

'A baby!' he said. 'So you are married. Perhaps—perhaps,' he added timidly, 'you don't want me here. I had better go. I had no right to come; but I thought you could tell me where Nell was.' He gazed again at the fire, and his shaky fingers strayed over the buttons of his threadbare coat. With an effort he staggered up.

It was only Genth's lips that moved. 'Yes, yes,' he said, in a hollow tone, 'go! And in the name of God, go quick! To-morrow—I'll see you to-morrow.'

A gust of wind drove the snow against the window. Before the fleeting patterns of the flakes were off the glass, another gust made them afresh. Harrington shivered. 'It's very cold,' he said; 'but I'll walk quick, and you'll tell me where to find Nell?'

As he put the question there sounded a rippling laugh; then the joyous snatch of a song, as some

one tripped down the stairs. The wanderer's face grew bright. He held up his hand. 'Listen!' he cried breathlessly. 'That is Nell's voice! My Nell! That is the song she used to sing long ago! Why, she is here, Hurley—she is!—' He turned wonderingly to Genth. The smack-owner's jaw had fallen; his teeth were chattering; and, trembling in every limb, he barely held up by the mantel-piece.

A puzzled look stole over Harrington's face. It cleared; and he too began to tremble. 'Your wife!' he whispered. 'You have married her! You thought me dead! I am going—I am going.' He put his hand out to feel for the door. He was trying to find the handle, when it swung open and Nell stood on the threshold. He gave a low sob, and with bent head sought to pass her. She tried to see his face.

'I am going, Nell,' he mumbled—'I am going.' He was quite helpless now, and blinded by tears.

At the sound of his voice, at the sight of the shaky figure grown suddenly old, some memory stirred her, and she clutched him by the arm. He lifted his head; their eyes met, and with a wild scream she sank to the floor.

An hour later, a doctor came. He looked at Harrington, who had been put to bed, and shook his head. 'I'm no use,' he said. 'Cold, exposure, a debilitated constitution. The man has been dying for weeks. He may last the night out; I doubt it.'

The doctor was right. Harrington gradually grew weaker and weaker. His brain wandered to strange scenes, the 'River Plate, Costa Rica: then home, and Nell. When his mind partially cleared, she was bending over him, and Genth sat holding his hand. Like a child he put up his face, and she kissed him. He looked, smiling, at Genth; then his head fell back on the pillow. 'I am going,' he said softly—'I am going.' There was a faint flutter of breath, and his eyes closed. The Deck Hand had gone.

THE DEATH OF SUMMER.

WILD Autumn winds blow chill and drear

Across the cloudy, storm-rent sky,

While hill and valley, far and near,

Folded in misty silence lie.

No sound of music fills the air,

No voice of bird along the brake;

Only the wild-fowl's cry, remote and rare,

Among the withered sedges of the lake.

Gone is the glory of the summer noon;

Gone is the tender grace of dawning light;

The soft, sweet radiance of the rising moon,

The silver silence of the starry night.

Yet, there is splendour in the waning woods,

And Summer dies, as dies a royal king,

All down the grassy glades where Silence broods

Beneath his shroud of golden blazoning;

Where amid leafy boughs, from spray to spray,

Falls the first touch of Winter's icy breath—

The first faint sign of lingering decay—

And smites the ruddy beech with crimson death.

B. G. JOHNS.

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THE ORIGIN OF PETROLEUM.

ANYTHING that adds to our knowledge of coal, or throws any light on the origin of the vast subterranean stores of petroleum oil and natural gas which have proved of such incalculable service to man, must be received with universal interest. A paper read by Professor Watson Smith at a meeting of the London Section of the Society of Chemical Industry does both. It principally deals with the results of his experiments on a highly bituminous Japanese coal, and the conclusions deducible from them.

This coal is produced from a mine at Miike, in the province of Chikugo, in Kiu-shiu, a large island in the south-west extremity of the Japanese Empire. The mine has the advantage of being close to the sea, and faces Shimabara Bay, from which it is some twenty miles distant. The deposit was known four hundred years ago; but as the Japanese have only learned quite recently the multifarious uses to which coal can be put, it was not worked until 1873, after the Government had purchased it at the request of its private proprietors. About 1876, the firm of Mitsui was appointed sole agents for the sale of this coal, the production having then reached three hundred tons per day. In 1885 a new shaft was sunk to a depth of two hundred and forty feet, and the output increased to twelve hundred tons per day; and in 1888 Mitsui bought the mine for about £750,000. Since then the newest machinery has been introduced into the mine, and every opportunity has been taken to improve the roads, harbours, and means of transit: a new shaft four hundred feet deep has been sunk; and the coal production for 1891 was estimated to reach the total of 600,000 tons. The coal-beds are supposed to cover an area of 3758 acres, containing some 85,444,000 tons of the mineral. The seam averages fully eight feet thick, and is of uniform and excellent quality throughout. It is coming largely into use for steam-raising, and is probably the best coal in Japan. The China Merchant Steam Navigation Company were the first to use Miike

coal on board their ships; but were soon followed by many other important firms trading in Chinese waters. Mr Thomas Weir of Shanghai minutely describes its manner of burning as follows: 'The Miike lump coal is highly bituminous, having a rather dull, rusty appearance. On first being put on the fire, it gives off great volumes of black smoke—which could be burned with careful management and suitable arrangement of furnace—and softens almost like pitch; but soon hardens, cokes, and burns brightly, giving off great heat, &c.' The reason for this dense cloud of black smoke will appear later, and is the gist of the whole argument.

It is a well-established fact, and a pretty obvious one too, that our coal deposits are nothing but masses of fossilised vegetation. Peat or turf, which covers nearly one-tenth of the entire surface of Ireland, is being rapidly formed at the present day. The principal plants that take part in this formation are bog-mosses, known under the generic name of *Sphagnum*. They grow very fast, the lower portion dying away as the upper part grows over them and shuts out the light and air; but the stems, being very wiry and persistent, form a tangled mass, which holds water like a sponge, and supplies the necessary moisture for the growth of the living portion above it. The remains of larger plants, trunks of trees, and other things, fall into it, and help more or less to assist in its formation. During heavy rains it gets silted up with mud, and is gradually converted into a solid felted mass. The softer portions of the bog-moss moulder away by degrees, and only the denser woody fibre and the resinous spores are finally left to form a store of carbonaceous material, which might in time and under proper conditions produce a kind of coal. It forms so fast in some places that Roman remains, and even Roman roads, have been found buried beneath eight feet of peat. The observations of the late Mr Binney of Manchester proved that oil flows from the peat, and it seems very likely that ozokerite, or earth-wax, is thus derived. By means of solvents, six per cent. of

oil can be extracted from peat itself. This oil, although not paraffin oil, resembled it in many respects. Oil has been found, too, under a large heath in Germany, the Luneberger Heide.

This process of peat-formation we can see going on under our very eyes, and, if there was nothing else to guide us, we should almost infer from that alone that coal had at all events a similar origin. Within the last few years, however, many facts bearing on the question have been brought to light. Coal always occurs in beds or seams, which vary a great deal in thickness. There are in general several beds in a coal-field, lying one over the other. Beneath each bed is always a layer of 'underclay' or 'seat-earth'; and the bed is covered by a stratum of shale. It is the same for every seam, no matter how many there may be. We have shale, coal, underclay—shale, coal, underclay, and so on repeated in every case. In between the underclay of one bed and the shale overlying the next, we may of course have bands of iron ore, sandstone or other water-deposited rocks; but just before we reach the coal, there is the shale, and below it the underclay, or something corresponding to it. The shale forming the 'roof' of the coal frequently contains impressions of fern-fronds, and in the underclay, fossils called 'stigmariæ' are often very abundant. These have the appearance of deeply-pitted stems, and the scars, or 'stigmata,' were thought to have been the places where the leaves were attached. In the mass of the coal, fluted tree trunks are found, called 'sigillariæ,' from the leaf-scars resembling the impressions of a seal. One day when a railway cutting was being driven through a Lancashire coal-field, it revealed a group of sigillaria trees resting on a seam of coal exactly where they must have grown, and sending down their roots into the underclay below. Mr Binney discovered that these roots were no other than the well-known stigmariæ, and that the scars themselves were the remains of rootlets, and not of leaves. It is evident from this that the fossilised vegetation grew where it is formed, as peat does now, and was not carried down to its resting-place by rivers, or transported thither by accident. Of course, small quantities of coal may have been formed by these delta deposits; but it seems hardly likely that the eighty distinct beds which may be recognised in the South Wales coal-field, for example, could have been produced in such an adventitious manner. The time that must have been required for the deposition of our coal-measures quite transcends our powers of imagination. Every separate seam of coal meant a depression of the earth where it grew beneath the water-level, for the rocks which cover it are sedimentary. Then, after a long interval, measured perhaps by tens of thousands of years, it was again raised above the surface, and a fresh forest gradually grew up; to be, after long ages, again submerged, and so on, until the whole series of fireclays, coal-seams, shales, sandstones, and iron ores were piled one above the other, hundreds of feet deep.

The well-known club-moss or *Lycopodium* is, like the peat-forming sphagnum, propagated by spores instead of seeds. Ferns also reproduce

themselves in the same way, and on the back of a fern frond in early summer, small green, generally kidney-shaped, bodies may be easily recognised. They are really small sacs—the 'sporangia,' which later on become filled with large numbers of little brown granules, the spores. The *lycopodium* spores are somewhat similar, and are produced by the plant in enormous quantities. They are highly resinous, and were formerly used in the theatre to produce mimic lightning, as, when they are blown through a spirit-flame, a vivid flash is caused; and in night-signalling they take the place of the heliograph. In examining thin sections of coal under the microscope, Professor Morris discovered numbers of yellowish sac-like bodies, which were at once identified as sporangia; and enclosed in them, and disseminated through the surrounding matrix, were quantities of small granules, which are no doubt the spores themselves. Although they bear such an exact resemblance to the fruit of the *lycopodium*, they did not grow on an insignificant plant two or three feet from the ground, but on a mighty forest tree, the *Lepidodendron*, towering up a hundred feet high, the remains of which occur abundantly in the coal-measures, and have sometimes been found with the cover in which the spore-cases are actually preserved, still attached to their branches. In spite of their difference in height, the resemblance between the shape of their stems and spores and spore-cases is so striking, that it seems impossible to doubt that the old forest giant which flourished perhaps hundreds of thousands of years ago was nothing but a magnified edition of the lowly club-moss. As with the peat, so with the coal; the softer portion gradually mouldered away, leaving only the hard woody tree stems and waterproof resinous spores; and Professor W. Boyd Dawkins says: 'No doubt, the bituminous matter of coal is almost all derived from the spores and sporangia of fossil vegetation allied to the club-moss. Our bituminous coal derives its bitumen from this altered resinous matter, first stored up in the fruits (spores, &c.), and afterwards more or less altered by subterranean heat into bitumen.'

Now, as regards the Japanese coal, Professor Watson Smith found it to contain no less than ten per cent. of bitumen or resinoids. The highest he was able to extract even from cannel coal was only a little over one per cent. This ten per cent. is therefore an enormous proportion, and marks out the Miike coal as a very remarkable one indeed. As might be expected, it is an excellent coal for gas-making, giving over 11,000 cubic feet of 23·4 candle-power gas per ton. When a splinter of it is placed in the flame, it catches fire and flares like a torch of pinewood. Now Dr Percy has shown that the ashes of a coal closely resemble the fireclay of the contiguous seams in which it grew. The ash of Miike coal contains a large proportion of lime, showing that the vegetation from which it was derived flourished in a chalky soil. Judging from this, its investigator considers it likely that, the soil being favourable to their growth, the trees from which the coal was derived must have been of an unusually resinous character.

A large quantity of this bitumen was extracted and fractionally distilled—that is, the heat was kept constant at a particular temperature until

nothing more distilled over, and then raised fifty degrees, and kept there until the renewed distillation again ceased; and so on. The first fraction smelt exactly like benzoline or petroleum naphtha; the next fraction when refined bore the unmistakable odour of petroleum lamp oil; and the next on cooling deposited paraffin scale abundantly; and the oil drained off was very similar to the lubricating oils obtained from American petroleum. Thus we see the reason for the dense volumes of black smoke which are given off when it is thrown on the furnace fire.

The question at once arises: could this petroleum-like substance formed in the coal have any bearing on the origin of petroleum? Professor Watson Smith replies that here we have a coal with the petroleum in it, which can be distilled off at a moderately high temperature. Supposing the Miike coal uniform throughout, there is distributed through it at this present moment no fewer than 8,544,000 tons of bitumen, capable of yielding some 1,800,000 tons of thick petroleum oil, and 427,000 tons of solid paraffin wax. If this were contained in porous sandstone, like the Pennsylvanian deposits, instead of being still left in the coal, we should certainly call it a most important reservoir of petroleum.

The next step the investigator proposes to take is to distil off the oil from a considerable quantity of the coal and see what the residual coal is like. Probably a residue resembling anthracite, a kind of coal converted almost into coke by natural agencies, will be left behind. In Pennsylvania and Eastern Ohio, where petroleum is found in such large quantities, it occurs uniformly saturating heavy beds of porous sandstone. This sandstone is overlaid by an impervious roof of slate, that holds down both the oil and the gas in the rock below under great pressure. The sandstone rests on an immense formation of shale, over one thousand feet thick, containing large quantities of animal and vegetable remains. Contiguous to these strata, although now separated by a branch of the Alleghanies which may have been upheaved more recently than the deposits, are vast beds of anthracite coal, which form by far the most important coal-field in America. The five separate beds cover an area amounting to four hundred and thirty-four square miles, and the coal-measures range from two to three thousand feet in depth. The average thickness of the actual coal-seams is at least seventy feet, and they reach a maximum of two hundred and seven feet. Is it not possible that the oil was once embosomed in this anthracite, as it is now in the Japanese coal? And, being driven out by subterranean heat, was absorbed by the neighbouring sandstone in the same way that, in the laboratory, the condenser imprisoned the vapours distilling over from the retort? Tar and oil springs are of frequent occurrence in our own country, although the production is insignificant. Here, there is no doubt that they originated in the coal.

Petroleum occurs widely distributed in various geological formations, and it is not contended that the above is the only way in which it may have originated. In fact, the shale described as underlying the petroleum deposits is a mass of fossil organisms, both animal and vegetable, of which it contains such quantities, that Dr J. S. Newbery

has suggested that the Silurian ocean from which it was deposited must have been a veritable Sargasso Sea. M. Zoloziecki has put forward a theory of paraffin formation from animal matter. Petroleum, indeed, has been obtained from animal substances at a great heat and high pressure. Under suitable conditions, too, it can be produced from fish-oil; and the Old Red Sandstone and other rocks, we know, teem with fossilised fish; but there are certain chemical considerations derived from the actual composition of mineral oil which, whilst throwing doubt upon all these hypotheses, do not render them altogether untenable. So that, although these other sources may have contributed, it seems more probable that the main origin was a carbonaceous one, especially since turpentine has been discovered in petroleum residues.

Thus, to sum up, we see that, to account for these deposits, we must carry our thoughts back to the time when the earth was covered with a dense bath of warm vapour, through which no ray of the sun could penetrate, as the surface of the planet Saturn is now; and in imagination, watch the vast forests of *Lepidodendrons*, tree ferns, *sigillarias*, and other flowerless giants scattering their showers of innumerable yellow resinous spores and cones, for century after century, on the marshy ground below; these in turn being covered with water and compressed beneath beds of sedimentary rock to form bituminous coal, which, perhaps ages after, was distilled by volcanic heat, and yielded the hidden store of oil and gas which well up in such enormous quantities from the sandstone of Pennsylvania and Ohio.

BLOOD ROYAL.

CHAPTER IV.—A ROYAL POURPARLER.

NEXT morning, when Richard went down to his work in town, Mr Wells, his employer, accosted him at once with the unwelcome greeting: 'Hullo, Plantagenet, so I hear you're going up to college at Oxford!'

Nothing on earth could well have been more unpleasant for poor Dick. He saw at once from Mr Wells's tone that his father must have bragged: he must have spoken of the projected trip at the *White Horse* last night, not as a mere speculative journey in search of a problematical and uncertain Scholarship, but as a *fait accompli*, a domestic arrangement dependent on the mere will of the house of Plantagenet. However, we must all answer for the sins of our fathers: there was nothing for it now but to brazen it out as best he might; so Dick at once confided to his master the true state of the case, explaining that he would only want a few days' holiday, during which he engaged to supply an efficient substitute; that his going to Oxford permanently must depend on his success in the Scholarship examination; and that even if he succeeded, which he modestly judged unlikely, he wouldn't need to give up his present engagement and go into residence at the university till October.

These explanations, frankly given with manly candour, had the good effect of visibly mollifying Mr Wells's nascent and half-unspoken resentment. Richard had noticed just at first that he assumed

a sarcastic and somewhat aggrieved tone, as one who might have expected to be the first person informed of this intended new departure. But as soon as all was satisfactorily cleared up, the bookseller's manner changed immediately, and he displayed instead a genuine interest in the success of the great undertaking. To say the truth, Mr Wells was not a little proud of his unique assistant. He regarded him with respect, not unminged with pity. All Chiddingwick, indeed, took a certain compassionate interest in the Plantagenet family. They were, so to speak, public property and local celebrities. Lady Agatha Moore herself, the wife of the Squire, and an Earl's daughter, always asked Mrs Plantagenet to her annual garden-party. Chiddingwickians pointed out the head of the house to strangers, and observed with pardonable possessive pride: 'That's our poor old dancing-master; he's a Plantagenet born, and some people say if it hadn't been for those unfortunate Wars of the Roses, he'd have been king of England. But now he holds classes at the *White Horse* Assembly Rooms.' Much more then, had, Mr Wells special reason to be proud of his own personal relations with the heir of the house, the final inheritor of so much shadowy and hypothetical splendour. The moment he learned the real nature of Dick Plantagenet's errand, he was kindness itself to his clever assistant. He desired to give Dick every indulgence in his power. Mind the shop? No, certainly not! Richard would want all his time now to cram for the examination. He must cram, cram, cram: there was nothing like cramming!

During the four days that remained before the trip to Oxford, Mr Wells wouldn't hear of Richard's doing any more work in the shop than was absolutely necessary. He must spend all his time, the good man said, in reading Hume and Smollett—the latest historical authorities of whom the Chiddingwick bookseller had any personal knowledge. Dick availed himself for the most part of his employer's kindness; but there was one piece of work, he said, which he couldn't neglect, no matter what happened. It was a certain book-binding job of no very great import—just a couple of volumes to cover in half-calf for the governess at the rectory. Yet he insisted upon doing it. Somehow, though he had only seen Mary Tudor once, for those few minutes in the shop, he attached a very singular and sentimental importance to binding that book for her. She was a pretty girl, for one thing, an extremely pretty girl, and he admired her intensely; but that wasn't all; she was a Tudor as well, and he was a Plantagenet. In some vague half-conscious way he reflected more than once that 'it had gone with a Tudor, and with a Tudor it might come back again.' What he meant by that *It* he hardly knew himself: certainly not the crown of this United Kingdom; for Dick was far too good a student of constitutional history not to be thoroughly aware that the crown of England itself was elective, not hereditary; and he had far too much common sense to suppose for one moment that the people of these three realms would desire to disturb the Act of Settlement and repeal the Union in order to place a local dancing-master or a bookseller's assistant on the throne of England.

The days wore away; Stubbs and Freeman were well thumbed: the two books for Mary Tudor were bound in the daintiest fashion known to Chiddingwickian art: and on the morning of the eventful Wednesday itself, when he was first to try his fate at Oxford, Dick took them up in person, neatly wrapped in white tissue paper, to the door of the rectory.

Half-way up the garden path, Mary met him by accident. She was walking in the grounds with one of the younger children; and Dick, whose quick imagination had built up already a curious castle in the air, felt half shocked to find that a future queen of England, Wales, and Ireland (*de jure*) should be set to take care of the rector's babies. However, he forgot his indignation, when Mary, recognising him, advanced with a pleasant smile—her smile was always considered the prettiest thing about her—and said in a tone as if addressed to an equal: 'Oh, you've brought back my books, have you? That's punctuality itself. Don't mind taking them to the door.—How much are they, please? I'll pay at once for them.'

Now, this was a trifle disconcerting to Dick, who had reasons of his own for not wishing her to open the parcel before him. Still, as there was no way out of it, he answered in a somewhat shamefaced and embarrassed voice: 'It comes to three-and-sixpence.'

Mary had opened the packet meanwhile and glanced hastily at the covers. She saw in a second that the bookseller's lad had exceeded her instructions. For the books were bound in full calf, very dainty and delicate, and on the front cover of each was stamped in excellent workmanship—a Tudor rose, with the initials *M. T.* intertwined in a neat little monogram beneath it. She looked at them for a moment with blank dismay in her eye, thinking just at first what a lot he must be going to charge her for it; then, as he named the price, a flush of shame rose of a sudden to her soft round cheek. 'Oh, no,' she said hurriedly. 'It *must* be more than that. You couldn't possibly bind them so for only three-and-sixpence!'

'Yes, I did,' Dick answered, now as crimson as herself. 'You'll find the bill inside. Mr Wells wrote it out. There's no error at all. You'll see it's what I tell you.'

Mary fingered her well-worn purse with uncertain fingers. 'Surely,' she said again, 'you've done it all in calf. Mr Wells can't have known exactly how you were doing it.'

This put a Plantagenet at once upon his mettle. 'Certainly he did,' Dick answered, almost haughtily. 'It was a remnant of calf, no use for anything else, that I just made fit by designing those corners. He said I could use it up if I cared to take the trouble. And I *did* care to take the trouble, and to cut a block for the rose, and to put on the monogram, which was all my own business, in my own overtime. Three-and-sixpence is the amount it's entered in the books for.'

Mary gazed hard at him in doubt. She scarcely knew what to do. She felt by pure instinct he was too much of a gentleman to insult him by offering him money for what had obviously been a labour of love to him; and yet, for her own part, she didn't like to receive those hand-

some covers to some extent as a present from a perfect stranger, and especially from a man in his peculiar position. Still, what else could she do? The books were her own; she couldn't refuse them now, merely because he chose to put a Tudor rose upon them—all the more as they contained those little marginal notes of 'localities' and 'finds' which even the amateur botanist prizes in his heart above all printed records; and she couldn't bear to ask this grave and dignified young man to take the volumes back, remove the covers on which he had evidently spent so much pains and thought, and replace them by three-and-sixpence worth of plain cloth, unlettered. In the end she was constrained to say frigidly, in a lowered voice: 'They're extremely pretty. It was good of you to take so much trouble about an old book like this. There's the money, thank you:—and—I'm greatly obliged to you.'

The words stuck in her throat. She said them almost necessarily with some little stiffness. And as she spoke, she looked down, and dug her parasol into the gravel of the path for nervousness. But Richard Plantagenet's pride was far deeper than her own. He took the money frankly; that was Mr Wells's; then he answered in that lordly voice he had inherited from his father: 'I'm glad you like the design; it's not quite original: I copied it myself with a few variations from the cover of a book that once belonged to Margaret Tudor. Her initials and yours are the same. But I see you think I oughtn't to have done it. I'm sorry for that: yet I had some excuse. I thought a Plantagenet might venture to take a little more pains than usual over a book for a Tudor. *Noblesse oblige.*' And as he spoke, standing a yard or two off her, with an air of stately dignity, he lifted his hat, and then moved slowly off down the path to the gate again.

Mary didn't know why, but with one of those impulsive fits which often come over sympathetic women, she ran hastily after him. 'I beg your pardon,' she said, catching him up, and looking into his face with her own as flushed as his. 'I'm afraid I've hurt you. I'm sure I didn't mean to. It was very, very kind of you to design and print that monogram so nicely. I understand your reasons, and I'm immensely obliged. It's a beautiful design: I shall be proud to possess it.'

As for Richard, he dared hardly raise his eyes to meet hers, they were so full of tears. This rebuff was very hard on him. But the tell-tale moisture didn't quite escape Mary. 'Thank you,' he said simply. 'I—I meant no rudeness; very much the contrary. The coincidence interested me; it made me wish to do the thing for you as well as I could. I'm sorry if I was obtrusive. But—one sometimes forgets—or perhaps remembers. It's good of you to speak so kindly.' And he raised his hat once more, and, walking rapidly off without another word, disappeared down the road in the direction of the High Street.

As soon as he was gone, Mary went back into the rectory. Mrs Tradescant, the rector's wife, was standing in the hall. Mary reflected at once that the little girl had listened open-eared to all this queer colloquy, and that to prevent misapprehension, the best thing she could do would be to report it all herself before the child could

speak of it. So she told the whole story of the strange young man who had insisted on binding her poor dog-eared old botany-book in such regal fashion. Mrs Tradescant glanced at it and only smiled. 'Oh, my dear, you mustn't mind him,' she said. 'He's one of those crazy Plantagenets. They're a very queer lot; as mad as hatters. The poor old father's a drunken old wretch, come down in the world, they say: he teaches dancing; but his mania is that he ought by rights to be king of England. He never says so openly, you know: he's too cunning for that: but in a covert sort of way, he lays tacit claim to it. The son's a very well conducted young man in his own rank, I believe, but as cracked as the father; and as for the daughter, oh, my dear—such a stuck-up sort of girl, with a feather in her hat, and a bee in her bonnet, who goes out and gives music lessons! It's dreadful, really. She plays the violin rather nicely, I hear; but she's an odious creature.—The books? Oh, yes, that's just the sort of thing Dick Plantagenet would love. He's mad on antiquity. If he saw on the title-page your name was Mary Tudor, he'd accept you at once as a remote cousin, and he'd claim acquaintance offhand by a royal monogram. The rose is not bad. But the best thing you can do is to take no further notice of him.'

A little later that very same morning, however, Richard Plantagenet, mad or sane, was speeding away across country—in a parliamentary train—towards Reading and Oxford, decided in his own mind now about two separate plans he had deeply at heart. The first one was, that, for the honour of the Plantagenets, he mustn't fail to get that Scholarship at Durham College: the second was, that, when he came back with it to Chiddingwick, he must make Mary Tudor understand he was at least a gentleman. He was rather less in love with her, to be sure, after this second meeting, than he had been after the first; but still, he liked her immensely, and in spite of her coldness, was somehow attracted towards her; and he couldn't bear to think a mere Welsh Tudor, not even really royal, should feel herself degraded by receiving a gift of a daintily bound book from the hands of the Heir Apparent of the true and only Plantagenets.

CHAPTER V.—GOOD SOCIETY.

Dick knew nothing of Oxford, and would hardly even have guessed where in the town to locate himself while the examination was going on, had not his old head-master at Chiddingwick grammar-school supplied him with the address of a small hotel, much frequented by studious and economical young men on similar errands. Hither, then, he repaired, Gladstone bag in hand, and engaged a modest second-floor room; after which, with much trepidation, he sallied forth at once in his best black suit to call in due form on the Reverend the Dean at Durham College.

By the door of the *Saracen's Head*, which was the old-fashioned name of his old-fashioned hostelry, two young men—mere overgrown school-boys of the Oxford pattern—lounged, chatting and chaffing together, as if bent on some small matter of insignificant importance. Each swung a light cane, and each looked and talked as if the town were his freehold. One was a fellow in a

loose gray tweed suit and a broad-brimmed slouch-hat of affectedly large and poetical pretensions; the other was a faster-looking and bolder young person, yet more quietly clad in a black cut-away coat and a billycock hat, to which commonplace afternoon costume of the English gentleman he nevertheless managed to give a touch of distinctly rowdy and rapid character. As Dick passed them on the steps, to go forth into the street, the young man in black observed oracularly, 'Lamb ten to the slaughter;' to which his companion answered with brisk good-humour in the self-same dialect, 'Lamb ten it is; these meadows pullulate: we shall have a full field of them.'

By a burst of inspiration, Dick somehow surveyed them that they were referring to the field for the Durham Scholarships, and that they knew of ten candidates at least in the place who were also going in for them. He didn't much care for the looks of his two fellow-competitors, for such he judged them to be; but the mere natural loneliness of a sensitive young man in such strange conditions somehow prompted him almost against his will to accost them. 'I beg your pardon,' he said timidly, in a rather soft voice, 'but I—that is to say—could you either of you tell me which is the nearest way to Durham College?'

The lad in the gray tweed suit laughed and surveyed him from head to foot with a somewhat supercilious glance as he answered with a curious self-assertive swagger: 'You're going to call on the Dean, I suppose. Well, so are we. Durham it is. If you want to know the way, you can come along with us.'

Companionship in misery is dear to the unsophisticated human soul; and Richard, in spite of all his father's lessons in deportment, shrank so profoundly from this initial ordeal of the introductory visit, that he was really grateful to the supercilious youth in the broad-brimmed hat for his condescending offer. Though, to be sure, if it came to that, nobody in England had a right to be either supercilious or condescending to a scion of the Plantagenets.

'Thank you,' he said, a little nervously. 'This is my first visit to Oxford, and I don't know my way about. But I suppose you're not in for the Scholarship yourself?' And he gazed half unconsciously at his new acquaintance's gray tweed suit and big sombrero, which were certainly somewhat noisy for a formal visit.

The young man in the billycock interpreted the glance aright, and answered it promptly. 'Oh, you don't know my friend,' he said with a twinkle in his eye, and a jerk of the head towards the lad in gray tweed; 'this is Gillingham of Rugby—otherwise known as the Born Poet. England expects every man to do his duty; but she never expects Gillingham to dress or behave like the rest of us poor common everyday mortals. And quite right, too. What's the good of being a Born Poet, I should like to know, if you've got to mind your Ps and Qs just like other people?'

'Well, I'm certainly glad I'm not an Other Person,' Gillingham responded calmly, with a nonchalant air of acknowledged superiority. 'Other People for the most part are so profoundly uninteresting! But if you're going to walk with

us, let me complete the introduction my friend has begun. This is Faussett of Rugby, otherwise known as the Born Philistine. Congenitally incapable of the faintest tincture of Culture himself, he regards the possession of that alien attribute by others as simply ridiculous.' Gillingham waved his hand vaguely towards the horizon in general. 'Disregard what he says,' he went on, 'as unworthy a serious person's intelligent consideration, and dismiss him to that limbo where he finds himself most at home, among the rowdy mob of all the Gaths and Askelons!'

Dick hardly knew how to comport himself in such unwonted company. Gillingham's manner was unlike anything else to which he had ever been accustomed. But he felt dimly aware that politeness compelled him to give his own name in return for the others'; so he faltered out somewhat feebly, 'My name's Plantagenet,' and then relapsed into a timid silence.

'Whew! How's that for a name?' Gillingham exclaimed, taken aback. 'Rather high, Tom, isn't it?—Are you any relation to the late family, so called, who were kings of England?'

This was a point-blank question which Dick could hardly avoid; but he got over the thin ice warily by answering with a smile: 'I never heard of more than one family of Plantagenets in England.'

'Eton, of course?' Gillingham suggested with a languid look. 'It must be Eton. It was founded by an ancestor.'

To Dick himself, the question of the Plantagenet pedigree was too sacred for a jest; but he saw the only way to treat the matter in the present company was by joking; so he answered with a little laugh: 'I believe there's no provision there for the founder's kin, so I didn't benefit by it. I come only from a very small country grammar-school—Chiddingwick, in Surrey.'

'Chiddingwick! Chiddingwick! Never knew there was such a place,' Gillingham put in with crushing emphasis. And he said it with an air which showed at once so insignificant a school was wholly unworthy a Born Poet's attention.

As for the Philistine, he laughed. 'Well, which are you going in for?' he asked, with a careless swing of his cane: 'The science, or the classics?'

'Neither,' Dick answered. 'My line's modern history.'

With a sudden little start, Gillingham seemed to wake up to interest. 'So's mine,' he put in, looking extremely wise. 'It's the one subject now taught at our existing universities that a creature with a soul—immortal or otherwise—would be justified in bothering his head about for one moment. Classics and mathematics! oh, fiddlesticks! shade of Shelley, my gorge rises at them!'

'You won't have any chance against Gillingham, though,' Faussett interposed with profound conviction. 'He's a fearful dab at history! You never knew such a howler. He's read pretty well everything that's ever been written in it from the earliest ages to the present time. Herodotus and York Powell alike at his fingertips! We consider at Rugby that a man's got to get up uncommon early if he wants to take a rise out of Trevor Gillingham.'

'I'm sorry for that,' Dick answered quite earnestly, astonished, now he stood face to face with these men of the world, at his own presumption in venturing even to try his luck against them. 'For I can't have many shots at Scholarships myself; and unless I get one, I can't afford to come up at all to the university.' His very pride made him confess this much to his new friends at once, for he didn't wish to seem as if he made their acquaintance under false pretences.

'Oh, for my part, I don't care twopence about the coin,' Gillingham replied with lordly indifference, cocking his hat yet a trifle more one-sidedly than ever. 'Only, the commoner's gown, you know, is such an inartistic monstrosity! I couldn't bear to wear it! And if one goes to a college at all, one likes to feel one goes on the very best possible footing, as a member of the foundation, and not as a mere outsider, admitted on sufferance.'

Dick followed him, trembling, into the large paved quad, and up the stone steps of the Dean's staircase, and quivered visibly to Faussett's naked eye as they were all three ushered into the great man's presence. The room was panelled, after Clarence's own heart: severe engravings from early Italian masters alone relieved the monotony of its old wooden wainscots.

A servant announced their names. The Dean, a precise-looking person in most clerical dress, seated at a little oak table all littered with papers, turned listlessly round in his swinging chair to receive them. 'Mr Gillingham of Rugby,' he said, focussing his eye-glass on the credentials of respectability which the Born Poet presented to him. 'Oh, yes, that's all right. Sixth Form—h'm, h'm: Your head-master was so kind as to write to me about you. I'm very glad to see you at Durham, I'm sure, Mr Gillingham: hope we may number you among ourselves before long. I've had the pleasure of meeting your father once—I think it was at Athens. Or no, the Piræus. Sir Bernard was good enough to use his influence in securing me an escort from the Greek Government for my explorations in Boeotia. Country very much disturbed: soldiers absolutely necessary.—These papers are quite satisfactory, of course; h'm, h'm: highly satisfactory. Your Head tells me you write verses, too. Well, well, we shall see. You'll go in for the Newdigate. The Keats of the future!'

'We call him the Born Poet at Rugby, sir,' Faussett put in, somewhat mischievously.

'And you're going in for the modern history examination?' the Dean said, smiling, but otherwise not heeding the cheeky interruption. 'Well, history will be flattered.' He readjusted his eye-glass.—'Mr Faussett; Rugby too, I believe? H'm, h'm; well, your credentials are respectable, decidedly respectable—though by no means brilliant. You've a brother at Christ Church, I understand; ah, yes, exactly. You take up classics. Quite so.—And now for you, sir; let me see;' he dropped his eyeglass, and stared hard at the letter Richard laid before him: 'Mr—er—Plantagenet of—what is it?—oh, I see, Chiddingwick grammar-school.—Chiddingwick, Chiddingwick? H'm? h'm? never heard of it. Eh? What's that? In Yorkshire, is it? Oh, ah, in Surrey; exactly; quite so. You're a candidate for the History

Scholarship, it seems. Well, the name Plantagenet's not unknown in history. That'll do, Mr Plantagenet; you can go. Good-morning. Examination begins in hall to-morrow at ten o'clock punctually.—Mr Gillingham, will you and your friend lunch with me on Friday at half-past one?—No engagement? Most fortunate.' And with a glance at the papers still scattered about his desk, he dismissed them silently.

Dick slunk down the steps with a more oppressive consciousness of his own utter nothingness in the scheme of things, than he had ever before in his life experienced. He strolled with his two chance acquaintances down the beautiful High Street, and into the gardens at Magdalen, very heavy in heart at their dire predictions. The cloisters themselves failed to bring him comfort. He felt himself foredoomed already to a disastrous fiasco. So many places and things he had only read about in books, this brilliant, easy-going, very grown-up Trevor Gillingham had seen and mixed in and made himself a part of. He had pervaded the Continent. The more Gillingham talked, indeed, the more Dick's heart sank. Why, the man knew well every historical site and building in Britain or out of it! History to him was not an old almanac, but an affair of real life. Paris, Brussels, Rome—Bath, Lincoln, Holyrood—he had known and seen them! Dick longed to go back and hide his own discomfited head once more in the congenial obscurity of dear sleepy old Chiddingwick.

But how could he ever go back without that boasted Scholarship? How cover his defeat after Mr Plantagenet's foolish talk at the *White Horse*? How face his fellow-townsmen—and Mary Tudor? For very shame's sake, he felt, he must brazen it out now, and do the best he knew—for the honour of the family.

SOME NEW INDIAN INSECT PESTS.

THE progress of scientific research is constantly leading to the discovery of new enemies to mankind. Fortunately, where science finds the bane, it also seeks to discover the antidote, although it is not always immediately successful. What Miss Ormerod is doing for England in her campaign against our insect enemies, Dr Cotes of the Indian Museum in Calcutta is striving to do against the legions of tiny insects in India that devour the valuable products of the earth and make vain the labour of the husbandman. In former times the vague name of 'blight' was given to every sort of flying insect or creeping pest that attacked the growing crops. Now, science with its microscope comes forward and examines the specific character of each sort of blight in whatever novel or unpleasant form it has presented itself. The philosopher, in his chamber of experiments, seeks to instruct his fellow-men whence and why the new plague has come, and how it may be mitigated or averted.

Every one in England has now become familiar with Indian tea. It is only about forty years ago that the cultivation of the tea-plant for commercial purposes was commenced in India. The enterprising men who established tea-gardens by clearing away the forests and underwood on the hills and by draining malarious swamps, found

that they had to contend with many unforeseen difficulties. Fever and ague, and sometimes cholera, seemed to haunt the new clearances. The tea-bushes that gave promise of an abundant crop were attacked by the paddle-cricket and slugs, and a peculiar form of red spider. These are now regarded as old enemies. But within the last two or three years a new assailant has appeared: it is in the form of a small four-winged mosquito, so small that it can hardly be distinguished without a microscope. But it has come in such myriads, that in one tea-garden of about five hundred acres it is calculated that a loss of above a thousand pounds sterling has been incurred in one year owing to the ravages of these almost invisible foes. Hitherto, these mosquitoes have appeared only in a comparatively limited locality; but if they were to descend simultaneously on all the tea-gardens in India, the imagination fails to form any approximate calculation of the infinite number of these tiny creatures that would be brought into existence. The questions arise, Where do they come from? Where have they been living for centuries unknown and innocuous to man? Why have they set their affections on the tea-plant? How do they propagate their species? And how can they be annihilated? All these scientific problems Dr Cotes is endeavouring to solve.

Another unexpected enemy, a common hairy caterpillar, has turned its attention to the tea-gardens. This caterpillar was previously known and disliked in other parts of India; for any person who imprudently laid hands on it found the long hairs sticking to his fingers and producing most irritating blisters. If a hair got into a man's eye, it set up an inflammation that sometimes ended in blindness. When a horde of these hairy caterpillars unexpectedly invaded a tea-garden in Assam one morning, the effects were most disastrous to the native labourers, or coolies, whose naked legs and feet came in contact with them. The women and the children who are employed in plucking the shoots and leaves of the tea-plants soon found their hands and arms stinging with pain, from the hairs of the caterpillars that they had fearlessly but imprudently handled. Before the morning's work could be finished, sixty of the men, women, and children were obliged to go to the medical officer for relief, with their hands or feet blistered and suppurating. There was no apparent cause to explain why these caterpillars had suddenly come out of the neighbouring jungle to prey upon the tea-plants; but it is to be feared that if they once acquire a taste and preference for tea-leaves, the tea-planter will have a new enemy to reckon with, and the cost of tea will eventually be enhanced to the human consumer. It is said by some authorities that the caterpillars have increased out of due proportion because the wild birds that used to feed on them have been reduced in number, as the native labourers on the gardens are given to the pursuit of birds, and ruthlessly destroy their eggs and the young birds in their nests. But this is hardly a sufficient explanation.

In two very distant parts of India, Assam and Ceylon, it is reported that the rice-crops have been simultaneously attacked by an insect to which the name of the rice-sapper has been given. It

is about the size of a common house-fly, but more like the Indian flying green bug. It sucks out the soft grain of the young rice, leaving the empty husk to come to maturity. In due time the husbandman sees the rice-stalks bending apparently under the weight of the ears of grain, but he will reap nothing but a crop of these rice-sappers. In Burma the growing rice-crops have been much injured by a new kind of butterfly; whilst in the Central Provinces of India a novel sort of white moth is found to have set its affections on the young rice-plants. It is almost impossible to say from what quarter these new enemies have come, but it is to be feared that science will be much puzzled how to deal with them.

In the North-west Provinces of India, the peach-trees have recently been attacked by a multitude of two-winged flies. Hitherto, the peach-trees had been believed to be exempt from any special enemies, although in the stone of an over-ripe peach it was always prudent to look for a lurking earwig or a juvenile centipede. In the province of Assam efforts have been made to breed the once wild tussah silkworms. Large plantations of castor-oil plants were kept up, as its leaves are the favourite food of the tussah silkworms. In August, last year, a strange tribe of caterpillars came in millions out of the neighbouring jungle, and devoured all the leaves of the castor-oil plants, so that when the tussah silkworms were hatched out there was no food for them, and they died. How is science to contend with the invasions of these unexpected enemies?

Those who deal in wheat and other Indian grains know that they have always been preyed upon by weevils; but now three new different kinds of weevil have been discovered infesting the crops of wheat and gram. The culture of vines has been in recent years introduced in the hills of the Punjab with some fair promise of success; but it is reported that the grapes have been attacked by a small two-winged fly, which deposits its larve in the skin of the grape. In the sal forests of Central India it is said that the leaves of the trees were destroyed over a tract of two hundred square miles by a novel sort of caterpillar. Although this is rather a large order on our credulity, there is some satisfaction in learning that these caterpillars were in their turn hunted and preyed upon by two kinds of large flies, which found the body of the caterpillar a suitable place for the deposit of their eggs. Unfortunately, these avenging flies are not sufficiently discriminating in their tastes, and are as capable of depositing their eggs in the caterpillar of the useful tussah silk-moth as they are of employing the sal leaf-destroying caterpillar for the same purpose.

If we turn from the enemies already enumerated, we come to an insect that works in rather a different Indian field, but is now finding its way to England. Bot-flies are indeed already well known in England, but they are to be included among Indian pests, for the hides shipped from the principal Indian ports are found to be riddled with their holes, and depreciated accordingly for the purposes of the leather-trade. Next in order are certain small beetles that attack specimens of natural history, such as the

skins of animals and birds. But it is almost impossible to enumerate exhaustively all the tiny enemies that exist in India, to the detriment of the crops and of many other things that are useful for the purposes of man. Probably India itself is not more prolific of such pests than Africa and the other tropical regions of the globe; and the inhabitants of the colder climates may think themselves fortunate that they have as yet escaped from the threatened ravages of the Colorado beetle and other famous American bugs.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—LE CONSEIL DE FAMILLE.

'CHECKLEY,' said Mr Dering on Monday morning, 'here is a note from Miss Elsie Arundel. She makes an appointment with me at four o'clock this afternoon. Keep me free for that hour. Her brother Athelstan is coming with her.—What's the matter, man?'

'It's coming, then. I knew it would come.' Checkley groaned. 'It's all over at last.'

'What is all over?'

'Everything. But don't you believe it. Tell 'em it's a lie made up to screen themselves. They can't prove it. Nobody can prove it. I'll back you up. Only don't you believe it. Mind—it is a lie—a made-up lie.'

'I don't know what has been the matter with you for the last day or two, Checkley. What am I not to believe? What is a lie? Who is making up a lie which cannot be proved?'

'Oh! I can't say the word—I can't. It's all over at last—at last.' He ran out of the room and slammed the door behind him.

'My dear mother'—Hilda drove to Pembroke Square directly after breakfast—'I have had a most curious letter from Elsie. What does it mean? She orders—she does not invite—she positively orders—Sir Samuel—actually orders Sir Samuel!—and myself to attend at Mr Dering's office at four. We are ordered to assist, she says, at the demolition of the structure we have so carefully erected.—What structure? What does she mean? Here is the letter.'

'I too, dear, have had a letter from her. She says that at four o'clock this afternoon all the wrongful and injurious suspicions will be cleared away, and that if I value the affection of my son and herself—the affection of herself—I must be present.—Hilda, what does this mean? I am very much troubled about the letter. On Saturday, she came here and informed me that the wedding would be held on Wednesday just as if nothing had happened; and she foretold that we should all be present, and that Athelstan would give her away—Athelstan. It is a very disquieting letter, because, my dear, do you think we could all of us—could we possibly be wrong, have been wrong from the very beginning—in Athelstan's case? Could Sir Samuel be wrong in George's case?'

'My dear mother, it is impossible. The case, unhappily, is too clear to admit of any doubt.

Sir Samuel with his long experience could not be wrong.'

'Then, Hilda dear, what can Elsie mean?'

'We have been talking about it all through breakfast. The only conclusion we can come to is, that there is going to be a smothering up of the whole business. Mr Dering, who has been terribly put out with the case, must have consented to smother up the matter. We think that the papers have been returned with the money received on dividends and coupons; and that Mr Dering has agreed to take no further proceedings. Now, if he would do that, Athelstan of course would come under the Act of Indemnity; and as the notes were never used by him, but were returned to their owner, it becomes as easy to recognise his innocence as that of the other man.—Do you see?'

'Yes. But that will not make them innocent.'

'Certainly not. But it makes all the difference in the world. Oh! there are families everywhere who have had to smother up things in order to escape a scandal. Well, I hope you will agree with us, and accept the invitation.'

'I suppose I must.—But how about removing all the suspicions?'

'Oh! that is only Elsie's enthusiastic way. She will go on, if she likes, believing that George had nothing to do with it. He will have every inducement to live honestly for the future. We can easily pretend to believe that Athelstan was always innocent, and we can persuade him—at least I hope we can persuade him—to go abroad. Sir Samuel kindly says that he will advance a hundred pounds in order to get rid of him. Then there will be no scandal, and everybody will be satisfied. As for our relations with Elsie and her husband, we can arrange them afterwards. Perhaps they will agree to live in a distant suburb—say Redhill, or Chislehurst, or Walthamstow—so that there may be a good excuse for never having them to the house. Because—smothering or no smothering—I can no longer have the same feelings towards Elsie as before. Her obstinate infatuation for that man exasperates me only to think of it. Nor have I the least intention of being on intimate relations with a forger who has only just escaped being a convict. Sir Samuel entirely agrees with me.'

The mother sighed. 'I could have wished that we were mistaken. Perhaps, after all, there may be something that Elsie has found out, some unexpected'—

'Say a miracle at once, my dear mother. It is just as likely to happen.'

The first to arrive at the office in the afternoon was Elsie herself, carrying a handbag.

'You were going to bring your brother, Elsie,' said Mr Dering. 'Where is he? And what is your important business with me? I suppose it is something about this wretched forgery, which really seems destined to finish me off. I have heard of nothing else—I think of nothing else—ever since it happened.'

'First, has anything new been discovered?'

'I hardly know,' Mr Dering replied wearily. 'They seem to have found the man Edmund Gray; but Checkley has suddenly cooled. Formerly, he clamoured perpetually that we must lose no time in getting a warrant for his arrest;

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he now wants to put it off and put it off. He was going on very strangely this morning. My dear, I sometimes think that my old clerk is off his head.'

'And you yourself—have you had any return of your forgetfulness?'

'Worse—worse.—Every day, worse. I now know when to look for a return of these fits. Every morning I ask myself what I did the day before. Always there are the same hours of forgetfulness—the morning and the evening. Last night, where was I? Perhaps somebody will find out for me—for I cannot remember.'

'Shall I find out for you, Mr Dering? If I were to tell you where you spent the evening yesterday, would you—would you?'

'What? How can you find out?'

Elsie bent her head. The moment had almost arrived, and she was afraid. She had come with the intention of clearing her brother and her lover at the cost of letting her guardian know that he was insane. A dreadful price to pay for their honour. But it had to be paid. And it must be done in the sight of all, so that there should be no possible margin left for malignity or suspicion.

'This business,' she said, 'concerns the honour of the two men who are dearer to me than all the world beside. Remember that—nothing short of that would make me do what I have been doing—what I am now doing. Their honour—oh! their honour. Think what it means to them. Self-respect, dignity, everything: the happiness of their homes: the pride of their children. Compared with one man's honour, what matters another man's humiliation? What matters the loss of that man's self-respect? What matters his loss of dignity? Their honour, Mr Dering, think of that—their honour!'

He bowed his head gravely, wondering what was to follow.

'A man's honour, as you say, Elsie, is the greatest thing in the world to him. Compared with that, another man's self-respect need not, I should say, as a general principle, be considered at all. Self-respect may be regained unless honour is lost.'

'Remember that, then, Mr Dering, when you hear what I have to say. Promise me to remember that. Oh! if there were a thousand reasons, formerly, why I would not pain you by a single word, there are ten thousand now—although you understand them not.'

'Why, Elsie, you are troubling your little head about trifles. You will not offend me whatever you say.'

'It is so important a thing,' she went on, 'that I have asked my mother and sister and Sir Samuel to meet us here at four o'clock, in order that they, too, may hear as well as you. Athelstan is with George. They have one or two persons to introduce to you.'

'All this seems to promise a meeting of some interest, and so far as one may judge from the preamble, of more than common importance. Well, Elsie, I am quite in your hands. If you and your brother between you will kindly produce the forger and give me back my property, I shall be truly grateful.'

'You shall see, Mr Dering. But as for the gratitude— Oh! here is Sir Samuel.'

The City knight appeared, large and important. He shook hands with Elsie and his brother, and took up his position on the hearthrug, behind his brother's chair. 'Well, Elsie,' he said, 'we are to hear something very important indeed, if one may judge by the tone of your letter, which was imperative.'

'Very important indeed, Sir Samuel.'

The next to arrive were Mrs Arundel and Hilda. They wore thick veils, and Hilda was dressed in a kind of half-mourning. They took chairs at the open window, between the historic safe and the equally historic small table. Lastly, George and Athelstan walked in. They received no greetings.

Mr Dering rose. 'Athelstan,' he said, 'it is eight years since you left us.' He held out his hand.

'Presently, Mr Dering,' said Athelstan. He looked round the room. His mother trembled, dropped her head, and put her handkerchief to her eyes, but said nothing. His sister looked out of window. Sir Samuel took no notice of him at all. Athelstan took a chair—the clients' chair—and placed it so as to have his mother and sister at the side. He wasn't therefore compelled to look at them across the table. He sat down, and remained in silence and motionless.

The Court was now complete. Mr Dering sat in his chair before his table, expectant, judicial. Sir Samuel stood behind him. Mrs Arundel and Hilda, the two ladies, sat at the open window. Elsie stood opposite to Mr Dering, on the other side of the table, her handbag before her. She looked like Counsel about to open the case for plaintiff. Athelstan—or plaintiff—naturally occupied the clients' chair on Mr Dering's left; and George, as naturally—the other plaintiff—stood behind him.

'Now, Elsie, if you please,' Mr Dering began.

'I shall want your clerk, Checkley, to be present, if you please.'

Mr Dering touched his bell. The clerk appeared. He stood before them like a criminal, pale and trembling. He looked at his master appealingly. His hands hung beside him. Yet not a word of accusation had been brought against him.

'Lord! man alive!' cried Sir Samuel, 'what on earth has come over you?'

Checkley shook his head sadly, but made no reply.

'I want to ask you a question or two, Checkley,' said Elsie, quietly. 'You have told Mr Dering—you have told Sir Samuel—that you saw my brother furtively put a parcel—presumably the stolen notes—into the safe at the very moment when you were charging him with forgery. Now, consider. That was a very serious thing to say. It was a direct statement of fact. Before, the charge rested on suspicion alone; but this is fact. Consider carefully. You may have been mistaken. Any of us may make a mistake.'

'It was true—Gospel truth—I see him place a parcel—edging along sideways—in the safe. The parcel we found afterwards in the safe containing all the notes.' The words were confident; but the manner was halting.

'Very well. Next, you told Sir Samuel that my brother had been living in some low suburb

of London with profligate companions, and that he had been even going about in rags and tatters.'

'Yes, I did. I told Sir Samuel what I heard. Mr Carstone told me. You'd better ask him. I only told what I heard.'

George went out, and returned, bringing with him Mr Freddy Carstone. He looked round the room and stared with surprise at Mr Dering, but said nothing. He had been warned to say nothing, except in answer to questions.

'Now, Mr Carstone,' Elsie asked him, 'how long is it since you met my brother after his return to England?'

'About three weeks ago I met him. It was in Holborn. I invited him into the *Salutation Tavern*.'

'Did you tell Mr Checkley here anything about his way of living?'

'I remember saying, foolishly, that he looked too respectable to have come from America; and I said in joke that I believed he had been in Camberwell all the time.'

'Nothing about profligacy?'

'Nothing at all.'

'Nothing about rags and tatters?'

'Certainly not. In fact, I knew nothing at all about Athelstan's life during the eight years that he has been away.'

'Have you anything to say, Checkley? You still stick to the parcel story, do you? Very well; and to the Camberwell and profligacy story?'

Checkley made no answer.

'Now, then. There is another question. You made a great point about certain imitations of Mr Dering's writing found in a drawer of Athelstan's table?'

'Well, they were there, in your brother's hand.'

'George, you have something to say on this point.'

'Only this. I was not long articulated at that time. The table was taken from the room in which I sat, and placed here for some special work. Now, the imitations of Mr Dering's handwriting were made by myself and another clerk in joke. I remember them perfectly. They were written at the back of a letter addressed to me.'

Mr Dering went to the safe and produced the bundle containing all the papers in the case. He unrolled the bundle and placed the contents on the table.

Everybody was now serious. Lady Dering looked out of the window no longer. Mrs Arundel had drawn her chair to the table.

Elsie picked out the paper containing the imitations. 'Tell me,' she said, 'if you remember—mind—everybody—this bundle of papers has never been shown to George—tell me the name of your correspondent.'

'It was Leonard Henryson.'

She gave the paper to Mr Dering. 'You see,' she said.

The lawyer gave it to his brother, who passed it on to his wife, who gave it to her mother. Mrs Arundel laid it on the table and raised her veil.

'The next point,' said Elsie, 'is about Athelstan's whereabouts during the last eight years.'

One letter was received by you, Mr Dering, four years ago. You have already shown it to me. Will you let me read this letter aloud for all to hear? It was in the bundle with the stopped notes. He bowed assent—and she read it.

'Twelve thousand pounds!' cried Sir Samuel—'twelve thousand pounds! All he had! Good Heavens!'

'All he had in the world,' said Elsie. 'And all for a child who refused to believe that her brother could be a villain! All he had in the world!' Her eyes filled with tears—but she dashed them aside and went on. 'He was in the States four years ago. That, I suppose, will no longer be denied. The next question is—when did he return to this country?'

George left the room again, and returned with a young gentleman.

'This gentleman,' Elsie continued, 'comes from Messrs Chenery & Sons, bankers, of New York and London. He has brought a letter with him. Will you kindly let me see it, sir?—It is,' she explained, 'a letter of credit brought over by my brother from California. You see the date—June 20th of this year.'

Mr Dering read it, and gave it to his brother, who gave it to his wife, as before.

'It says that Mr Athelstan Arundel, one of the staff of a certain Californian paper, will leave New York on June the 21st by the *Shannon*, and that he is authorised to draw on Messrs Chenery & Sons for so much.—Thank you.' The young gentleman retired.

'Now, Mr Dering, are you satisfied that Athelstan was in America four years ago—that he left America two months ago, and that he was then on the staff of a Californian paper?'

'There seems no reason to doubt these facts.—But'—he put his forefinger on the cheque payable to the order of Edmund Gray—'are we any nearer to the forger of this cheque?'

'I am coming to that presently. I am going to show you all, so that there shall be no doubt whatever, who is the forger—the one hand—in the business. Wait a little.'

Strangely enough, every eye fell upon Checkley, who now trembled and shook with every sign of terror.

'Sit down, Checkley,' said his master.—'Elsie, do we want this gentleman any longer? His name I have not the pleasure of knowing.'

'Oh! come,' said Mr Carstone, who was nearest. 'You know my name, surely.'

George warned him with a look, and he subsided into silence.

'I think I shall want you, Mr Carstone,' Elsie replied, 'if you will kindly take a chair and wait.—Now, Sir Samuel, I think I am right in saying that your belief in the guilt of George rested entirely on the supposed complicity of Athelstan. That gone, what becomes of your charge? Also, there is no doubt, I believe, that one hand, and one hand alone, has committed the whole long list of letters and forgeries. If, therefore, Athelstan could not execute the second business, how could he do the first? But I have more than arguments for you.'

Sir Samuel coughed. Mrs Arundel sighed.

'As regards the charge against George, apart from his supposed intimacy with an imaginary criminal, the only suspicious thing is that he

may have had access to the open safe. Well, Checkley also may have had access.—Don't be afraid, Checkley—we are not going to charge you with the thing at all. You are not the forger. In fact, there was a third person who had access to the safe.'

She opened her handbag and took out a packet of papers.

Then she sat down, with these in her hand, and leaning over the table, she looked straight and full into Mr Dering's eyes, and began to talk slowly in a low and murmuring voice. And now, indeed, everybody understood that something very serious indeed was going to be said and done. At the last moment a way had occurred to Elsie. She would let them all see for themselves what had happened, and she would spare her guardian the bitter shame and pain of being exposed in the presence of all this company.

'Mr Dering,' she began, 'you have strangely forgotten that you know Mr Edmund Gray. How could you come to forget that? Why, it is ten years at least since you made his acquaintance. He knows you very well. He does not pretend to have forgotten you. You are his solicitor. You have the management of his property—his large private fortune—in your hands. You are his most intimate friend. It is not well to forget old friends, is it? You must not say that you forget Edmund Gray.'

Mr Dering changed colour. His eyes expressed bewilderment. He made no reply.

'You know that Edmund Gray leaves this room every evening on his way to Gray's Inn: you remember that. And that he comes here every morning, but not till eleven or twelve—two hours after the time that you yourself used to come. His head is always so full of his thoughts and his teaching, that he forgets the time between twelve and four, just as you forget the evening and the morning. You are both so much absorbed that you cannot remember each other.'

Mr Dering sat upright, the tips of his fingers touching. He listened at first gravely—though anxiously. Presently a remarkable change passed over his face: he became full of anxiety. He listened as if he was trying to remember: as if he was trying to understand.

'Edmund Gray,' he said, speaking slowly. 'Yes, I remember my client Edmund Gray. I have a letter to write for him. What is it? Excuse me a moment; I must write that note for him.' He took pen and paper and hastily wrote a note, which Elsie took from him, read, and gave to Sir Samuel.

'You want to tell the banker that Mr Edmund Gray has returned you the transfers.—Yes—Thank you. I thought you could not forget that client, of all others.'

He leaned back smiling—his expression no longer anxious, but pleased and happy. The change transformed him. He was not Mr Dering, but another.

'Go on, child.'

'The rooms of Gray's Inn are quiet all day long. It is a peaceful place for study, is it not? You sit there, your books before you, the world forgotten.'

'Quite forgotten,' said Mr Dering.

'No—no,' cried Checkley, springing to his feet. 'I won't have it done. I'—

'Sit down.' George pushed him back into his chair. 'Another word, and you leave the room.'

ABOUT MISERS.

FEW people are able to realise to themselves the all-absorbing passion for hoarding which engrosses, to the exclusion of all others, the heart of the Miser. Curiously enough, this craving for secret wealth is a product of civilisation, which has grown up with society, and become more developed as gold and silver became emblems of wealth. The occupation and ambition of a miser's life is not to accumulate for himself or his children or relations, but for the same reason that a magpie steals a silver spoon, for the pleasure of hiding it.

Daniel Dancer was one of the class of misers who hoarded money for the pleasure of secreting it. In this he but followed an hereditary tendency, as his father and grandfather had all done the same. It has been said that miserly instincts as a general rule are not inherited, but this case was undoubtedly an exception; for not only himself but his brothers and sisters were all of a miserly disposition. He was born in the beginning of the eighteenth century at Weald, a village near Harrow, and on the death of his father, Daniel, the eldest son, inherited a fair estate. He suffered great uneasiness at this time on account of a feeling of certainty which possessed him that his father had concealed large sums of money about the premises. His trouble was not occasioned so much by the idea that the money might not be discovered, but from the fear that his brothers might find it and not give it to him. Ultimately, about two hundred pounds in gold and silver coins were discovered enclosed in two pewter dishes buried beneath a gate-post, and nothing more was ever found.

Dancer spent the whole of his life in the house on Harrow Weald Common, and a dreary, wretched blank that life was. The house stood in about eighty acres of rich meadow-land, with some fine oak-trees upon it; and there was also a small farm adjoining. The whole, if properly cultivated, might at that time have brought a nice little income. But cultivation is expensive, so he preferred to let everything run to grass. The house was never repaired, and gradually fell into sad decay. The gates on the premises were all off their hinges, and the hedges were allowed to grow until they became useless. He also practised a rigid economy upon his own person. He seldom washed his hands and face, and when he did, dispensed with the luxury of either soap or towel. His tattered clothes, of which the original colours were unrecognisable, were held together by means of a hayband wound round his body, his legs being encased in a similar covering. A more forlorn or wretched looking object it would be impossible to imagine; and yet at this time he was in possession of property of the annual value of three thousand pounds.

As he at this time lived alone, being too penurious to allow himself help of any kind,

his dwelling offered a temptation to robbery that was not likely to be resisted. His well-known avarice was an excuse, and seemed also a palliation for the crime. On several occasions thieves broke into the house, and once or twice he was nearly hanged in the endeavour to extort from him a confession where he had hidden his money. At length he securely nailed up all the doors and windows of his house, save one on the upper floor, which he entered by means of a ladder, dragging it in after him like Robinson Crusoe.

As no man is wholly bad, so this miserable miser had one good quality. Lady Tempest, his nearest neighbour, pitied the man, and had been kind to him, visiting him when he was ill, and endeavouring to persuade him to allow himself a few of the necessities of life. Not succeeding in getting him to abandon the sack in which he had slept for years, she actually presented him with a bed. In gratitude for her kindness, he made a will in her favour, and one day, when he thought he was dying, he sent for her, and gave her the paper. Having thus yielded up all that was dear to him on earth, he soon sank, and died on September 4, 1794, aged seventy-eight, and was buried in the churchyard of his parish of Harrow. Apart from his besetting weakness—craze, call it what you will—he often exhibited strong common sense, and there is no doubt but for that weakness he would have been a reputable citizen and a credit to his family.

John Elwes is a name which has become proverbial in the annals of avarice. Born to great riches, he nevertheless developed a passion for accumulating wealth by denying himself common necessities to such a degree as to make his name famous. The career of John Elwes presents in many respects a marked contrast to that of Dancer, and furnishes an example of the terrible inconsistency of man. His father's name was Meggott, a brewer of Southwark, who died when the boy was about four years old; and it was to the principles instilled by his mother, and later, the advice and example of his uncle, that John Elwes probably owed the most marked traits in his character. Although her husband left her one hundred thousand pounds, it is said she starved herself to death. Her son was sent to Westminster School, where he remained some years, and became a good classical scholar. He inherited about two hundred and fifty thousand pounds from his uncle, Sir Harry Elwes, who was himself as penurious as his nephew afterwards became; and as his own fortune was of a similar amount, he was at this time a very rich man. For fifteen years before his uncle's death John Elwes was known in all the fashionable circles of the metropolis, his large fortune introducing him to the best society. His passion for play—a passion at that time rampant in society—was only exceeded by his avarice, and it was not until late in life that he entirely relinquished it. According to his own assertion, few played deeper or with more varying success. He once sat playing for two days and a night with the Duke of Northumberland, to whom he lost several thousands. Strange inconsistency! that while struggling to save sixpences and shillings, he could thus fritter away thousands of pounds. At this time he was his uncle's acknowledged heir, and used to visit him frequently at his seat in Suffolk. It

is said that, fearful that his uncle would think him wantonly extravagant if he appeared before him in his ordinary dress, he hired a room in a cottage near, where he used to call and change his clothes for a very mean-looking quiet suit.

On the death of his uncle, Elwes assumed his name and removed to Suffolk, where he began to keep foxhounds. He had always been a bold and fearless rider, and at this time his hunters were considered among the best in the country. This was the only time he ever was known to spend money on pleasure. Even then, everything was managed after the most frugal fashion. His huntsman milked the cows, prepared breakfast for himself and friends, then attended to the stables, donned his green coat, and led the hounds; and after a day's hunting, refreshed himself by rubbing down the horses, milking the cows again, and so forth. And yet his master often called him an idle dog, and said he wanted to be paid for doing nothing.

With the two large fortunes which he possessed, and the wretched way in which he lived, his whole expenses at this time not being more than three hundred pounds a year, riches poured in upon him in torrents. But as he never kept any accounts or trusted any one to keep them for him, relying on his memory for everything, his affairs were in a frightful tangle, of which no one could find the thread but himself, and he lost it as he advanced in years. He was a prey to every person who had a want or a scheme that promised high interest, and in this way is said to have lost one hundred and fifty thousand pounds.

He sat for Berkshire, in which he had a large estate, in three parliaments; but his parliamentary honours made no difference in his dress or his habits. He consented to stand for the constituency only upon condition that he should be returned free of expense. He dined once at the ordinary at Abingdon during his canvass, and so obtained his seat in parliament for the moderate sum of one shilling and sixpence, a record which has probably not yet been broken. Nevertheless, he was wont to declare that the seat cost him quite as much as three contested elections, in consequence of the borrowing propensities of the other members—loans that were never repaid. Probably that was one reason why he retired from parliament, as his constituents had a high opinion of his integrity, and would certainly have returned him at a small expense.

As Elwes grew in years, his parsimony increased. He took to building largely in London around Marylebone, and this entailed frequent visits to the metropolis. On these occasions it was his custom to occupy any house of his own that might happen to be empty. In this manner he moved about from street to street, so that his own relations never knew where to find him. A couple of beds, the same number of chairs, a table, and an old woman, comprised all the furniture, and he moved them about at a minute's warning. He used to say that of all his movables the old woman gave him the most trouble. She was always taking cold from the chillness of the large rooms, coupled with insufficient firing.

His son George having married, was naturally anxious that his father should make his home

with him. One obstacle advanced by the old man was the expense of the journey; this was overcome by the attorney employed by his son offering to take him to Berkshire free of cost. Next, he stated that his last coat was so shabby, and he could not afford to buy another. This objection was likewise overcome through the same agency, his son desiring Mr Partis, the attorney, to buy one and make him a present of it. He finally went to reside with his son on his estate in Berkshire; but his memory was beginning to fail him, and he was continually losing the small sum of money which he had taken with him, and which he declared was all he had in the world. It was about five pounds; and this he used to hide, and being unable to find it, declared that he had been robbed. At last, having become very feeble, and his memory quite gone, he died on the 26th of November 1788, leaving property to the amount of eight hundred thousand pounds. His two natural sons inherited half a million; and the remainder, consisting of entailed estates, descended to the heir-at-law.

This man was one of the strangest contradictions. He was of the highest honour and integrity, and his word alone was always considered a sufficient security. Though consumed and his better nature distorted by the passion of avarice, such was his delicacy of feeling that he professed never to be able to ask a gentleman for money, and this rule he never violated. In consequence, several large sums which in his gambling days he won from persons of rank were never paid. His manners were always gentlemanly and mild, even rudeness could not ruffle them; and on several occasions he was known to put himself to considerable trouble in order to do a service to persons from whom he could have had no hope of repayment. From all of which we may conclude that there was in him a natural kindness of heart, though choked by a rank growth of noxious weeds.

Of a totally different character was Thomas Cooke, who was a contemporary of Elwes, and who attained some little celebrity by his riches and shameless meannesses. He was born at Clewer, near Windsor, in 1726. His father, an itinerant fiddler, died when he was an infant, and he was brought up by a grandmother at Swannington, near Norwich. As a boy he was employed at a factory in Norwich, afterwards becoming a porter to a drysalter. Through the interest of his master, he obtained an appointment in the Excise, and arrived in London with eight shillings in his pocket. His early habits of parsimony continued. He ingratiated himself with a brewer, and took some trouble to learn the business; and when this man died, he told the widow her only chance of carrying on the trade was to marry himself, as he was better acquainted with it than any one else. To this she ultimately consented. He was now a rich man; but the richer he became, the more his avarice increased. He allowed scarcely any food in the house, nearly starved besides ill-treating his wife; and she, poor soul, who had been used to a very different life with her former husband, soon died of a broken heart. One of his favourite methods of obtaining his daily food was by timely visits to persons he knew, throwing out

hints of having just made his will, in which he had not forgotten them. Or he would be very particular in having the full names of the children written down, carefully bestowing the paper in his pocket-book. Another method was to fall down in the street in a simulated fit before a good house, into which he would be taken and kindly treated. He never failed to call the next day, profuse in his thanks for their kindness, representing that they had saved his life, for which some day they would receive a substantial reward. Thus, by empty promises made to all sorts of people, he was continually raising hopes for no other purpose than to trade on them to his own advantage. As the rich Mr Cooke's friendship was worth cultivating, he was continually receiving presents of geese, turkeys, hares, and wines, from people to whom he had made these false promises. Notwithstanding his inordinate love of money, he was fond of amusement; he liked a good horse, and went once a year to Epsom races. These excursions, however, seldom cost him anything, for he always managed to fasten himself upon other people. At length, through infirmities of age, he found himself compelled to have medical advice. His plan then was to dress himself in rags, and apply to some physician as a pauper or unfortunate tradesman, relying upon the doctor's kindness to obtain his advice. He did this many times, and once was so troublesome to a doctor, that the latter caused inquiries to be made about him, and discovered who he was. Upon this he refused to see him again, and sent him his bill, which, however, was never paid. Thus did this man, by the most paltry devices, delight in tricking every one with whom he was brought in contact. At length he became extremely weak, and spent the remaining portion of his life in arranging his affairs with his solicitor, altering and realtering his will many times. He died on the 26th of August 1811, in the eighty-sixth year of his age, unpitied and unlamented, leaving nearly one hundred and thirty thousand pounds behind him. Of all the miserable and sordid men of whose life we have any record, his, surely, is the worst. Not one good action or one redeeming virtue can we place to his credit.

THE AUSTRALIAN LARRIKIN.

He is a corner-boy; but he is more than that. He shuns honest work; but he is more than an idler. Like the mysterious growths in Australian fauna and flora, he seems to be a peculiar product of the country; and he has grown with the growth of population, until his present numbers, and his habits and methods of operation, have become an interference with the liberty of the well disposed, and his presence has become a nuisance. He is not illiterate. Not that, by any means. He can read, write, and cipher. The system of compulsory education has taught him the three Rs; but it has fallen short of teaching him to behave himself or to become a respectable member of society. Our Australian Larrikin has diverted his knowledge to vile uses, and turned into foul channels what might otherwise have helped him in a true life-career. He can be more ingeniously profane than the old country

corner-boy of fifty years ago; but he is in every respect a larrikin, and his education only seems to have assisted him in becoming a cleverer one.

In his moments of respite from his perverse war against society, he is a politician. He can talk glibly and familiarly of Sir John Robertson as 'old Johnny Robertson,' and knows all about Sir Henry Parkes from the days of his toy-shop till the present. In New South Wales he is a Protectionist, and reproaches the Free-trade policy of the Government for his want of employment; while in Victoria he rails against Protection as the occasion of all his woes, and he is there a thorough-going Free-trader. The new question of Federation he professes to understand in all its bearings, and on this, as on all like subjects, he speaks with the authority of one who knows.

But the prominent theme of his conversation and the charm of his life is Sport, and particularly that section of it known by him as horse-racing. He knows all the great horses of the past and the present; and ventures to give 'tips' as to all the future. He will undertake to enlighten you about the English Derby, and discourse eloquently regarding the prospects of Australian horses winning laurels there in days to come. The Melbourne Cup and the Randwick or Liverpool races are watched by him with the keenest interest, and by means fair or foul he raises money to place on the events.

Cricket has of course a large share of his attention. Intercolonial matches interest him only to a slight degree; but the arrival in the colonies of an English cricketing team is a red-letter day for him; and in an incredibly short space of time he is thoroughly versed in the outstanding characteristics of the play of every member in the team. And if you find him asserting that 'So-and-so' is a good wicket-keeper, and some one else the best bowler in the team, you have generally to admit that the judgment he has passed is correct.

The other form of athletics which aids in relieving our friend's life of care is sculling; and in recent times, perhaps the sculling contests more than cricket have added zest to his existence. This is naturally to be accounted for by the fact that the Australians have been the victors; and beyond all else, our larrikin is an Australian and a worshipper of muscle.

The foregoing is our larrikin in his milder moods. Unfortunately, there is a darker side. He does not always talk politics, or the turf, or athletics. The practice of cruelty forms one of his chief personal amusements. And this is not to be wondered at. It is only another phase of that disregard for feelings which prompts him to insult the human beings which pass him by at the street corners. The lower forms of creation should have no feelings; hence, on his Sundays, he and a few of his fellows may be seen proceeding to the bush on a hunting expedition—the ostensible game being rabbits, hares, native bears, kangaroos, wallabies, or aught of the like which may be started. If on the journey, however, anything should be encountered in the shape of young cattle, and if half a chance presents itself, the higher game, irrespective of its value, will be that destroyed. Only about twelve months ago the writer saw a

yearling heifer which had fallen into the merciless hands of a band of these ruffians; their dogs had been set on to worry it; and when the refined amusement ceased, the poor beast was almost powerless to move.

The Australian larrikin is a thief. He must have money; for he attends races and bets on them; he smokes and he drinks; and these things mean money. Nowadays, it does not often happen that fond and foolish parents will provide their grown-up and idle sons with means whereby to continue in that occupation. Life is becoming too much of a struggle in the colonies, as elsewhere, to admit of such; and if the larrikin is forced on his own resources, he is to be found pilfering from shop-entrances, clearing fowl-roosts, breaking and entering dwellings, and developing into a sneaking, contemptible thief.

Some of the plundering depredations of these youths have a ludicrous side. Not a great while ago two of them resolved to start poultry-farming in a little place in the vicinity of Sydney. The undertaking seemed a laudable one; and it was pleasing to hear of the enterprise of the lads embarking on the venture with the evident desire to turn over a new leaf and gain an honest livelihood. The poultry-run was prepared, and was gradually stocked; but unfortunately, about the same time numbers of people began complaining that their fowl-roosts had been visited by night and deprived of their occupants. The police got behind the scenes; the fowls were identified; the run was broken up, and the poultry-fanciers were provided with other quarters. Doubtless, during all the future lives of these two individuals there will be muttered cursing against the brutal colonial laws which place a block in the way of men earning their livelihood, merely because of some absurd notions about the rights of property.

Sometimes, too, there is considerable romance connected with the procedure of the larrikin. A year ago or so half-a-dozen of them formed themselves into a sort of joint-stock company, with the apparent intention of saving expense in the shape of rent. They took up their residence in a rocky seaside cavern, and were certainly accomplishing their object; but soon it was discovered that, as well as living rent free, they were managing at the same time to get together the necessities of life without troubling to pay for them. One of the partners in the concern was found to have eloped with a bag of flour from a grocery establishment; and others of them had succeeded in doing the like regarding many of the commodities necessary for the carrying on of a well-ordered and well-provided abode. But here, again, the police put an abrupt ending to the proceedings, and Nature's romantic residence by the sea was exchanged for one of artificial construction.

Were we, however, to enumerate all the delinquencies of the Australian larrikin, our survey would extend over all the items of the criminal calendar. Assaults on policemen, assaults on females, stabbing affrays, robberies from the person, and every conceivable form of offence, would be in the catalogue. All do not go the full length in blackguardism; but some, on the other hand, seem demon-possessed in their mad career; and for these there is nothing too daring,

nothing too desperate. Of such a character were the larrikins who, a few years ago, committed a foul and well-known atrocity, for which several of them suffered the extreme penalty of the law, and others are at present undergoing varied terms of imprisonment.

The ages of the individuals we have been describing range from the middle of the 'teens' to the middle of the 'twenties.' At the earlier age the youth is graduating in the school of vice under the instruction of the elder members of 'the talent.' At the latter he has become a confirmed frequenter of the jails; and drifts into the ranks of that section of the adult unemployed which lounges in the parks in the daytime, and, when not engaged in deeds of darkness, sleeps there at night.

There are larrikinesses also. These keep the company of the larrikins, and often assist them in their burglaries and other exploits. They frequent the dens of the Chinamen in the cities, and the huts of the Chinese gardeners in the suburbs and the country; and they do so, some of them, when they have hardly entered their 'teens.' Some months ago, in Sydney, a member of this class was ordered to be imprisoned for three months, for 'having no lawful, visible means of support.' She was eighteen years of age, and had been in the habit of living for some weeks at a time in the den of one Chinaman, and then removing to another, and so on. She said 'she would not work while she could be supported by Chinamen, and that she liked Chinamen better than other people.' One of the Celestials came forward to say that 'he would mallee [marry] her by-and-by;' but the magistrate had heard such speech before, and passed sentence.

Reasons innumerable have been given for this state of things in connection with youthful Australia. Some have said that where exceptional wildness is encountered, the transgressors will be found to be the descendants of the earliest of all the white settlers in Australia—those who 'left their country for their country's good,' and who, in entering upon colonial life, had a stained record to start with. Some, again, declare that a large proportion of the larrikin class are the posterity of those who, being far from a success at home, were despatched by fond parents to Australia, with bright visions indulged 'to gild the far land where their homes were to be,' visions of future reformation, and of the new men the new country would make. The hopes were illusive, and such settlers turned out no more of an Australian success than an English one; and it is not unreasonable for some to suppose that their offspring have inherited their evil propensities. Others, again, lay a large part of the blame at the door of parents, and affirm that there is an almost general want of parental control sadly noticeable in the Australian colonies, which has already caused much mischief, and augurs badly for the future. The free, open-air life which colonial children lead allows them to be much less under the direct parental care than is the case in the old lands; and an independence of action tends to be developed, which, if not guided to proper aims, soon finds out improper ones. No efficient, directing power is vouchsafed, so some are found to say, and the

natural result of the want of restraint on the part of parents has led on the part of children to a want of regard not only for parental law, but for all law, and for constituted authority.

It is probable that all of these reasons have something to do with the point at issue. Certain it is that the last-mentioned one has had confirmation in a speech by the Honourable J. H. Carruthers, Minister of Education for New South Wales. Speaking to a gathering of school children, he said: 'It was a regrettable fact that during the year 1889 there had been more than one thousand convictions recorded of juvenile offenders for stealing and destroying plants and flowers in the Sydney Botanic Gardens; while in other parts of the world there could be grown around the grounds of gentlemen plants and flowers and fruits unfenced and unmolested. He deplored the evident want of respect for property which was manifested by the growing boys and girls of Australia, and hoped for better things.'

We have sketched the evil. What will cure it all? The question is easy to ask; but it is a simpler task to tell of the facts and give reasons for them than to point out the remedy. The authorities by convicting on the charge, 'No lawful, visible means of support,' rid society for a short time of the presence of both male and female members of 'the craft;' but it is only a brief respite, and does not cure. He would be a public benefactor who would devise effective means for converting into a useful and respectable member of society the Australian larrikin of to-day.

AN AUTUMN MELODY.

WHAT notes of what ditty can sound from the city,
From out of the dust and the din,
Where the sun's pallid taper is dim through the
vapour

That shrouds all the sorrow and sin?
At evening I listen—the murky lamps glisten,
The stars peer by two and by three;
The harsh Babel-noises replace your sweet voices,
Dear sea!

Yet past the fog-curtain, I know it for certain,
The barn-roofs have caught the last ray;
The smoke of the threshing is softly enmeshing
Brown gables with delicate gray;
The red leaves are falling, the plovers are calling,
The sea-wind is salt o'er the wold;
The bryonies blacken, the tufts of green bracken
Turn gold.

O scents that redouble where slow through the
stubble
The plough cleaves a pathway of hope!
O woods fading yellow, and orchards grown mellow,
And flocks on the far-away slope!
O sea-songs that mingle on boulder and shingle,
O fields that of old-time I knew!
My heart swells to bursting with infinite thirsting
For you!

M. C. GILLINGTON.

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BRITISH REGIMENTS AND THEIR INSIGNIA.

THE time-honoured badges and other devices borne by our British Regiments can boast in many instances of a very interesting origin. This is not only true with regard to the 'white horse,' 'laurel wreath,' or 'castle and key,' which we are accustomed to see set down in almanacs and the like as the badges of certain corps, for there are frequently other distinguishing features that find no place in such lists. These are sometimes of a kind, too, not well calculated to attract the notice of non-military persons; and it is possibly within the mark to say that not one in twenty civilian observers detects, for example, the apparently meaningless bow of ribbon on the back of the collars of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers. This much-prized decoration is a unique distinction, without, however, any very heroic history; it is merely a memento of the queue or pigtail which was worn in the army till about 1808.

Among other badges, the same regiment carries the not unusual one of the 'white horse,' above alluded to. Though well enough known, no doubt, to be the 'white horse of Hanover,' it is probably not so widely understood for what reason this device came to be bestowed upon so many of our older regiments. It would appear that in the beginning of the last century the appointments of a good many corps displayed the armorial coat or crest of the colonel-in-chief, who was often a member of the aristocracy, and a territorial magnate in some part of the country. Such marks of distinction on the part of these territorial families, we are told, excited the keen jealousy of the newly-arrived Hanoverians, so much so, that one of the very first steps taken by George I. was to sweep away these family insignia and replace them with his own. Hence, then, the frequency of the white horse as a regimental device.

A regiment of great renown, the Scots Greys, carry as a badge an eagle with outstretched wings—the only device of the kind in the army.

The Greys have enjoyed this unique distinction since the celebrated capture of a French eagle or standard at Waterloo by Sergeant Ewart, who was given a commission for his gallantry. It is a well-earned badge, too, for the Greys have a sort of pre-eminence for taking standards: at Ramillies they captured the colours of the 'Régiment du Roi;' while at Dettingen they took the famous white standard of the French household cavalry. And they are well entitled to the motto 'Second to none,' which they proudly carry. The mention of this motto reminds us that there is another of the kind, though in Latin, in the 'Service:' the Coldstream Guards carry the words 'Nulli Secundus' upon their regimental colour. When the troops were paraded to take the oath of allegiance to Charles II. after the Restoration, the men were ordered to 'ground' their arms. Among others present were the three regiments since known as the Foot-guards; and they were commanded to take up arms as the First, Second, and Third Guards. The First and Third obeyed with alacrity; the regiment of General Monk stood still, to the surprise of the king, who inquired of Monk the reason for their insubordinate bearing. The veteran replied that his regiment declined to be considered second to any other; and, says the legend, Charles remarked: 'Very well; they shall be my Coldstream Regiment of Foot-guards, and second to none.' Hence the motto. General Monk's connection with this corps is commemorated in a curious manner. A small Union Jack is borne on the Queen's Colour of the Coldstream, in consequence of Monk having been an Admiral of the fleet as well as a general. This is a distinction without a parallel in the army.

Almost every one must notice that while officers wear their sashes over the left shoulder, sergeants have theirs over the right. There is one exception, however, to this rule; for the sergeants of the 29th Foot arrange their sashes in precisely the same manner as the officers. Some say that this distinction dates from Culloden, where the regiment is alleged to have had so

many officers slain, that sergeants had to take their places in command of the companies. Another regiment, the 13th, commemorates its terrible loss on the same field in a different fashion: the officers wear perennial mourning in the shape of a black stripe in their gold lace. This kind of perpetual mourning is not, however, peculiar to the 13th. The 65th and 84th have black-edged lace on the officers' tunics, in memory, it is said, of the loss they sustained on the Nive in 1813; and black gloves used to be worn by the 84th to commemorate the same event. Some other corps have the black stripe in their gold lace, but it seems to be very doubtful for what reasons. In certain cases it is supposed to be a symbol of mourning for General Wolfe or Sir John Moore; in others, for heavy losses in action.

At Dettingen, in 1743, the 22d Foot extricated George II. from a somewhat perilous position, in remembrance of which event they wear a small sprig of oak in their caps on the Queen's birthday and other special occasions; and on the 29th of May an acorn is worn by some old regiments, that date being the anniversary of the Restoration. In a similar fashion the 12th and 20th wear a rose on the 1st of August. This floral decoration arises from the tradition, which is well founded, that at Minden these regiments marched through flower-gardens, and most of the men wore roses as they went into action on August 1, 1759. For their prowess at Minden, the 12th, 20th, 23d, 25th, 37th, and 51st regiments were granted leave to carry a laurel wreath on their colours and equipments; and for reasons above alluded to, the 20th have in addition a rose on their standards. Besides the 'Minden wreath,' there is one other instance of the same symbol in the army—it is borne on the colours of the 57th, the 'Die Hards' of Albuera celebrity. A regiment just mentioned, the 12th, together with the 39th, 56th, and 58th, carry the 'Castle and Key,' the motto 'Montis insignia Calpe,' and the word 'Gibraltar,' on account of having taken part in the memorable defence of that fortress from 1779 to 1783.

A famous regiment, the 5th or Northumberland Fusiliers, has a distinction of a curious if not altogether unprecedented variety. In their head-dress the officers and men have a plume red in the upper moiety and white in the lower; and though this may not perhaps seem a matter of much moment, it has a history. At Wilhelmstahl, and again when in St Lucia, the 5th, after sanguinary combats, gathered from the caps of slain French grenadiers enough white feathers to fit out the whole regiment with plumes—an adornment which a while afterwards met with the approval of the authorities. But in 1829 a War Office order gave instructions for the white plume to be more generally adopted in the service; and in consequence of this innovation, the Fusiliers complained that they would lose their well-earned distinction. So the matter at issue was eventually compromised by granting them permission to wear the half-red, half-white plume above mentioned. For reasons never properly explained, the 5th wear a rose on St George's Day.

Besides feathers, other curious trophies are represented in the belongings of this regiment.

At Lucknow they captured an ivory bedstead belonging to the Begum, as well as a great rod or stick of silver. From a part of the former a bandmaster's baton was carved; while the latter was fashioned into a drum-major's staff. Both are still doing duty. This staff, by the way, reminds us of the ivory stick carried on the anniversaries of certain battles by the sergeant-major of the 91st Highlanders. When on the way home from the Cape in 1802, the transport having the regiment on board was charged by a sword-fish, which left its weapon embedded in the side of the vessel. Converted into a walking-stick, the ivory sword accompanied the sergeant-major through the whole of the Peninsular War. The names of the battles in which it was carried are inscribed upon it on plates of solid gold; and it is still carried on parade by the sergeant-major on the anniversaries of these actions.

Somewhat akin to the party-coloured plume of the Northumberland Fusiliers, again, was the red ball which used to appear on the shakoes of the light company of the 46th Foot. During the battle of Brandywine, in the American War, this company by accurate shooting made great havoc in the ranks of the enemy, who threatened, when they could obtain a favourable opportunity for revenge, to give the marksmen no quarter. In defiance, however, of this menace, and to make themselves more readily distinguished from their comrades, they dyed the ball in their caps red—with blood, according to tradition—in place of the green worn by the rest of the regiment. This distinction was subsequently sanctioned by the War Office authorities.

One more instance of a similar kind, and we are done. The 28th Foot used to have a singular distinguishing feature in their number badge, which was affixed not only on the front, in the usual manner, but also on the *back* of their caps. On one occasion in Egypt, when rather incautiously drawn up in line, a fierce onslaught was made upon the regiment, in rear as well as in front, by large bodies of French cavalry. There was no time to get into square formation to 'receive' the charging horsemen; but the commanding officer, being a man of resource, shouted, 'Rear rank, right-about-face. Fire!' The men carried out the order with promptitude; standing back to back, they simultaneously beat off both assaults; and to commemorate the affair, they were granted the unique distinction of the duplicate number badge.

BLOOD ROYAL.

CHAPTER VI.—THE PROOF OF THE PUDDING.

DICK slept little that night: he lay awake, despondent. Next day he rose unrefreshed, and by a quarter to ten was in the quad at Durham. Not another candidate as yet had showed up so early. But undergraduates were astir, moving aimlessly across the quad in caps and gowns, and staring hard at the intruder, as one might stare at a strange wild beast from some distant country. Dick shrank nervously from their gaze, hardly daring to remember how he had hoped at Chiddingwick to be reckoned in their number. One

thing only gave him courage every time he raised his eyes—the Plantagenet Leopards on the façade of the buildings. Should he, the descendant of so many great kings—*atavis editus regibus*—should he slink ashamed from the sons of men whom his ancestors would have treated as rebellious subjects? He refused such degradation. For the honour of the Plantagenets he would still do his best; and more than his best, the Black Prince himself could never have accomplished.

He lounged around the quad till the doors of the hall were opened. A minute before that time, Gillingham strolled casually up in sombrero and gray suit and nodded a distant nod to him. 'Morning, Plantagenet,' he said languidly, putting his pipe in his pocket; and it was with an effort that Dick managed to answer as if unconcerned, 'Good-morning, Gillingham.'

The first paper was a stiff one—a feeler on general European history, to begin with. Dick glanced over it in haste, and saw to his alarm and horror a great many questions that seemed painfully unfamiliar. Who on earth were Jacopo Nardi, and Requesens, and Jean Rey? What was meant by the Publication of the Edict of Rostock? And he thought himself an historian! Pah! this was simply horrible! He glanced up mutely at the other candidates. One or two of them appeared every bit as ill at ease as himself; but others smiled satisfied; and as for the Born Poet, leaning back against the wall with pen poised in one hand, he surveyed the printed form with a pleased smirk on his face that said as plainly as words could say it, 'This paper was just made for me! If I'd chosen the questions myself, I couldn't have chosen anything that would have suited me better.' He set to work at it at once, with a business-like air—while Dick chewed his quill pen—evidently flooring every item in the lot consecutively. No picking and choosing for him; he dashed straight at it: Peter the Great or Charles XII, Cæsar Borgia or Robespierre, it was all one, Dick could see, to the Born Poet. He wrote away for dear life with equal promptitude on the Reformation in Germany and the Picts in Scotland; he seemed just as much at home with the Moors at Granada as with the Normans in Sicily: he never hesitated for a second over that fearful stumper, 'State what you know of the Rise and Progress of the Bavarian Monarchy;' and he splashed off three whole pages of crowded foolscap without turning a hair, in answer to the command, 'Describe succinctly the alterations effected in the Polish Constitution during the seventeenth Century.' Such encyclopædic knowledge appalled and alarmed poor Dick, with his narrower British outlook: he began to feel he had been ill-advised indeed to measure his own strength against the diplomatic service and the historical geniuses of the old foundations.

When they came out at midday, he compared notes on their respective performances with Gillingham. All three young men lunched together at the *Saracen's Head*—Dick ordering cold beef and a glass of water, for Mr Plantagenet's example had made him a teetotaler; while the two Rugby boys fared sumptuously every day off outlets, asparagus, fresh strawberries, and claret.

Gillingham had walked through the paper, he averred; a set of absurdly elementary questions. 'I floored Jacopo Nardi,' he remarked with a genial smile, 'and I simply polished off the Edict of Rostock.' Dick, more despondent, went through it in detail, confessing with shame to entire ignorance of more than one important matter. 'Oh, the Poet wins!' Faussett exclaimed, with deep admiration. 'He wins in a canter. I tell you, it's no use any other fellow going in, when the Poet's in the field. It's Gillingham first, and the rest nowhere. He knows his books, you see. He's a fearful pro. at them.'

'Perhaps there's a dark horse, though,' Gillingham suggested, smiling. 'The Prince of the Blood may hold the lists after all, against all comers.'

'Perhaps so,' Faussett answered with a short little laugh. 'But I'll back the Rugby lot against the field, all the same, for a fiver. The rest are rank outsiders. Even money on the Poet! Now gentlemen, now's your chance! the Poet for a fiver! even money on the Poet, the Poet wins; who'll back the Plantagenet?'

Dick coloured to the very roots of his hair; he felt himself beaten in the race beforehand. Oh, why had he ever come up to this glorious, impossible place at all? And why did he ever confide the secret of his intentions to the imprudent head of the house of Plantagenet?

That day and the next day, it was always the same. He sat, and bit his pen, and looked hard at the questions, and waited for inspiration that never seemed to come: while Gillingham, the brilliant, the omniscient, the practical, fully equipped at all points, went on and wrote—wrote, scratching his foolscap noisily with a hurrying pen, straight through the paper. Dick envied him his fluency, his readiness, his rapidity; the Born Poet kept his knowledge all packed for immediate use at the ends of his fingers, and seemed able to pour it forth on no matter what topic, the very instant he required it. Words came to him quick as thought: he never paused for a second. Before the end of the examination, Dick had long ago given up all for lost, and only went on writing at the papers at all from a dogged sense that it ill became a Plantagenet to admit he was beaten as long as a drop of blood or a whiff of breath remained in his body.

The three days of the examination passed slowly away, and each day Dick felt even more dissatisfied with his work than he had felt on the previous one. On the very last evening, he indited a despondent letter to Maud, so as to break the disappointment for her gently, explaining how unequally he was matched with this clever fellow Gillingham, whom all Rugby regarded with unanimous voice as a heaven-sent genius, a natural historian, and a Born Poet. After which, with many sighs, he betook himself once more for the twentieth time to the study of the questions he had answered worst, wondering how on earth he could ever have made that stupid blunder about Aidan and the Synod of Whitby, and what could have induced him to suppose for one second that Peter of Amboise was really the same person as Peter the Hermit. With these and other like errors he made his soul miserable that live-long night; and he worried himself with highly-coloured

mental pictures of the disgrace he would feel it to return to Chiddingwick, no Oxford man at all, but a bookseller's assistant!

Not till twelve o'clock next day was the result to be announced. Richard spent the morning listlessly with Gillingham and Faussett. The Born Poet was not boastful; he hated ostentation; but he let it be clearly felt he knew he had acquitted himself with distinguished credit. Poor Dick was miserable. He half reflected upon the desirability of returning at once to Chiddingwick, without waiting to hear the result of the examination; but the blood of the Plantagenets revolted within him against such a confession of abject cowardice. At twelve o'clock or a little after, he straggled round to Durham. In the big Chapel Quad, a crowd of eager competitors gathered thick in front of the notice-board. Dick hardly dared to press in among them and read in plain black and white the story of his own unqualified discomfiture. He held back and hesitated. Two elderly men in caps and gowns, whom he knew now by sight as fellows and tutors, were talking to one another quite loud by the gate. 'But we haven't seen Plantagenet yet,' the gravest of them said to his neighbour; he was a tall fair man, with a cultivated red beard and a most æsthetic *pince-nez*.

Dick's heart came up in his mouth. He stood forward diffidently. 'My name's Plantagenet,' he said, with a very white face. 'Did you want to speak to me?'

'Oh, yes,' the tutor answered, shaking him warmly by the hand: 'you must come up, you know, to enter your name on the books, and be introduced to the Warden.'

Dick trembled like a girl. His heart jumped within him. 'Why, what have I got?' he asked, hardly daring even to ask it, lest he should find himself mistaken.

The man with the red beard held out a duplicate copy of the paper on the notice-board. 'You can see for yourself,' he answered; and Dick looked at it much agitated.

'Modern History: Mr Richard Plantagenet, late of Chiddingwick Grammar-school, is elected to a Scholarship of the annual value of One Hundred Pounds. *Proxime accessit*, Mr Trevor Gillingham of Rugby School. Mr Gillingham is offered a set of rooms, rent free, in the College.'

The world reeled round and round on Dick as a pivot. It was too good to be true. He couldn't even now believe it. Of what happened next, he never had any clear or connected recollection. In some vague phantasmagoric fashion he was dimly aware of being taken by the tutor into the College Hall and introduced by name to a bland-looking effigy in a crimson gown, supposed to represent the Head of the College; after which it seemed to him that somebody made him sign a large book of statutes or something of the sort in mediæval Latin, wherein he described himself as 'Plantagenet, Ricardus, gen. fil., hujus ædis alumnus'; and that somebody else informed him in the same tongue he was duly elected. And then he bowed himself out in what Mr Plantagenet the elder would have considered a painfully inadequate manner, and disappeared with brimming eyes into the front quadrangle.

As yet he had scarcely begun to be faintly conscious of a vague sense of elation and triumph;

but as he reached the open air, which freshened and revived him, it occurred to him all at once that now he was really to all practical intents and purposes an Oxford undergraduate, one of those very people whose gorgeous striped blazers and lordly manners had of late so overawed him. Would he ever himself wear such noble neckties? Would he sport a straw hat with a party-coloured ribbon? He looked up at the big window of that beautiful chapel, with its flamboyant tracery, and felt forthwith a proprietary interest in it. By the door, Faussett was standing. As Dick passed, he looked up and recognised 'the dark horse,' the rank outsider. He came forward and took his hand, which he wrung with unfeigned admiration. 'By Jove, Plantagenet,' he cried, 'you've licked us; you've fairly licked us. It's wonderful, old man. I didn't think you'd have done it. The Poet's such an extraordinary dab, you know, at history. But you must be a dabber. Look here, I say, what a pity you didn't take me the other day when I offered even money on Trev. against the field. You simply chucked away a good chance of a fiver!'

A little farther on, Gillingham himself strolled up to them. His manner was pure gold. There was no trace of jealousy in the way he seized his unexpected rival's hand. To do him justice, indeed, that smallest and meanest of the human passions had no place at all in the Born Poet's nature. 'Well, I congratulate you,' he said with a passing pang of regret—for he too had wished not a little to get that Scholarship; 'as Sir Philip Sidney said, your need was the greater. And even for myself I'm not wholly dissatisfied. It's been a disappointment to me—and I don't very often secure the luxury of a disappointment. The true poet, you see, ought to have felt and known every human passion, good, bad, or indifferent. As pure experience, therefore, I'm not sorry you've licked me. It will enable me to throw myself henceforth more dramatically and realistically into the position of the vanquished, which is always the more pathetic, and therefore the more poetical.'

They parted a little farther down on the way towards the High Street. After they'd done so, the Philistine turned admiringly towards his schoolfellow, whom no loyal Rugby boy could for a moment believe to have been really beaten in fair fight by a creature from a place called Chiddingwick Grammar-school. 'By George, Trev,' he exclaimed with a glow of genuine admiration, 'I never saw anything like that! It was noble, it was splendid of you!'

The Born Poet hardly knew what his companion meant; but if it meant that he thought something which he, Trevor Gillingham, had done was noble and splendid, why, 'twas certainly not the Born Poet's cue to dispute the point with him. So he smiled a quiet non-committing sort of smile, and murmured in a gentle but distant voice, 'Aha? you think so?'

'Think so!' Faussett echoed. 'Why, of course I do: it's magnificent. Only—for the honour of the school, you know, Trev.—I really think you oughtn't to have done it. You ought to have tried your very best to lick him.'

And meanwhile, Dick Plantagenet himself, the real hero of the day, was straggling down, more dead than alive for joy, towards the Oxford post-

office, to send off the very first telegram he had ever despatched in his life: 'MISS MAUD PLANTAGENET, Chiddingwick, Surrey.—Hooray, have got it, the hundred pound history.' Thirteen words: sixpence ha'penny. Strike out the Maud, and it's the even sixpence.*

(To be continued.)

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THE BANKERS' CLEARING-HOUSE.

Most people have heard of the Bankers' Clearing-house. It is situated in Post-office Court, which runs between Lombard and King William Streets, and is by no means prepossessing in appearance. Time was, no doubt, when it could boast of being as pleasing to the eye as most of its then neighbours; but *tempora mutantur*—and the Clearing-house has changed for the worse. The dirt of ages has clustered thick upon it; its architectural style has grown hopelessly old-fashioned; while lordly banking halls of granite and of Portland stone have risen and compassed it on every side. It formed, originally, part of the old Post-office, and was first put to its present use some hundred and ten years ago; but how long previous to its adaptation to the purposes of the City bankers its walls were set up the record does not inform us.

The portals of the House are so jealously guarded by a couple of door-keepers that no member of the general public is likely to have an opportunity of witnessing for himself the work conducted inside; and, therefore, the following particulars of the system, from the pen of one who has had considerable experience as a 'Clearer,' may not prove uninteresting.

Each of the twenty-five Clearing Bankers is allotted a desk, over which the name of the firm is displayed in prominent letters. These desks are arranged in alphabetical order, Barclay's being close to the left-hand side of the door, with Brown's, the City Bank, and others for near neighbours. That of the National Provincial is at the far end of the House; and the remaining banks follow in proper sequence until Williams', on the right-hand side of the door, is reached. The number of clerks representing each bank varies considerably; for while such houses as Glyn's and the London and County have as many as eight, a small bank like the London and South-western sends only one during the early portion of the work, and an extra hand about four o'clock, when the busiest time commences. On Stock Exchange 'Settling Days,' when stock-brokers' cheques pass in large numbers through the Clearing-house, and on the 4th of each month, on which day a great many bills fall due, most of the banks increase the number of their representatives, and on these occasions the desk accommodation is by no means sufficient. Some slight relief is afforded by pressing into the service a small room up-stairs; but the arrangement is found to be very inconvenient, and the staff will gladly welcome the day when the Committee of Bankers, in whose hands the management of the House is placed, decides to remove the business to some more commodious structure.

The staff consists of a 'Chief Inspector,' 'Deputy Inspector,' 'Clearers,' and 'Runners.'

The two inspectors carefully scrutinise each clearer's balance-sheet, and mark off its various amounts in order to detect any error that may have arisen. The signature of one is required upon the transfer-form when a balance is to be paid or received, and no small portion of their work is the preparation of elaborate tables setting forth the totals of the vast numbers of cheques and bills passing daily through the House.

The business of the clearers is to enter under the name of the presenting bank the amounts of the cheques and bills—termed in the House 'articles'—drawn upon their own firm. The books in which these entries are made have printed at the head of their columns the names of the various banks; and though the articles have stamped across them the title of the firm presenting, it is no uncommon occurrence for a clearer to enter in his hurry some of them under the wrong heading, and so cause considerable trouble not only to himself but to the clerk who has to balance with him when the work is agreed at the end of the day. The bad figures made by the drawers of cheques are frequently the cause of putting the work wrong; and many a laborious 'tick-up' has to be endured in search of some error which has occurred in consequence of the penchant some people have for making an 8 with a remarkable resemblance to a 5, or writing down a 6 where their intention was to form a mere cipher.

The runners' avocation is to journey frequently between their respective offices and the House, bringing into the latter batches of articles, which they distribute upon the desks of the banks upon whom they are drawn, and returning with those payable by their own firm, and which have been duly entered by their clearers in the 'In-clearing' books.

At the close of business the clearer has brought him the books in which the 'out-clearing articles' were entered before being sent down to the House. The totals of these, with those of his own in-clearing books, he agrees with the other banks, and strikes a balance with each. The balance-sheet has printed in alphabetical order down the middle a list of the Clearing Banks, and on each side of it a money column, that on the left being headed 'Debtors,' that on the right 'Creditors.' The clearer we will say represents the London and County Banking Company; and, starting at the top of the list, proceeds to strike a balance between his firm and the Alliance Bank. He finds, we will assume, that the sum of the Alliance columns in the in-clearing book is, to put the amount in round figures, £50,000, while the out-clearing total is £45,000. This gives a balance of £5000 in favour of the Alliance, and that amount he enters in the right-hand column against the name of that bank. The Alliance clearer, working in the same way, discovers that the London and County Bank owes him £5000, and accordingly inserts those figures in the left-hand column of his balance-sheet. When a similar process has been gone through with the remaining banks, the two sides of the sheet are cast. If the sum of the right side is the larger, the bank has to pay the balance away; if the left exceeds the right, then the operation is reversed. All the Clearing Banks have accounts with the Bank of England, where is also kept the 'Clearing Inspectors' Account,'

the latter being solely used for the purpose of arranging the transfers of the Clearing Banks. Those firms owing balances at the end of the day's transactions authorise the Bank of England to transfer the required amount from their accounts to that of the Clearing Inspectors, from which, in turn, the banks claiming balances are credited with the sums due to them. If there are no errors in the work, the Inspectors' Account will exactly balance; but where a difference exists, the Inspectors have thrust upon them the unpleasant task of searching through the twenty-five balance-sheets in order to detect the mistake.

THE IVORY GATE.*

By WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—LE CONSEIL DE FAMILLE (continued).

'It is a peaceful day,' Elsie continued, 'that you pass—the most part alone—you with your books. Sometimes you come here to call upon your old friend and solicitor, Mr Dering.'

'Sometimes,' he replied. 'We are very old friends. Though his views are narrow.—Where is he?' He looked about the room. 'You are all waiting to see him? He will be here directly. He is always here about this time.'

'Yes, directly. You remember what I said to you on Sunday concerning certain transactions? I told you how important it was to have the exact truth about them.'

'Certainly. I remember. I wrote an account of them for you.'

'You did. Are these papers what you wrote?'

He looked at them for a moment. 'These are my papers,' he said. 'They are what I wrote at your request. They contain a perfectly true account of what happened.'

'Now, before I go on, you will not mind—these people here do not know Mr Edmund Gray—you will not mind my asking a few persons to testify that you are really Mr Edmund Gray?'

'My dear child, ask all the world if you wish; though I do not understand why my identity should be doubted.'

'Not quite all the world.—Mr Carstone, will you tell us the name of this gentleman?'

'He is Mr Edmund Gray, my neighbour at No. 22 South Square, Gray's Inn.'

Mr Edmund Gray inclined his head and smiled.

George went outside and returned, followed by a small company, who, in answer to Elsie, stepped forward one after the other and made answer.

Said one: 'I am the landlord of the rooms at 22 South Square tenanted by Mr Edmund Gray. He has held the rooms for ten years. This gentleman is Mr Edmund Gray, my tenant.'

Said another: 'I am a barrister, and the tenant of the rooms above those held by Mr Edmund Gray. I have known him—more or less—for ten years. This gentleman is Mr Edmund Gray.'

Said a third: 'I am a commissionaire. I remember this gentleman very well, though it is eight years since he employed me, and only for one job then. I went from an hotel in Norfolk

Street, Strand, to a bank with a cheque which I was to cash for him in ten-pound notes. He gave me half a sovereign.'

'Quite so,' said Mr Edmund Gray. 'I remember you, too. It was a cheque for seven hundred and twenty pounds, the particulars of which you have in my statement, Elsie. I well remember this one-armed commissionaire.'

And a fourth: 'I am the laundress who does for Mr Edmund Gray. I have done for him for ten years. This gentleman is Mr Edmund Gray.'

And a fifth: 'I am a news-agent, and I have a shop at the entrance of Gray's Inn. This gentleman is Mr Edmund Gray, of 22 South Square. I have known him in the Inn for ten years.'

To each in turn Mr Dering nodded with a kindly smile.

'Athelstan,' said Elsie, 'will you tell us when and where you have met Mr Edmund Gray?'

'I met him last week in Carstone's rooms on the same landing. He sat with us for an hour or more.'

'It is quite true,' said Mr Dering. 'I have had the pleasure of meeting Mr Arundel on that occasion.'

'I also saw him,' Athelstan continued, 'at a small lecture Hall at Kentish Town on Sunday evening—yesterday.'

'To complete the evidence,' said Elsie, 'I have myself spent many hours almost daily with Mr Edmund Gray during the last fortnight or so.—Is not that true, dear Master?'

'Quite true, my Scholar.'

'Brother—brother'—Sir Samuel touched his arm—'I implore you—rouse yourself. Shake off this fancy.'

'Let him alone, Sir Samuel,' said George—'let him alone. We have not done with him yet.'

'Yes,' cried Mrs Arundel, who had now left her seat and was leaning over the table, following what was said with breathless interest—'let us finish out this comedy or tragedy—as the case may be. Let no one interrupt.'

'I have also met you, sir'—Mr Dering addressed Checkley, who only groaned and shook. 'It was outside a tavern. You took me in and offered me a drink.'

Checkley shook his head, either in sadness or in denial—but replied not, and at the thought of offering Mr Dering a drink, everybody laughed, which was a relief.

'Dear Master,' Elsie went on in her soft voice, 'I am so glad that you remember all these things. It makes one's task so much easier. Why, your memory is as strong as ever, in spite of all your work.—Now, I am going to read the two statements you wrote down yesterday afternoon. Then you may recall anything else you might like to add. Remember, that as regards this first affair, the cheque for seven hundred and twenty pounds, my brother was charged, on suspicion only, with having forged it. Now listen.' She read the brief statement which you have already seen concerning the business of the first cheque. 'That is your history of the affair.'

'Quite so. Dering drew the cheque at my request. I cashed it. I found that I had no need of the notes, and I returned them. That is very simple.'

'It is all so simple that nobody ever guessed it before.—Now we come to the transfers made in

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the spring of the present year. You wrote a second statement regarding them. I will read that as well. Please listen very carefully.'

She read the other statement, which you have also seen already. She read it very slowly, so that there should be no mistake possible. During the reading of these documents Sir Samuel's face expressed every possible shade of surprise. Mrs Arundel, leaning over the table, followed every line. Hilda wept—her head gracefully inclined over her pocket-handkerchief, as if it was an urn.

'This is your account of the business?'

'Certainly. There is nothing more to be added. It is a plain statement of the facts. I do not understand how they could be in any way doubted or misrepresented.'

'Would you, Sir Samuel, like to ask Mr Edmund Gray any question?'

'I don't understand. He says that Mr Dering wrote a letter for him.'

Elsie showed him the letter they had seen Mr Dering write, which he was passing from one to the other.

'Where are the transfers?' Sir Samuel went on. 'He says they were placed by himself in the safe.'

Mr Edmund Gray rose and walked to the safe. He laid his hands upon a packet and took it out.

'These are the papers,' he said.

Sir Samuel opened the roll and looked them over. 'They seem all right,' he said. 'This is very wonderful.'

'Wonderful—and sad—most lamentable,' whispered Lady Dering.

'Wonderful indeed!' Mrs Arundel echoed.

'Most wonderful! most unexpected!'

'A moment more, and I have done.' Elsie again took up the tale. 'Here is a cheque to the order of Mr Dering signed by Mr Edmund Gray for the whole of the money lying in his name at the Bank.—You agree, Master, that it is best for the future that all your affairs should be in the hands of your solicitor?'

'I quite agree.'

'Here is a letter to the manager of the Bank, requesting him to pay over Edmund Gray's dividends to the account of Mr Dering.—And now I think I have proved my case. Here in the safe were the ten-pound notes received by Mr Edmund Gray, and placed there by him. Here were the transfers and certificates placed there by him: you have heard half-a-dozen people testify to the fact that you have Edmund Gray before you. His statement of the business has been read to you. It shows, what no other theory of the case could show, how the thing was really done. Lastly, it shows the absolute and complete innocence of my brother and of George.—Have you anything more to say, Sir Samuel?'

'Nothing—except that I was misled by a statement concerning a profligate life among low companions, without which no suspicion could have fallen upon either of you gentlemen. It was'—he pointed to the unhappy Checkley—'a vile and malignant falsehood. Do you hear, sir? Vile and malignant. It only remains for us all to make such reparation as we may—nothing would suffice, I know, but such reparation as we can—by the expression of the shame and regret that we all feel.'

'Athelstan,' said his mother, 'what can I say? Oh! what can I say?'

Athelstan rose—during the long business he had sat motionless in the clients' chair, his head in his hand. Now he rose and stepped over to his mother. 'Hush!' he said. 'Not a word. It is all forgotten—all forgiven.'

But Hilda sank upon her knees and caught his hands.

'George,' said Sir Samuel, 'forgive me. The case looked black against you at one time. It did indeed. Forgive me.' He held out his hand.

Then there was great hand-shaking, embracing, and many tears. As for Checkley he crept out and vanished in the retreat of his own room. 'It is all over,' he murmured—'all over. I've lost four hundred pounds a year. That's gone. All over—all over!'

Mr Edmund Gray looked on this happy scene of family reconciliation with benevolence and smiles.

Family reconciliations must not be prolonged: you cannot sit over a family reconciliation as over a bottle of port. It must be quickly despatched. Sir Samuel whispered to Hilda that they had better go.

'Come,' said Lady Dering. 'We will all meet again this evening at Pembroke Square—and tomorrow evening—and on Wednesday afternoon.—Elsie, you are a witch and a sorceress and a wise woman. You said that Athelstan should give you away, and he will.—Brother, come with us. Leave Elsie to George.—Oh! how handsome you are looking, my poor ill-used brother! Try to forgive us if you can.'

She turned to Mr Edmund Gray. 'Sir,' she said, 'we ought to be very grateful to you—indeed, we are—for enabling us to clear away the odious cloud of suspicion which had rolled over our heads. It was very good of you to draw out those statements for my sister. But I do think that if Mr Dering had told his old friends about you—about Mr Edmund Gray—we should have been spared a great deal of trouble and unnecessary shame.—Good-day, sir.'

Sir Samuel lingered a moment. He looked as if he would appeal to Mr Edmund Gray as to a brother. 'Don't speak to him,' Elsie whispered. 'Let him alone. He will become himself again presently. Let him alone.'

So he went out, and the door was shut, and Edmund Gray was left alone with George and the Scholar.

'My Master'—Elsie sat down beside him—'I fear you have been interrupted. But indeed it was necessary. Don't ask why. Things get into a muddle sometimes, don't they? You have gathered something of the trouble, too. Now that is all over—past and gone.'

'I am glad for your sake, child.'

'Master—dear Master—I have a confession to make. When I found out who you were—I mean what manner of man you were—my only thought at first was to coax you and wheedle you and flatter you till you gave me exactly the information that I wanted. I confess it. That was my only purpose. Nay—more—for the sake of my lover and my brother I would do it again. Well—I found that the only way to win your confidence was to pretend to be your Scholar and

to believe all you taught. So I pretended. So I won your confidence. So I obtained all I wanted. So I have made it impossible for even the most malignant creature in the world to pretend that these two men had anything to do with what they called a forgery. But—believe me, dear Master—while I pretended, I was punished, because my pretence is turned to certainty.'

'Child, I knew it. You could not pretend—no woman could pretend so as to deceive me on a point so simple.'

'Dear Master, you do not know the possibilities of feminine craft. But I pretend no more. Oh! I care not how you make your attempt, whether you destroy Property or not. Mr Dering says that Property is Civilisation—but I don't care. To me it is enough to dream—to know—that there is an Earthly Paradise possible, if only men will think so and will keep it before their eyes, though it be as far off as the blue hills. It is beautiful only to think of it: the soul is lifted up only to think that there is such a place. Keep the eyes of your people on this glorious place, dear Master: make it impossible for them to forget it or to let it go out of their sight. Then, half-unconsciously, they will be running, dragging each other, forcing each other—exhorting each other to hurry along the dusty road which leads to that Earthly Paradise with its Four-square City of the Jasper wall. Preach about it, Master. Write about it. Make all men talk about it and think about it.'

She threw her arms round his neck and kissed him.

'Master, we shall be away for a month or two. Then we shall come back, and I shall sit at your feet again. You shall come and stay with us. We will give you love, and you shall give us hope. I have made my confession. Forgive me.'

They left him sitting alone. Presently he arose, put all the papers back in the safe, and walked slowly away—to Gray's Inn.

Next morning when he opened his letters he found one marked 'Private.' It was from Sir Samuel.

'DEAR EDWARD,' it said—'We are all very glad to tell you that the business of the shares and certificates is now completely cleared up. Checkley is not in any way concerned in it—nor is George Austin. And I am happy to say there is a complete solution of the former mystery which entirely clears Hilda's brother. Under these circumstances, we are agreed that it is best for you not to trouble yourself about any further investigations. You will find in the safe the transfers, a cheque to yourself of all the money received by Edmund Gray, and an order in the Bank concerning the dividends. You have been the victim of a very remarkable hallucination. I need not explain further. Mr Edmund Gray, however, is undoubtedly insane. I hear, and have myself observed, that you have been greatly disturbed and distressed by these mysterious events. Now that they are settled finally—I may say that only a happy chance set us on the right track—we all hope that you will be satisfied with our assurance, and that you will not trouble yourself any more in the matter.—Your affectionate brother, SAMUEL DERING.'

Mr Dering, after reading this letter, got up and

looked in the safe, where he found the papers referred to. He rang the bell. 'Checkley, who has been at my safe?'

'Nobody but you.'

'Don't tell lies. Who put those papers in the safe?'

'They must have been put there yesterday—you were in the room.'

'Yesterday—what happened yesterday?'

Checkley was silent.

'Who was here yesterday?—Go on, Checkley. Don't be afraid.'

'Sir Samuel was here—and Lady Dering—and Mrs Arundel—and Miss Elsie—and your Partner—and Mr Athelstan. Two or three more came in and went away.'

'That will do. You need tell me no more. I don't want to know the particulars.—Checkley, my day's work is done. I have thought so for some time past. Now I am certain, I shall retire.'

'No—no,' cried Checkley, the tears running down his face. 'Not to retire—after all these years—not to retire.'

'I know now the meaning of my fits of forgetfulness. I have feared and suspected it for a long time. While I am lost to myself, I am going about the world, doing I know not what. And I will not ask. I may be this Edmund Gray who preaches Socialism and gives me his precious tracts. I may be some one else. I say, Checkley, that I know now what has happened to me. Deny it if you can—if you can, I say.'

Checkley did not offer any denial. He hung his head.—'This is the meaning of Elsie's strange hints and queer protestations. Half my time I am a madman—a madman.—Checkley, ask Mr Austin to come to me at once. My day is done.' He closed his open blotting-pad and placed the unopened letters beside it. Then he rose and pushed back his chair—the chair in which he had sat for fifty years and more. 'My day is done—my day is done.'

CHAPTER XXXIX.—THE LAST.

Mr Dering left his office, went back to Gray's Inn, and sat down again before the Ivory Gate. Those who have once sat for an hour or two in this place return to it again and again and never leave it. It is, to begin with, the most beautiful gate ever erected. The brain and wit and fancy of man could never conceive such a gate, could never execute such a conception. It is all of pure ivory, carved with flowers such as never grew; curving and flowing lines leading nowhere; figures of maidens lovely beyond all dreams; philosophers whose wisdom reaches unto the heavens; statesmen who discern the gathering forces and control the destinies of a nation; inventors who conquer nature; physicians who prolong life; ecclesiastics who convert the Carthusian cell into a bower of delight; poets who here find their fantasies divine; men and women in work-a-day dress who wear the faces of the heavenly host.

All the dreamers lie here, not asleep, but dreaming. Their eyes are open, but they do not see each other: they see these dreams. Those of the young who are also generous come here and dream until they grow older and are chained to

their work and can dream no more. Men of all conditions come here—even the little shop-boy—even the maiden who cleans the knives and polishes the boots—all are here. The young Prince is here : the little charity boy is here : the lad whose loftiest ambition is that he may one day stand in the pulpit of the little Baptist village chapel is here : here is the undergraduate who was Captain of Eton and will be Senior Classic and Member of Parliament and Minister—even Prime Minister—and will belong to History. The poet is here, and the painter, and sometimes hither comes the novelist, and, but more rarely, the dramatist. Hither comes the musician to lift up his soul with thoughts that only music can give : and the singer, so that he sings more than is apparent from the words : and the actor, so that he puts things into the play never dreamed by him who wrote it. Great is the power, great the gifts, of this noble Gate of Ivory.

Sitting before that gate, such a dreamer as Edmund Gray receives strange visions. He sees clearly and near at hand the things which might be, yet are not, and never can be until man lays down his garb of selfishness and puts on the white robes of Charity. To that dreamer the Kingdom of Heaven, which seems to some so far off and to others impossible, so that they deride the name of it, is actually close at hand—with us—easy to enter if we only choose. He exhorts his fellows to enter with him. And they would follow, but they cannot because they are held back by custom and necessity. They must obey the laws of the multitude, and so they stay where they are. And when the dreamer passes away, his memory is quickly lost, and the brightness quickly leaves those dimly-lighted lives. Yet other dreamers come—every day there arises an Edmund Gray.

Now when Edmund Gray takes the place of Edward Dering, in which guise does the soul, in the end, leave the earth? Are the dreams of Edmund Gray perhaps the logical development of the doctrines held by Edward Dering? Is the present stage of Individual Property—where every man works for himself and his household—one through which the world must pass before it can reach the higher level of working each for all? First men and women hunt, separate : they live apart in hollow trees and caves. Then they live together, and the man hunts for his wife and children. Next, they live in communities, which grow into towns and tribes and nations. Then men rely upon the protection of the law, and work for themselves again. That is our present stage : it has lasted long—very long. Perhaps it will break up some day : perhaps sooner than we think. Who knows? All things are possible—even the crash and wreck of a civilisation which has taken thousands of years to build up. And upon it may come—one knows not—that other stage which now belongs to the dreamer before the Ivory Gate.

The wedding was held then, as Elsie said it should be, shorn of none of its splendours, and relieved of the cloud which had hung over them so long and threatened them so gloomily. Athelstan the Exile—Athelstan the Ne'er-do-well—Athelstan the Profligate—Athelstan the Resident of Camberwell—Athelstan the Smirched and Soiled—stood beside the altar, tall and gallant,

and gave away the bride for all the world to see—nobody in the least ashamed of him. There was not any breath of scandal left. Here he was, returned from his travels, a tall and proper man, dressed in broadcloth, perhaps with money in purse, prosperous and successful in the sight of all. His mother gazed upon him when she should have been looking at the bride or into her Prayer Book. Her eyes were red, but then a mother is allowed a tear or two when her daughter leaves the nest. And as to those who had whispered words about family jars, quarrels and estrangements, or had spoken against the fair fame of the groom, they were now as mute as mice.

All the richer members of the House of Arundel—the City Arundels—were present. One of them—chief partner in a leading firm of accountants—afterwards computed, for the greater increase of the family glory, how many hundreds of thousands of pounds were gathered together at one moment beneath that sacred roof. He counted the members, and made that little addition, during the performance of the ceremony. Those of the Austins who were not disgracefully poor—there are some branches of the family, I believe, pretty low down—were also present. And the company went to Pembroke Square after the service, gazed admiringly at the wedding presents, and drank the health of the bride and bridegroom, and gathered with cousinly curiosity round the returned Prodigal. But they knew nothing—mind you—of his connection with Camberwell. And nothing about his supposed complicity in the Edmund Gray business. There had been, happily, no scandal.

Among the company in the church was Mr Dering. He stood tall and erect, his coat buttoned, his face keen and hard, the family lawyer stamped by nature and long custom.

Presently, when the service was about half way through, a change came over him. His face relaxed : the lines curved just a little laterally, the austerity vanished, his eyes brightened. He took off his gloves furtively and opened his coat. He was Edmund Gray. In that capacity he afterwards drank to the bride and wished her happiness. And he walked all the way from Pembroke Square to South Square, Gray's Inn.

I see in the future an old man growing feeble : he leans upon the arm of a girl whom he calls his Scholar, his disciple, and his child. His face is serene : he is perfectly happy : the Advent of that Kingdom whose glories he preaches is very nigh at hand. He lives in the house of his disciple : he has forgotten the very existence of his lawyer : he goes no more to Lincoln's Inn : always he is lying, night and day, before that miracle of carven work in Ivory. There he watches—it is his Vision—the long procession of those who work and sing at their work and are happy, work they ever so hard, because they work each for all and all for each. And there is no more sorrow or crying and no more pain. What hath the Gate of Horn—through which is allowed nothing but what is true—bitterly true—absolutely true—nakedly, coldly, shiveringly true—to show in comparison with this? A crowd trampling upon each other : men who enslave and rob each other : men and women and

children lying in misery—men and women and children starving.—Let us fly, my brothers—let us swiftly fly—let us hasten—to the Gate of Ivory.

THE END.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

ONCE more have we arrived at that period of the year when the meeting of the British Association tells us of the progress which scientific knowledge has made during the past twelve months. The meeting this year in the Scottish capital, while it has not attracted quite so many members as was anticipated, has been full of interest, both in the quality of the excellent addresses which have been delivered by the Presidents of the various sections, as well as in the papers on widely divergent subjects which have been read by the members. In glancing through the various subjects dealt with, it would be difficult for any person not to find some topic of interest peculiar to himself.

It would be impossible, as it is unnecessary, to give even a brief review of the various subjects dealt with by the Association; but as an instance of the extent of ground covered by them we will mention two of totally different bearing. The one is a paper on the 'Utilisation of Flowing Water as a Motive-power,' contributed by Messrs Purdon and Walters of London. The motor designed by these gentlemen for the purpose of driving electric, pumping, grinding, and other machinery consists of a pontoon fitted with blades fixed at intervals on an endless chain, passing over vertical wheels. These blades, when the pontoon is anchored, are carried forward by the tide, and so give motion to the wheels. The other paper to which we refer is contributed by Mr W. H. Preece, on 'The Destruction of Lightning-protectors by Recent Municipal Legislation.' In this paper Mr Preece assumes that the extraordinary immunity of private dwellings from lightning-stroke arises from the metal on the roofs together with the draining-pipes in connection with it forming a passage for the electricity to earth. The present system of detaching the pipes from the drains, in order to prevent egress of sewer-gas, must, he believes, do away with this protection, unless at least part of the metal pipe is allowed to bridge over the gap. If Mr Preece's argument be correct, it would seem that our houses have all been furnished with lightning-conductors without our cognisance.

The 'penny-in-the-slot' principle of commercial supply continues to meet with fresh applications. In some parts of Paris a pailful of hot water can be obtained from street standards for a five centime piece. Another phase of the slot-principle will be welcomed by railway travellers, who will presently be able to obtain half an hour's radiance from a three-candle-power electric lamp for the expenditure of one penny. It is said that the Metropolitan District Railway will be the first to have its carriages fitted with the penny-'slot' lamps, which are of the most ingenious construction; but if the scheme prove practicable, all the other lines will be obliged to

follow suit. The substitution of electric lamps fed by a current generated by the moving train, for the old dim oil-lamps, which necessitated so much work in trimming, removing, and lighting, must have already proved as great a saving to the companies adopting it as it has been a comfort to their passengers.

The Pearl-fishery of the Gulf of California forms the subject of an interesting Report contributed to the Bulletin of the United States Fish Commission. The pearl-diver as here described has none of that romance attaching to him which in past times was associated with this occupation. He is simply a submarine labourer, like those who are engaged round our own coasts and in rivers for harbour and bridge construction. He is furnished with the regulation india-rubber suit and brass helmet, and is supplied with air from an attendant boat, so that he can remain at work for an hour or more, instead of the sixty-seconds' plunge into sunlit water which used to be the diver's lot. He gathers the shells into a wire-basket, which is hauled up when full by his companions in the boat. During the summer, the entire eastern coast of California forms the base of operations for the pearl-divers.

A volcanic eruption, which seems only second in severity to the outburst some years ago at Krakatoa, in the Strait of Sunda, occurred in June last at Great Sangir. Some particulars of the disaster have come to us, given in letters from the chief Dutch settlement in the north of the Celebes, from which the scene of the disturbance is distant about three hundred miles. Without any of the usual warnings of a seismic character, a volcano near Tarvena, the capital of the island, suddenly threw out stones of considerable size, which killed hundreds of persons, and caused the light wooden houses common to the country to collapse with the weight of material accumulated on their roofs. Great streams of lava flowed at the same time with awful rapidity down the sides of the mountain, and swept houses and their inmates away in their terrible embrace. The total loss of life is estimated as nearly as it can be at many thousands.

It has long been foreseen that the sailor as Nelson knew him is doomed to extinction, for the work formerly done by his muscular arm is now done by hydraulic and electric power. Even the work of holystoning a ship's deck is to be his no longer, for a machine has been constructed which will move the stone in any required direction over the surface of the boards, and will do the work very much quicker, if not better than it could be done by Jack. The machine is patented by Captain Lowberg of New York.

The chemist to the American Department of Agriculture has recently called attention to a novel system of butter adulteration which is carried out by a preparation called 'Gilt-edged Butter Compound.' The advertisers of this substance claim for it that added to a pint of milk and a pound of butter, the whole being churned together, the product will be two pounds of butter. This result is verified by the trials which have been made with the Compound at the Government Laboratory; but analysis shows that the butter produced contains three times the normal quantity of water and half the proper

percentage of butter-fat. The trick is a most ingenious one, and is explained by the fact that the Gilt-edged Butter Compound contains a large quantity of pepsine, an organic substance which has the property of enabling butter to take up its bulk of milk without materially altering its appearance.

All English-speaking peoples will be gratified to learn that Anne Hathaway's Cottage at Stratford-on-Avon has been purchased for the public by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trustees. For many years this cottage, the home of her who afterwards became Shakespeare's wife, and the scene of his courtship, has been shown to visitors to the shrine at Stratford, but it has been in private hands. It was recently advertised for sale, and ultimately secured by the Trustees, together with the many relics which it contains of him who was 'not for an age, but for all time.'

Mr James Morris of Glasgow has recently discovered a new method of producing Gems artificially, but as yet he has given no details of his method of procedure. He says that the process which he has adopted is a simple one, and that many analogies point to the probability of its being one of those followed in Nature's laboratory. The products which he obtains consist of rounded and compact crystals composed chiefly of alumina. They are transparent, and by special treatment will take a blue colour, and although the bulk of them may be described as sapphires, some at least are believed to be diamonds. These last, however, are much smaller than the chief crystals, which approach one-sixteenth of an inch in diameter, and they have not yet been exposed to those tests which would identify them as diamonds. 'The sparkle of some of these small crystals,' says Mr Morris, 'is magnificent. Carbon is present in the production of all the crystals, and some of the aluminous ones contain a little of that element.' It is not easy to anticipate what would be the result of the discovery of a method by which gems of large size could be manufactured, but certainly it would be one which to many would be most unwelcome.

Two melancholy accidents through balloons becoming ruptured in mid-air have led to experiments being made with a view to save life under such conditions. One *aéronaut* in France fitted the top of his balloon with a parachute which overspread the upper part of the gaseous envelope. He then made an ascent, and, with marvellous confidence in the value of his improvement, purposely cut the fabric of the balloon and let the gas escape. The parachute then expanded, and the occupants of the car sank slowly and safely to earth. In another experiment, conducted in this country, to show that if the neck-line of a balloon were left untied, the silk envelope would itself form an umbrella-like parachute, the car had no occupants, but was weighted so as to represent a crew of three persons. By means of a fuse and a weight the fabric was automatically slit from top to bottom when the balloon was at a height of three thousand feet, upon which the material assumed the form of an inverted basin and came down gently. It is argued from the result of this experiment that the occupants of a burst balloon would come safely to the ground,

if they only have the presence of mind to cut the neck-line.

Probably one of the most charming exhibits at the coming World's Fair at Chicago will be the Irish Village which is being arranged under the auspices of the Countess of Aberdeen and Mrs Ernest Hart. In this village there are to be seven cottages, in each of which will be carried on a different industry, such as spinning, dyeing, weaving, embroidering, lace-making, &c. There will also be a model dairy, with dairymaids making butter from the milk of real Kerry cows. In this village will stand a 'replica' of Donegal Castle, an old well, and other Celtic memorials.

Photography has long proved of value as an aid to astronomy, and it is a matter of common knowledge that a complete photographic survey of the heavens has for some time been in progress. As a good instance of the manner in which the camera can be used to solve an astronomical problem, we may point to the work recently undertaken by Mr Isaac Roberts, F.R.S., in his search for hypothetical planets existing beyond the orbit of Neptune, which has generally been regarded as the limit of the solar system. Professor Forbes twelve years ago predicted that two such planets exist; and Mr Roberts recently agreed to search for them by photographic methods, if the Professor would point out their supposed position. A chart was made of the region indicated by Professor Forbes, and this was covered by eighteen photographic plates, two sets of photo-plates being taken at intervals of seven days between the exposures. The dual photographs so obtained were then superposed, in order to see if any star appeared on one plate which was not on the other, and to detect any change of position in any particular star which might have occurred in the interval between the two exposures. By this method Mr Roberts was able to assert that there was no planetary body in the region indicated.

Waterspouts are very seldom seen in Britain, but their occurrence is occasionally recorded. In July last much damage was caused by one of these unwelcome visitors, which made its appearance on the Yorkshire wolds in the neighbourhood of Langtoft. After travelling for some distance, its progress was arrested by a hill, upon which it expended its force. After cutting three ditches, two of which were nearly thirty yards long, and about ten feet deep, and scattering the expelled rock, amounting to many tons, the village of Langtoft, lying at a lower level, was inundated by the released water, which formed a volume seven to ten feet in height. Two cottages and a workshop were destroyed; but the loss of life was happily confined to a few pigs, some sheep, and poultry. Curiously enough, a similar visitation occurred on this same hill four years ago.

In a recent Report by the Consul-general of Smyrna several interesting details are given concerning the Sponge-trade of that district. As a whole the industry has suffered a decrease as compared with the year 1890; but while the output of sponges of the fine quality was less, the prices realised were higher; but sponges of an inferior kind were sold at unremunerative rates. Districts which have long been in use are becoming exhausted, and although new fields are being discovered, the produce from them does

not yet compensate for the decreased supply from the old ones. The risks attached to the occupation have increased, for the men are tempted to descend to greater depths than formerly, and as many as eighty fatal accidents are recorded for the past season. This, out of a total of four thousand men employed, is a high percentage. Fishing continues throughout the winter season, but not in the same localities as during the summer. A parasitical weed which infested the sponges some years ago and gave much anxiety is gradually decreasing in quantity.

Rain which on touching the ground crackles and emits electric sparks is a very uncommon, but not unknown phenomenon. An instance of the kind was recently reported from Cordova, in Spain, by an electrical engineer who witnessed the occurrence. The weather had been warm and undisturbed by wind, and soon after dark the sky became overcast by clouds. At about eight o'clock there came a flash of lightning followed by great drops of electrical rain, each one of which on touching the ground, walls, or trees gave a faint crack, and emitted a spark of light. The phenomenon continued for several seconds, and apparently ceased as soon as the atmosphere was saturated with moisture.

In the interesting Cantor lectures on Mine-surveying, lately delivered at the Society of Arts by Mr Brough, much attention was devoted to the divining-rod and its pretensions as a discoverer of hidden minerals, a use to which to a considerable extent it is still put. While the hazel fork or divining-rod cannot be regarded seriously as an aid to the miners, it is of great value in the discovery of iron ore when it takes the form of a magnetic needle, for by noting the inclination or 'dip' of the needle as the ground is traversed, some idea of the extent of the deposit can be formed. An instance is recorded by Professor Le Neve Foster where a bed of iron ore lying below a lake in Sweden was correctly mapped by observations of this kind in winter when the water was covered with ice. This method of surveying has not escaped the keen scent of the fraudulent. In some cases the inclination of the needle has been helped by the approach of a walking-stick containing a concealed magnet, and it is not difficult to make the needle itself give unreliable testimony.

A curious fact connected with the French revenue has been made known. It is forbidden, on the shores of the Mediterranean, to draw any sea-water without a permit from the civil authorities. A well-known Englishman, staying in a villa on the Riviera the garden of which runs down to the sea-shore, could not obtain a painful of sea-water without permission of the civil power. The story is corroborated by others, who tell us that not a servant or villager can be induced to rob the ocean of a quart of water without permission of the Mayor of the district. The explanation of this apparent anomaly is that the French revenue derives benefit from a tax on salt, and if sea-water were free to all, the peasants would boil it down and make illicit salt.

The terrible disaster at St Gervais by which an hotel and most of its occupants was washed away in the dead of night, has been investigated by different men of science, who do not, however, agree as to the causes which led to

the catastrophe. One theory is that the usual drainage from the glacier from which the disaster undoubtedly originated became either totally blocked or partially obstructed, and that in this way a volume of water was pent up, which gradually acquired sufficient pressure to break its bonds. A more likely theory is that held by Professor Forel, who says that a body of water sufficient to do so much damage could not accumulate in so small a space as that assigned to it. He believes that the disaster was due to the natural movement and breaking-up of the glacier, and that the avalanche consisted of what he calls a lava of ice and water. The ravine shows no trace of any great evacuation of water; but he found the earth mixed with powdered ice, while great blocks of glacier ice were strewn in every direction. The catastrophe was caused then, if this latter theory be adopted, by an avalanche of ice starting at an altitude of ten thousand feet, which was 'pulverised by its fall, a large portion of it being melted by the heat generated in its rapid passage, and contact with matters relatively warm.' The falling mass was further liquefied by mingling with the water which finds its natural outlet at the ravine in question.

THE TURN OF THE WHEEL.

I.

'THAT be a relief!' exclaimed Micah Daggles as he threw down his hammer and drew his sleeve across his forehead.

It was striking one o'clock. They could just hear the quarters from the Stent parish church, about a third of a mile from the Rathole.

The other workers in Micah's shop also uttered exclamations of gladness. It was a blazing July day outside the shed. Inside the shed, where three fires were going, blown on by bellows, it was as hot as it well could be without being unbearable. These other workers comprised Mrs Daggles, Ruth Daggles, Adam Gray, and a boy. It was almost a family affair, this chain-shop of the Rathole. Adam Gray, though no relation, in fact, had won Ruth's heart, and was to marry her when—

But this brings us to the pathos of the place. Trade was extremely bad. It had steadily worsened for years. The big chain-factories had swallowed up scores of the domestic workshops. Not absorbed them, giving compensation for so doing; but driven them into extinction by the facilities they naturally obtained for underselling them. What became of them afterwards no one knew. The men and women left the neighbourhood, some well-nigh broken-hearted. The Stent district, though spoilt by these factories, is not without attraction; and after all, home is home, be it a palace in a shire, a hovel in Stent, or a single room in a Whitechapel alley.

The Daggles had come down in the world. Micah's father had been reputed a well-to-do man. The bankers of Stent had treated him with a certain deference that meant much in a pecuniary sense. His bills were always met, with never a word about extended time. There was then, too, a certain rude plenty in the old red house: meat on the table every day, and no lack of bones for the three white bulldogs which

for fully ten years seemed to occupy almost too much of old Daggles's spare time.

But the old man died one day, with a queer sort of smile on his face. 'Mebbe, Micah, thou'lt be a rich man—mebbe thou won't,' he murmured.

This oracular statement did not affect Micah much at the time. But after the funeral—with abundance of feathers, and half Stent at their doors uttering exclamations of rapture—Micah betook himself to the bank in his sleek Sunday clothes, and asked the manager to please to tell him how much money he had inherited. The old man had been mightily reserved. He always drew the wages himself, and attended to cheques and all commercial matters. His son was just a paid employee of his—rather more favoured than the rest of course, but little else. But the banker had merely lifted his eyebrows and said there was nothing in his hands to the late Mr Daggles's credit. There had been once upon a time, he allowed, a matter of thousands; but it had all been withdrawn. He rather fancied the chain-maker had invested it in land, was exceedingly surprised at the deceased man's reticence, and was sorry he could say nothing of a more satisfactory kind for Micah.

Time passed, and affairs stood as they did on this particular day of disappointment. No one knew in the least what had become of old Daggles's money. Micah had questioned every lawyer within ten miles of Stent on the subject, had, in fact, become liable for an astonishing number of six-and-eightpences quite to no purpose. And as the outcome, it appeared he was the heir to nothing in the world but the old workshop, the old red house adjacent, and a strip of soft ground behind, some twenty yards by five, which sloped towards a certain black brook between elder-bushes, famous for the size and number of its rats. Hence the style of the immediate neighbourhood: Rathole.

Micah had married three or four years before his father's death, and Ruth was born. In compliance with local custom, Mrs Daggles, when she was freed from the embarrassments attendant upon little Ruth's birth, had entered the workshop and wielded a hammer with the rest. She was a large woman, of the common Stent type: fond of bright Paisley shawls and drooping feathers to her bonnets, with a very red face, and great arms which made nothing of the ten-pound hammers. And she was not slow to proclaim her opinion that her husband's father had behaved very shabbily in doing away with the money she, in common with others, believed had been saved up for the next generation.

Since then, all sorts of discomfiting events had happened. The first large factory had been established—a huge haunting building of red brick with a tall chimney. Others had followed it; and now daily you might see men and lasses in troops entering the gates of the various works. Trade had languished, and the price of materials had risen, while the ability of Micah's customers to pay enhanced values had gone down. Little by little the old Daggles connection had died off. It was not easy—it seemed almost impossible—to get new patrons. These were secured by the big works. Nor was it easy to get workers to grub and hammer in the pokey little domestic

forge, when in the large establishments they got higher wages, better and a more extensive society, and where the sanitary conditions were better cared for.

Thus, from eight paid hammerers, the workshop had fallen to one—young Adam Gray. The odd lad who took charge of one of the bellows was of small account. Adam Gray was an anomaly in Stent. He had none of the braggart, self-assertive ways of the other chain-makers; nor did he care two pins about pigeon-flying, horse-racing, coursing, or poaching, which were the favourite holiday pursuits of the districts. He was a quiet, almost a moping sort of lad, with long hair and a reflective look. Mrs Daggles did not think much of him; but she forebore to tell him so, fearful lest he, like his predecessors, should straightway give notice. Micah, on the other hand, had a certain regard for the lad. There was something in Adam's face and in such of his mind as he exhibited that convinced Mr Daggles that his assistant was not, as Mrs Daggles playfully expressed it more than once, 'such a fool as he looked.' Adam had a fine pair of brown eyes. He was, besides, strong in the arm and phenomenally industrious.

Ruth Daggles had entered the workshop in her tenth year. That was before state legislation made it penal to employ young girls at hard chain-work. She was a delicate little slip of maidenhood, and Adam from the first resented seeing her little arms bared to such work as she had to do. The attachment that grew up naturally between them increased with the years. Ruth, though distinctly pretty in a fragile way, was almost as shy a girl as Adam was diffident among mankind. The two went about together, much to the amusement of Stent. Mrs Daggles did not appreciate such a courtship. But Micah said: 'Let 'a be—the lad's a good un, and the wench loves him. I'll ha' no comin' between um.'

This was how matters stood in the Daggles household when Micah flung away his hammer and breathed with satisfaction. He adopted the conventional division of the day that Adam might have the less cause for discontent with the lower rate of wages he received, and, for Ruth's sake, received willingly. All four left the workshop as if it were a Purgatory, as in truth it was that day.

'Put on thy coat, wench,' said Micah when he saw Ruth bare-armed to the shoulder, and with her dress open at the throat, inhaling the scant July breeze with avidity. Her little face was sadly pale, and her blue eyes seemed preternaturally large. But ere Micah had finished speaking Adam had anticipated him.

'I dunnot want it, Adam,' murmured the girl as she fidgeted under the cloak.

'You'd catch a cold, else; you are such a one for colds, Ruth.'

A sudden rush of petulance took possession of the girl. It was not wonderful. The poor lass had been worked beyond her strength. Chain-making is never an agreeable employment. The hot days of summer had told upon her.

'I'd like rarely to ketch a cold as should carry me right away to the churchyard—that I would,' she exclaimed. Tears broke from the blue eyes as she said these naughty, though not unpardonable words.

Micah looked at his daughter in surprise, and his face assumed an expression of grievous anxiety. None knew better than he how little chance there seemed of excusing Ruth from the work she did in the forge. The bellows must be blown. The lad could not attend to two pair at once; nor could he, Micah, afford to pay another hand. Things seemed almost desperate with him.

'Come, my wench,' he said nevertheless, with a tone of tenderness that in the grimed and wrinkled man was very touching, 'keep up thy heart; joy cometh in the morning, the Book says.—Bring her in, Adam, lad, to her dinner. I wouldn't be surprised, not I, if there was to be a bit of pork on the table to-day. Thou wert allers a good little un for pork, Ruth.'

The girl surrendered herself to Adam.

'I'm so tired,' she whispered. 'I didna mean to bother poor feyther.'

Adam stooped and kissed the pale face, where a tear was beginning to run. 'Your father's right,' he said. 'Never fear; it'll be better by-and-by. I had a black dream last night—it goes by contraries, you know, dear. I'll work the extra this evening, and you shall go at five.'

The tear-dimmed look that Ruth gave him was enough reward to Adam for his offer of self-sacrifice.

Then they went in to dinner, which did in fact include some salt pork with the potatoes. Salt pork, potatoes, and bread do not make up a great meal; but they dined worse three days in the week.

Yet another shock was destined, however, to come upon Micah Daggie that afternoon. They had hardly begun to work again when a black-coated young man appeared with a paper. 'Mr Branstone has sent me with this, Mr Daggie,' he said. 'I'm sorry to have to bring it.'

'What is it, sir?' asked the chain-maker, looking about for his iron spectacles. 'There be no papers due yet awhile.'

'It's about the mortgage. Those people want to build another factory; and unless you can pay, I'm afraid they mean to foreclose, take possession, you know, and just pull down your place.'

'Pull down this 'ere house, which was my gran'feyther's?' exclaimed Daggie.

'That's just it, Mr Daggie. But you must try and find the money.'

'I canna do that, sir. I'd as well hope to find a gold mine. Well-a-day, it be hard!—How much time do they give me?'

'A month, Mr Daggie.'

'One month—only a month. Well, if the Lord dunnot provide in that time, they shall have their will o' me, sir.—I wish you good-day.'

II.

August opened very wet in Stent. The black brook of the Rathole surged in its bed with a riotous music that was never heard except in flood-times. For a week it rained daily—heavy tempestuous downpours, with big drops. It was good weather neither for farmers nor chain-makers.

Micah Daggie and all in his shop were, however, less concerned about the weather than about

the calamity that was impending over them. On the 14th of the month, if money was not found, they would have to go elsewhere.

'It'll just break my heart, though I winna say nowt about it,' said Micah to Adam one day. To which young Gray made no reply. What reply could he have made?

There were snatches of talk between them about America, or joining one of the large factories as paid hands. It would have to be one or the other. There was no money for the passage to New York. The issue, therefore, seemed a foregone conclusion. But it was a sad come-down for Micah, whose father and grandfather had both been independent employers of labour themselves.

'If only,' began Adam one evening as they sat in the gloaming under a stunted old apple-tree, and listened to the tumult of the stream—'if only I could get some one to take up this idea of mine!'

Adam had the self-contained temperament of the inventor. He had already made two or three clever improvements in the domestic machinery, which, from his ignorance of common protective measures, had soon become public property. Of late, however, he had, as he fancied, conceived a plan by which chain-production might be increased in a very simple manner. He was so fearful that this also should get appropriated, that he let no one into the secret except just Micah and Ruth. Money was necessary to test it fairly, and he had nothing like enough money for the purpose. Hardly had he said these words, when they both heard a cracking sound. Immediately afterwards Mrs Daggie and Ruth came running down the little puddly garden path.

'Th' house's falling, Micah!' cried Mrs Daggie.

They stood all together by the ancient apple-tree and watched.

A thin smile stole over Micah's face. 'I knew,' he said, 'as my gran'feyther 'ud never let owt but Daggies have to do wi' it.'

'Still, it would be such a pity if it was to break down now,' added Adam. 'It's the damp. There's been crownins' in all over Stent. You know that pub. by Rachel Row, the *Gammon of Bacon*. Well, it sank three feet last Sunday night, and none on 'em knew about it till they got up and found the sitting-parlour windows level with the ground.'

Ruth had instinctively ranged herself by Adam, whose arm, also instinctively, was round her neck.

'Tales like them bean't over-comforting,' observed Mrs Daggie snappishly. 'It 'ud be fine and nice to be wi'out a roof to our heads—in this rain and all.'

They waited for half an hour; then, no further symptoms of collapse having declared itself, they slowly re-entered the house.

'It's a mossul o' one side,' said Micah with a forced laugh as he lurched against the right-hand wall. 'But that's nothing,' he added hastily. 'There's a many houses in Stent as has been like that for years an' years, an' never the worse for it.'

Adam looked dubious, and his eyes wavered between Ruth and the tallow candle in the kitchen, which could be seen guttering at a considerable angle on the table. 'I'll fetch Jake

Carter,' he exclaimed as he snatched up his cap ; 'he'll know if it's safe.'

Jake Carter soon came, laughed at the idea that there was any real danger in a house so slightly tilted, and then went away, refusing the glass of beer that was offered to him.

An hour after this the house was wrapped in utter darkness. The Daggles and Adam were all abed, and the heavy rain and the noisy brook echoed about it.

But Jake Carter's wisdom on this occasion was at fault. Towards one o'clock, when the heavens seemed like to be wholly liquidated upon the earth, there was another resounding crack throughout the house, and in an instant the back part of the building, on the side which had already yielded, broke into the ground. The loss of equilibrium sent the chimney-pots flying ; and one of the inner walls fell with a crash. The lesser noise of breaking china and sliding furniture could also be heard, followed by a scream from Ruth, and Micah's and Mrs Daggles' voices intermingled.

Adam slept on the ground-floor, in the room in which Micah's father had died. It was just here that the subsidence was most emphatic. He awoke with a sense of calamity upon him, heard the clamour of the general ruin, and was then sensible that his head was much lower than his heels. In this uncomfortable position he heard something else. If it was not the chink of gold pieces in numbers, then his recollection of the sound as he had heard it in the bank when he had changed a cheque for Micah was much disordered for the moment. However, he did not heed this agreeable music. He was much encumbered, and all his wits were necessary to enable him to get out of bed and grovel upon his hands and knees towards the door. Ruth's cries much stimulated him.

An hour passed, and then all the four members of the household were reunited outside in the drenching night. No one was hurt. Ruth had been merely frightened. She was quite calm again, now that Adam had her in charge.

They went to a neighbour's house, where they were given such accommodation as was possible. Here it was that Adam recalled to mind the noise of gold pieces.

'Micah,' he said, 'if there is not money in the house, my hearing is at fault. It was like bagfuls of it breaking against each other.'

At first the chain-maker made light of the matter. 'Thou wert but half awake, lad, an' it was the glasses bursting thou heardest.' Later, however, he suddenly became serious. 'See,' he whispered ; 'the daylight is here, an' it doan't rain so much. What dost say—us two'll just step across an' look at th' ould place.'

Mrs Daggles, too, wished to accompany them, mindful of her Sunday gowns, a favourite kitchen clock, and certain other articles she wished to secure from possible ruin. But Micah bade her lie down again and keep Ruth company.

They had much ado to get into the building, and could move in it only on their hands and knees. But the moment they were in Adam's room the truth of his tale was evident. A timber had started from the wall and knocked out several bricks ; and with the bricks three boxes had come out. These latter lay in a heap in the sunken corner with a number of sovereigns still

in them. As for the coins that had got dislodged, they were in double handfuls in the corner of the room. There was also another similar box still in the hole whence the others had tumbled, and this, too, proved to be full of gold.

The two men sat on the floor and looked at each other. Adam was the first to speak. 'I knew that good would come of it, Micah ; though I'll allow I hadn't much hope how it would come.'

'It's my feyther's savings—there bean't a doubt in the matter,' retorted Micah. 'Praise the Lord, for sure good *hev* come from this evil.'

Then they set to work and collected the coins. They replaced them in the boxes, which were just ordinary workshop boxes for chain-litter, and without lids. And carrying them in their arms, sweetly conscious of their weightiness, they returned to the house, where Mrs Daggles and Ruth lay awaiting them.

'See what we've found, my dears,' cried old Micah joyfully as he plumped his burden upon the floor. 'We're rich for life—all four on us.—An' we'll hev your invention put up in Lunnun, Adam, where they're all fine an' honest, I've heard tell. An' you shall hev the wench here whenever she likes to say "I'll hev you."'

Adam laughed somewhat shyly. Mrs Daggles was too much occupied with the gold to heed anything else.

'I think, Master,' said Adam, 'I'll be wise to strike while my chance is warm.—Will it be "Yes," Ruth, if I ask you now this very minute?' He took the girl's hand, she assenting, with a happy light in her eyes. 'I've loved you ever since you were a mite—you know I have,' proceeded Adam. 'Will you be my wife for better or worse, Ruth?'

The 'Yes, Adam' of her reply was fully as cordial as the young man could have desired it to be.

There were six thousand five hundred sovereigns in the boxes—quite enough, as Micah said, to set up a big chain-factory if he had a mind to build it. But he preferred to live on the interest of it in a snug house outside Stent. The five hundred pounds that were appropriated to further Adam's invention turned out a remarkably good investment. It did not result in a fortune, but it brought in a very comfortable living for Adam and his wife.

A CURIOUS CALLING.

'WHAT ! never heard of a "husher?" Then we'll interview one.'

My friend who made this remark had been employed as an enumerator during the last Census, and his work had brought him into contact with men and women following remarkably curious occupations in order to procure the means of existence. Of these the trade of a husher is certainly not the best known to the general public.

Hushers, I discovered, was a name given to those men who make a living by raking away the accumulated mud from the walls and grubbing and hunting for unconsidered and other trifles in the sickening effluvium of the metro-

politan sewers. The reader might well be pardoned if he imagines that these men are small and emaciated, with pallid countenance and one-foot-in-the-grave appearance. That this is not the case was vouched for by the singularly strong and robust individual we interviewed. He had worked some thirty-five years as a husher, and had never experienced a day's illness in his life. His appearance was so florid and healthy, that I suggested he might be an exception among those who followed this odorous occupation. Not so, however; as a class, these men are remarkably healthy, and escape sickness of all kinds in a manner astonishing. This fact, as true as it is unaccountable, has always been a puzzle to doctors generally. The hushers themselves never tire of declaring they receive great benefit from the gases they inhale in the sewers. Be this as it may, their lot does not seem to be a particularly happy one, although the average earnings of each man in a gang of five or six are better than those of an ordinary artisan.

For several reasons, hushers invariably work in gangs, each gang being accompanied by an old hand, who knows every inch of the ground, and is capable of conducting them all over underground London. Under his guidance—without which they would soon lose themselves—they travel long distances, and are enabled to scour not only the main sewers but also many of the smaller branches. A good lookout man is also posted at the entrance. The absolute necessity of this individual may be judged by mentioning the fact that should a shower of rain come on suddenly, the hushers would, unless warned, be washed into the river.

Until recently, the not very prepossessing entrances to the main sewers could be seen by any one travelling down the river by boat, and the general public could enter them if they so wished. These entrances have now been blocked by the authorities. The hushers are therefore 'barred' by heavy iron gates from entering the main sewers direct, and have consequently to make their way first of all through the smaller passages before reaching their hunting-grounds.

Before commencing operations each man in a gang provides himself with a bull's-eye lantern, a canvas apron, and a pole some seven or eight feet in length, having an iron attachment at one end somewhat in the shape of a hoe. For greater convenience, the lantern is invariably fixed to the right shoulder, so that when walking, the light is thrown ahead; and when stooping, its rays shine directly to their feet. Thus accoutred they walk slowly along through the mud, feeling with their naked feet for anything unusual, at the same time raking the accumulation from the walls and picking from the crevices any article they see. Nothing is allowed to escape them, no matter what its value, provided it is not valueless. Old iron, pieces of rope, bones, current coin of the realm, and articles of plate and jewellery—all is good fish which comes to the husher's net.

With 'finds' in the way of coins of course the 'humble penny' predominates. Sixpences and shillings, however, often increase the value of the collection; and at rare intervals—too rare to please the husher—half-sovereigns and even sovereigns are discovered. Like the flies in

amber, the mystery is how they got there. Among other articles of intrinsic worth, silver spoons are most often found, although shirt-studs, diamond rings, silver drinking-vessels, and many other quite-out-of-place articles swell the list from time to time. Lucky finds such as those above mentioned do not deter the husher from keeping a sharp lookout for less valuable articles as they float by. His 'eagle eye' from long practice is capable of judging the worth of the floating refuse before it would be even discernible to the ordinary observer. Mile after mile does the sewer-hunter traverse underground, until a tolerably heavy bag is a result of his labour. Night or day is all one to the husher. Some gangs enter the sewers at night and work on until morning, while others carry out the search only during the daytime. Rats abound everywhere, some of them being of enormous size, large enough to frighten any beginner at the game. The experienced husher, however, takes no notice of them; and the rats are only too pleased to sneak away in the darkness.

When a gang has done a fair day or night's work and leave the sewer, the first business is to sort and divide the spoil. The saleable goods, such as bones, rope, rags, &c., are disposed of to the marine-store dealer; and any articles of silver plate or jewellery are pledged. The proceeds are then added to any money found during the work, and the whole is equally divided among the gang. The average earnings, taking the year through, are about seven shillings per day each man, this sum being greatly exceeded if a man happens to join a 'lucky' gang. This peculiar line of business has not as yet suffered from over-competition.

SOMETIMES.

SOMETIMES, when life seems wonderfully dear,
When heart and spirit bound with untold mirth
For very gladness of our God-given birth,
And all the happinesses round us here;
When blossoms throng our pathway, skies are clear,
And loved and loving ones are by our side,
Until it seems in all the horizon wide
No touch of sorrow ever could appear;
Then sometimes, in a moment, at a word,
Some memory—a child's sad, lonely cry—
The mournful note of some wild stricken bird—
A look of anguish in some dumb thing's eye—
Will fill the heart with such a weight of grief,
That bitter tears alone will bring relief.

FEODORA BELL.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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AUSTRALASIAN BANKS AND BRITISH DEPOSITS.

A LITTLE over forty-three millions of British money, the main portion of which comes from Scotland, is at present deposited with the banks in Australasia. This of itself forms sufficient reason why the depositor should know about these banks. But, in addition, there has been a severe crisis in the Antipodes; about fifty financial institutions, including so-called land banks, have toppled down, and in their fall have of necessity more or less involved the ordinary banks of issue. These, in fact, have suffered losses during the last seven years owing to failures and disasters, according to the estimate of the *Australasian Insurance and Banking Record*, of not less than four and a half millions sterling, and one has had to close its doors.

It is now three-quarters of a century since the first bank was established in Australia—namely, the Bank of New South Wales in 1817. The number of Australasian banks is now twenty-five with 1713 branches—a goodly number for a population of four millions. Many of the bank offices are palatial buildings, such, for instance, as the premises of the Australian Joint-stock Bank in Sydney, which are said to be the finest of the kind in the world. Some of the branch banks, however, are in small country townships consisting of collections for the most part of wooden shanties, where one would hardly think it worth while to set down a branch in the parent country. But they must surely pay or they would not be maintained, and they are easily abandoned if unprofitable. In the up-country branches, firearms are as indispensable an article of furniture as the coal-scuttle; and it is the duty of the Inspector on his periodical visits to see that the revolvers are in order and that a supply of ammunition is in hand. The country managers keep a horse at the bank's expense to visit the farmers, and are often at work in boots and breeches. So very different from the staid and decorously habilitated

banker of the home type! The banker's office hours are nine A.M. to five P.M. in the big towns. As to salaries, an officer of two years' standing usually gets sixty pounds; one of six or eight years' service may have from one hundred and fifty to one hundred and eighty pounds per annum.

Most of the Australasian banks have offices, and some of them head offices, in London; and certain of the banks have established what is termed a London Register. A London Register is a Register of Shareholders who have subscribed to an issue of shares in London. The shares on the London Register cannot be transferred to the Colonial Register, nor can shares on the Colonial Register be transferred to London. Australian bank shares command a higher price in the London market, usually ten per cent. more than the price ruling in the colonies. The reason for this is that the Antipodeans expect a better return for their capital. If an Australian bank wants to float an issue of shares here, it must open a London Register and obtain a quotation on the Stock Exchange to enable free dealings to take place in the shares. The shares on the Colonial Register are not negotiable here, and buyers or sellers in this country must appoint an attorney to act for them in the colony if they wish to operate.

A London Register does much to increase the prestige and influence of the bank adopting it in Great Britain. It is of importance also to found jurisdiction on in case of litigation. Depositors like to see the shares of the bank in which they are interested quoted in the newspapers, as it affords them an index—often the only one available to them—to the prosperity of the institution, and the consequent safety of their hoard. If a bank's shares stand at a good premium, it is fair to infer as a general rule that its credit is good and its position sound. A high price on the London Stock Exchange is at anyrate a very substantial argument.

But the London Register has its disadvantages. Troubles in the Antipodes, either personal to the

bank or resulting indirectly, have an instant influence on quotations, and set depositors thinking; whereas if there were no London Register, and consequently no quotation of shares, they would be in 'happy ignorance.' The heavy selling of shares and depression of price constitute a great source of danger to a bank. A case in point is the Agra and Masterman's Bank, which was wrecked in 1866 by Stock Exchange 'bears.' This led to the passing of Leeman's Act, which provided that a sale of bank shares shall be invalid unless the numbers of the shares are stated in the contract.

It may be asked, wherein lies the security to a depositor?—in the paid-up capital, the reserve fund, or the reserve liability? In our opinion, it is in all the three; yet the principal security is without doubt the reserve liability. An ample capital is a necessity; yet on how comparatively small a capital some of the Australian banks have been rearing a magnificent fabric of deposits. One bank with six hundred thousand pounds of paid-up capital has accumulated deposits, in this case gathered mainly in the colonies, to the extent of twelve millions, and pays a dividend of twenty-five per cent. The reserve funds of the Australian banks total a little more than half the amount of the paid-up capital. A reserve fund is very desirable as a security; it is the bank's absolute property; it consists of undivided profits; and it cannot be redemanded like deposit money. Yet there have been notable cases of failure on the part of banks possessing good reserve funds, such as the Cape of Good Hope Bank; and recent disclosures have led depositors to pay more attention to reserve liability, which is by far the most important security from their point of view. A very slight depreciation in assets will wipe out most reserve funds. In one bank which was ultimately amalgamated with another the depreciation was as much as twenty-five per cent. Take the case of a big bank with, say, a capital and reserve fund of one and a quarter million, and twelve millions of assets. A depreciation of ten per cent. in assets would absorb all its capital and reserve. Any one who knows the nature of bank assets, the stone and lime holdings, the advances on goods and stock, the expense of liquidation and of litigation, and the bad debts, knows that in times of forced realisation from shareholders and the bank's debtors there is unfortunately ample room for depreciation. But with a Register of Shareholders who are personally liable for a certain amount of reserved liability, the depositor should feel more secure. The amount is intact, that is, it cannot be drawn on save in the event of liquidation. The depositor should satisfy himself, however, that the shareholders are not 'dummies'—that is, fictitious persons—but that they have a real existence, and are more or less in credit.

The paid-up capital of the Australasian banks amounts to nearly sixteen millions; and the total capital liability—callable and reserved under charter—is about twenty-three and a half millions sterling. It appears that, in terms of the Acts of Incorporation under which most of the banks are constituted, the liability of the shareholders is limited to double the amount of their shares; and shareholders are made responsible to this extent in the interest of the bank's creditors,

who, if this provision had not existed, would otherwise have had no redress in the event of the assets of the banks failing to satisfy their claims. The bank with the greatest amount of capital liability is the Union Bank of Australia, which has a million and a half of paid-up, and three millions of callable capital. The Bank of Australasia has £1,600,000 paid up, and a reserve liability of like amount; and the Commercial Bank of Australia has a capital of three millions, of which £1,200,000 is paid up.

While on the subject of capital, we should mention a peculiar method adopted by one of the banks—the Union Bank of Australia—in the way of capitalising a portion of its deposit money. It has £750,000 of what it terms 'Inscribed Stock Deposits.' This Deposit stock is guaranteed a return of four per cent; but it can only be realised by sale on 'Change and on conditions defined by the bank. The object of establishing this stock was to obtain money which was not liable to be withdrawn, as is the case with ordinary deposits.

An additional security offered to depositors in the Melbourne banks is afforded in the fact, as stated in the Melbourne *Argus* of 29th March 1892, that, at a meeting of the associated banks, held on the previous day, it was resolved to announce: 'That the associated banks in Melbourne have agreed upon mutually satisfactory conditions, on which they will extend their joint support to any one of their number requiring it.' The names of the ten associated banks in Melbourne are as under: Bank of Australasia, Bank of Victoria (Limited), City of Melbourne Bank (Limited), Colonial Bank of Australasia, Commercial Bank of Australia (Limited), English, Scottish, and Australian Chartered Bank, Federal Bank of Australia (Limited), London Chartered Bank of Australia, National Bank of Australasia, Union Bank of Australia (Limited). One Sydney bank, the Bank of New South Wales, although not one of the associated banks in Melbourne, has joined in this alliance for mutual support. It was estimated a couple of years ago that these Victorian banks held among them somewhere from fifteen to twenty millions of British deposit money, and it is expected that in the other colonies, notably New South Wales, the banks there will similarly federate for self-protection to the benefit of the British depositor.

Another security offered to depositors consists in the opportunity which they have of insuring their bank deposits with companies transacting this class of business. For the benefit of intending insurers we may name several companies which are mentioned by the *Bankers' Magazine* of London—namely, the Mortgage Insurance Corporation, the Securities Insurance Company (Limited), and the Law Guarantee and Trust Society (Limited). These insure bank deposits, bonds, debts, and all classes of securities and investments, granting policies of insurance therefor at a premium usually of two shillings and sixpence per cent. Amongst other companies undertaking the guarantee of deposits are the Liverpool Mortgage Insurance Company, the Insurance Trust and Agency (Limited), and the Lancashire Trust and Mortgage Insurance Corporation. These companies appear to act on the doctrine of averages and to limit their risks in

each particular bank. They do not disclose what the amount of that risk is, nor do they publish the extent of their transactions, probably from the circumstance that this class of business is novel and tentative. As the premium of insurance is so small, there is much to be said in favour of thus insuring the repayment of deposits made with the weaker banks. If a bank gets into any discredit, the companies will either refuse to insure or raise their rates considerably. As much as fifteen shillings per cent. premium has been asked in a doubtful case. The underwriters at Lloyd's also bid for business of this kind, and they will insure the deposits of a bank in difficulties in the same way and at something approaching the same rates of premium as they charge for the insurance of a ship which is long overdue.

The Australasian banks allow no interest in the colonies on current accounts. On deposits for fixed periods, from three months to five years, rates are allowed varying from three to five per cent., as the case may be. These rates are fixed in the various colonies by agreement among the banks so as to keep down the evils of excessive competition. But the rates offered in this country to British depositors are not so regulated. Each bank fixes its own terms, which are entirely dependent on its money needs. If it has a plethora of deposits, it offers less inducement; but if it requires money, say, to float a colonial loan or make advances generally, it raises its rates to the British public accordingly.

The rates charged recently by the Australasian banks for advances averaged eight per cent. for overdrafts; and for discounts, nine to ten per cent. The advances of the Australasian banks amount to the large sum of about one hundred and forty-three millions to a population of four millions. A critic remarking on this, has asked: 'Is there one farmer in ten in any of these colonies who is not in debt for his land, or who has not obtained advances upon his growing crops? Is there one house in ten in Melbourne or Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane, or Wellington, without a mortgage on it?' This leads us to remark how very different is the Australian banks' system of lending money from what it is in this country. Here we think it bad banking to lend on goods or material possessions, and only do so in very exceptional cases, personal security which can be turned into cash being much preferred. But in Australasia the security in the great majority of cases consists of mortgages on land, farms, and houses, especially in the country, it being the only security that country-people have. Then there are personal guarantees, also liens over stock, crops, wool, &c.

In regard to what are termed pastoral advances, the late Mr Brett said that it might fairly be assumed that fully two-thirds of 'all debts due to the banks' in Australasia were directly or indirectly based upon pastoral securities, connected with the occupation of grazing-land, which is mostly the unalienated property of the Crown. Wool is impledged by a document which confers a preferable lien over the wool in favour of the bank, fixes the rate of interest on the loan, and stipulates that the sheep shall be shorn and the wool delivered to, or sold for behoof of, the lending bank. If any of these conditions are not com-

plied with, the bank as lienee can take possession of the stock at any moment for such purpose.

It may be asked how the Australasian banks have managed to secure so much British deposit money, which, by the way, does not appear to be diminishing in amount, since it is stated in the *Australasian Banking Record* that an increase of three and a half millions in the total had taken place during the past year. It may be mentioned that the Australian money deposited with the banks in the colonies amounts to one hundred and ten millions. The popularity of British depositing with Australian banks is primarily due to the favourable conditions attaching to the deposit receipts, the interest on which is paid to the depositor by warrant issued half-yearly for the interest due, less the income tax. But the great success which deposit-seeking institutions have met with in Scotland is to be ascribed to the efforts of agents representing the banks, who, under the stimulus of a small commission of usually two shillings and sixpence per cent., gather in much deposit money. Investors ordinarily leave the disposal of their funds in the discretion of their factors and lawyers, and these gentlemen have been valuable allies to the Australian banks in this way. There is, moreover, a scarcity of secure investments, and the amount of money seeking investment is growing greater day by day.

The present crisis in Australia has been intensified by the speculative action of many of the land and building companies, or, as they misname themselves, 'land banks.' These and other financial companies have likewise drawn much deposit money through their agents here offering higher rates than the ordinary banks. The result of this influx of British money was to encourage a fictitious trading and operating in land. The constant tendency of land to rise in price proved tempting to many of the companies, who bought and mortgaged properties in order, by selling them again, to make money out of them. Land reached such inflated values that, in some cases, house property and land in the vicinity of Melbourne fetched higher prices than in the immediate neighbourhood of London. A period of inflation has been followed by a time of depression, and the present prices of town properties in those colonies affected by the land 'boom' are as much below the real value as they were formerly above it. Fortunately, the land 'boom' was to a great extent local, and its effects were not felt in all the colonies or in all parts of any one. Most of the banks are represented in several colonies; so, when trade is bad and losses are made in one colony, they may be reaping profits in another.

But although, through its association with land institutions as clients, banking in Australasia has suffered some losses, there can be no question as to the future of Australia as a whole. It has advanced with such leaps and bounds that its 'resistless march' cannot long be stayed. The largest island in the world, it is more than twenty-six times the size of the United Kingdom, more than fifteen times as large as France, more than half as large again as Russia in Europe, and almost equal in extent to the Continent of Europe, or to the United States of America. So says the Government Statist of New South

Wales, who adds that the British Empire extends over an area of 8,040,000 square miles, so that nearly two-fifths of its area is embraced within the limits of the seven colonies. In 1889 it had one hundred millions of sheep, nine and a half millions of cattle, one and a half million of horses, and more than a million of swine. The year's value of wool grown was twenty million pounds, of other pastoral produce fifteen millions, of agricultural produce twenty-five millions, and of dairy produce seven millions. The total capital value of pastoral property, including stock, freehold land, improvements, and plant, is four hundred and seventeen millions sterling.

Everywhere signs of the latest improvements are visible. Owing to the uncertain rainfalls and recurring droughts, tanks and wells have been dug in many places. In New South Wales alone four millions have been spent in the construction of tanks for large storage purposes. Even wire-fenced paddocks have been provided for the sheep. The railway lines which belong to Government extend to more than fifteen thousand miles. It is acknowledged that on these and other public works too much public money has been expended, and one result is that the present public debt of the colonies is nearly two hundred millions sterling. The interest on this will partly be met out of the large revenues derived from the Government railways and harbours, and partly from the industrial earnings of the community, and it is of importance that the credit of the country be maintained, so that the loans which fall to be renewed may be taken up at the same low rates as at present. And as the loans are frequently financed by the banks, the more credit that the colonies enjoy for financial and administrative power, the better will it be for the banks, whose wealth is bound up with that of the whole community.

BLOOD ROYAL.*

BY GRANT ALLEN,

Author of *In All Shades*, *This Mortal Coil*, &c.

CHAPTER VII.—AFFAIRS OF THE HEART.

THE return to Chiddingwick was a triumphal entry. Before seven o'clock that evening, when the South-eastern train crawled at its accustomed leisurely pace, with a few weary gasps, into Chiddingwick Station, Mr Plantagenet had spread the news of his son's success broadcast through the town, *via* the *White Horse* parlour. Already, on the strength of Dick's great achievement, he had become the partaker, at other people's expense, of no fewer than three separate brandies and sodas; which simple Bacchic rites, more frequently repeated, would have left him almost incapable of meeting the hero of the hour with suitable effect, had not Maud impounded him, so to speak, by main force after five o'clock tea, and compelled him to remain under strict supervision in the domestic jail till the eve of Dick's arrival.

Dick jumped out, all eagerness. On the platform, his mother stood waiting to receive him, proud but tearful, for to her, good woman, the glories of the Plantagenet name were far less a

matter of interest than the thought of losing for the best part of three years the mainstay of the family. Maud was there, too, beaming over with pure delight, and even prouder than she had ever been in her life before of her handsome brother. Mr Plantagenet himself really rose for once to the dignity of the occasion, and instead of greeting Richard with the theatrical grace and professional flourish he had originally contemplated, forgot in the hurry of the moment the high-flown speech he had mentally composed for delivery on the platform, and only remembered to grasp his son's hand hard with genuine warmth as he murmured, in some broken and inarticulate way: 'My boy, my dear boy, we're all so pleased and delighted to hear it.' He reflected afterwards with regret, to be sure, that he had thrown away a magnificent opportunity for a most effective display by his stupid emotion; but Dick was the gainer by it. Never before in his life did he remember to have seen his father act or speak with so much simple and natural dignity.

All Chiddingwick, indeed, rejoiced with their joy. For Chiddingwick, we know, was proud in its way of the Plantagenets. Did not the most respectable families send their children to take dancing lessons at the *White Horse* Assembly Rooms from the disreputable old scamp, on the strength of his name, his faded literary character, and his shadowy claim to regal ancestry? The station-master himself, that mighty man in office, shook hands with 'Mr Richard' immediately on his arrival; the porters presented him with a bouquet of white pinks fresh plucked from the Company's garden; and even Mr Wells raised his hat to his late assistant with full consciousness of what respect was due from a country tradesman to a gentleman who had been admitted with flying colours to 'Oxford College.' Dick's progress up the High Street was one long shaking of many friendly hands; and if that benevolent soul, Mr Trevor Gillingham, of Rugby School, could only have seen the deep interest which his rival's success excited in an entire community, he would have felt more than ever, what he frequently told all his Sixth Form friends, that he was glad he'd been able 'practically to retire' in favour of a young man so popular and so deserving.

And then, after the first flush of delight in his victory had worn off, there grew up in Richard's mind the more practical question of ways and means: what was he to do with his time in the interval, till term began in October? Neither his father nor Mr Wells would hear of his returning meanwhile to his old employment.

'No, no, Dick—Mr Richard, I mean,' the good bookseller said seriously. 'For your sake and the business's, I couldn't dream of permitting it. It's out of place entirely. A scholar of Durham College, Oxford, mustn't soil his hands with waiting in a shop. It wouldn't be respectable. No self-respecting tradesman can have a gentleman in your present position standing behind his counter. I call it untradesman-like. It's calculated to upset the natural and proper relations of classes. You must look out for some work more suited to your existing position and prospects; and I must look out for an assistant in turn who ain't a member of an ancient and respected university.'

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Dick admitted with a sigh the eternal fitness of Mr Wells's view; but at the same time he wondered what work on earth he could get which would allow him to earn his livelihood for the moment without interfering with the new and unpractical dignity of a Scholar of Durham College, Oxford. He had saved enough from his wages to eke out his Scholarship and enable him to live very economically at the university: but he must bridge over the time between now and October without trenching upon the little nest-egg laid by for the future.

As often happens, chance stepped in at the very nick of time to fill up the vacancy. At the rectory that night, Mr Tradescant was talking over with his wife the question of a tutor for their eldest son, that prodigiously stupid boy of seventeen—a pure portent of ignorance—who was to go in for an army examination at the end of September. 'No, I won't send him away from home, Clara,' the rector broke out testily. 'It's no earthly use sending him away from home. He's far too lazy. Unless Arthur's under my own eye, he'll never work with any one. Let me see, he comes home from Marlborough on the 28th. We must get somebody somehow before then who'll be able to give him lessons at home, if possible. If he has two months and more of perfect idleness, he'll forget all he ever knew (which isn't much), and go up for examination with his mind a perfect blank, a *tabula rasa*, a sheet of white note-paper. And yet, unless we get a tutor down from town every day—which would run into money—I'm sure I don't know who the—person is we could possibly get to teach him.'

Mary Tudor was sitting by; and being a very young and inexperienced girl, she hadn't yet learned that the perfect governess, when she hears her employers discuss their private affairs, should behave as though her ears were only for ornament. (And Mary's, indeed, were extremely ornamental.) So she intervened with a suggestion—a thing no fully-trained young woman from a modern Agency would ever dream of doing. 'There's that Plantagenet boy, you know, Mrs Tradescant,' she remarked, without bearing him the slightest grudge for his curious behaviour over the bookbinding incident. 'He's just got a Scholarship at Oxford to-day, Mr Wells was telling me. I wonder if he would do? They say he's a very clever, well-read young fellow.'

The Reverend Hugh received the suggestion with considerable favour. 'Why, there's something in that, Miss Tudor,' he said, leaning back in his easy-chair. 'I'm glad you thought of it. The young man must be fairly well up in his work to have taken a Scholarship—a very good one, too, a hundred a year, at my own old college. I met Plantagenet this afternoon in the High Street, overflowing with it.—This is worth looking into, Clara: he's on the spot, you must bear in mind; and under the circumstances, I expect, he'd be in want of work, and—willing, I daresay, to take extremely little. He can't very well go back to Wells's, don't you see; and he can't afford to live at home without doing something.'

'The boy's as mad as a March hare, and not a very desirable companion for Arthur, you must feel yourself,' Mrs Tradescant answered, a little chillily, not over well pleased with Mary for

having ventured to interfere in so domestic a matter. 'And besides, there's the old man! Just consider the associations!'

'Well, he can't help being the son of his father,' the rector replied with a man's greater tolerance. 'He was born with that encumbrance. And as to companions, my dear, young Plantagenet's at anyrate a vast deal better than Reece and the groom, who seem to me to be Arthur's chief friends and allies whenever he's at home here. The boy may be mad, as you suggest: I daresay he is: but he's not too mad to get a Durham Scholarship; and I only wish Arthur had half his complaint in that matter. A fellow who can take a Scholarship at Durham's no fool, I can tell you. I'll inquire about his terms when I go into town to-morrow.'

And the Reverend Hugh did inquire accordingly, and found Dick's attainments so satisfactory for his purpose that he forthwith engaged the new scholar as tutor for Arthur, to come five days in the week and give four hours' tuition a day till the end of September, at a most modest salary, which to Dick nevertheless seemed as the very wealth of Croesus. Not till long after did Dick know that he owed this appointment in the first instance to a chance word of Mary Tudor's. Nor did Mary suspect, when out of pure goodness of heart and sympathy for a deserving and struggling young man she suggested him for the appointment, that his engagement would be the occasion of throwing them too much together in future.

So luck would have it, however. Five days a week, Dick went up with his little strapped parcel of books to the rectory door, to engage in the uncongenial and well-nigh impossible task of endeavouring to drive the faint shadow of an idea into Arthur Tradescant's impenetrable cranium. It was work, hard work—but it had its compensations. For quite insensibly to both at first, it brought Dick and Mary a great deal into one another's society at many odd moments. In the very beginning, it is true, they only met quite by accident in the hall and passages or on the garden path; and Mary rather shrank from conversation with the young man who had been the hero of that curious episode about the binding of the Flora. But gradually the same chance threw them more and more into contact; besides, their relative positions had been somewhat altered meanwhile by Dick's success at Durham. He was now no longer the bookseller's young man, but a student who was shortly to go up to Oxford. This told with Mary, as it tells with all of us, almost without our knowing it. We can seldom separate the man from the artificial place he holds in our social system. Indeed, the very similarity of their positions in the household—his as tutor and hers as governess—made to some extent now a bond of union between them. Before many weeks were out, Mary had begun to look for Dick's pleasant smile of welcome when he arrived in the morning, and to see that the strange young man, whose grave demeanour and conscious self-respect had struck her so markedly that first day at Mr Wells's, had really after all a great deal in him.

The more Dick saw of Mary, too, the better he liked her. Just at first, to be sure, his impulse had been a mere freak of fancy, based on the

curious coincidence of their regal names; that alone, and nothing else, had made him think to himself he might possibly fall in love with her. But after a while the mere fancy counted for comparatively little; it was the woman herself, bright, cheery, sensible, that really attracted him. From the very beginning he had admired her; he soon learned to love her; and Mary for her part found it pleasant, indeed, that there was somebody in this social wilderness of Chiddingwick who genuinely cared for her. A governess's lot is as a rule a most lonely one, and sympathy in particular is passing dear to her. Now Dick was able to let Mary feel he sympathised with her silently in her utter loneliness; and Mary grew soon to be grateful to Dick in turn for his kindness and attention. She forgot the handsome shopman with the long yellow hair in the prospective glories of the Durham undergraduate.

The summer wore away, and the time drew near when Richard must begin to think about his preparations for going up to Oxford. A day or two before the date fixed for the meeting of the colleges, he was walking on the footpath that runs obliquely across the fields which stretch up the long slope of the hill behind Chiddingwick. As he walked and reflected, he hardly noticed a light figure in a pretty print dress hurrying down the hillside towards him. As it approached, he looked up; a sudden thrill ran through him. It was Mary who was coming! How odd! He had been thinking about her that very moment! And yet not so odd, either; for how often he thought about her! He had been thinking just now that he couldn't bear to leave Chiddingwick without telling her how much she had lately become to him, and how very, very deeply he regretted leaving her. His face flushed at the sight and the thought; it seemed to him almost like an omen of success that she should happen to come up at the very moment when he was thinking such things of her. It was so unusual for Mary to go out beyond the rectory grounds by herself; still more unusual for her to be coming home alone so late in that particular direction. He raised his hat as she approached. 'Oh, Miss Tudor,' he cried shyly, with a young man's mixture of tinidity and warmth, 'I'm so glad to see you here. I—I was just thinking about you. I want to have a talk with you.'

'And I was just thinking about you,' Mary answered more frankly, with a scarcely perceptible blush—the charming blush that comes over a good girl's face when she ventures to say something really kind and sympathetic to a man she cares for. 'I was thinking how very soon we're going to lose you.' And as she said it, she reflected to herself what a very different young man this pleasant intelligent Oxford scholar seemed to her now from the singular person who had insisted, three months back, on putting her monogram with the Tudor rose on the *British Flora*!

'No, were you really?' Dick cried, with a glowing cheek, much deeper red than her own. 'Now that was just kind of you. You can't think how much pleasanter and happier in every way you've made my time at the rectory for me.' And he glanced down into her liquid eyes with grateful devotion.

'I might say the same thing to you,' Mary answered, very low, hardly knowing whether it was quite right of her even to admit such reciprocity.

Dick's face was on fire with ingenuous delight. 'No, you can't mean to say that?' he exclaimed, a delicious little thrill coursing through him to the finger-tips. 'Oh, how very, very kind of you!' He hesitated a moment; then he added with a tremor: 'You needn't walk so fast, you know. I may just turn round and walk back with you, mayn't I?'

'I don't quite know,' Mary answered, looking round her, a little uncertain. She didn't feel sure in her own heart whether she ought to allow him. He was a very nice fellow, to be sure, and she liked him immensely, now she'd got to know him; but would Mrs Tradescant approve of her permitting him to accompany her? 'Perhaps you'd better not'—she faltered again—but her lingering tones belied her words. 'I'm—I'm in a hurry to get home. I really mustn't wait a minute.'

In spite of what she said, however, Dick continued—just like a man—to walk on by her side; and Mary, it must be admitted by the candid historian, took no great pains to prevent him. 'I'm so glad you say you'll miss me, Miss Tudor,' he began timidly, after a very long pause—oh, those eloquent pauses! 'For I too shall miss you. We've seen so much of each other, you know, these last six or eight weeks; and it's been such a pleasure to me.'

Mary answered nothing, but walked on faster than ever, as if in particular haste to return to the rectory, where they were really awaiting her. Still, a great round spot burned bright red in her cheek, and her poor throbbing heart gave a terrible flutter.

Dick tried to slacken the pace, but Mary wouldn't allow him. 'Do you know,' he went on, glancing down at her appealingly, 'it may seem a queer thing to you for a fellow to say, but until I met you, my sister Maud was the only girl I'd ever met whom I could consider—well—my equal.'

He said it quite simply, with all the pride of a Plantagenet; and as he spoke, Mary felt conscious to herself that whatever else Dick might be, after all he was a gentleman. Yes, and in spite of old Mr Plantagenet's many obvious faults, a descendant of gentlemen too; for even in his last disreputable and broken old age, traces of breeding still clung about the Chiddingwick dancing-master. Mary instinctively understood and sympathised with the poor lad's feeling. She spoke very softly. 'I know what you mean,' she said, 'and I can understand it with you. I've met your sister—at—the *White Horse*, and I felt, of course'—She checked herself suddenly. She had just been going to say, 'I felt she was a lady,' but instinct taught her at once how rude and pretentious the expression would sound to him; so she altered her unspoken phrase to, 'I felt at once we should have a great deal in common.'

'I'm so glad you think so,' Dick murmured in return, growing fiery red once more, for he knew Mary was accustomed to accompany the rectory children to the Assembly Rooms' dancing lessons, where Maud often helped her father with her violin; and he couldn't bear to think she should

have seen the head of the house engaged in such an unworthy and degrading occupation. 'Well, I was just going to say, you're the only girl I ever met in my life with whom I could speak—you know what I mean—why, just speak my whole heart out.'

'It's very kind of you to say so,' Mary answered, beginning to walk much faster. She was really getting frightened now what Dick might go on to say to her.

'And so,' the young man continued, floundering on after the fashion of young men in love, 'I—I shall feel going away from you.'

Mary's heart beat fast. She liked Dick very much, oh, very much indeed; but she didn't feel quite sure it was anything more than liking. (Women, you know, make in these matters such nice distinctions.) 'You'll meet plenty of new friends,' she said faintly, 'at Oxford.'

'Oh, but that won't be at all the same!' Dick answered, trembling. 'They'll all be men, you see.' And then he paused, wondering whether perhaps he had spoken too plainly.

Mary's pace by this time had become almost unlady-like, so fast was she walking. Still, just to break the awkward silence which followed Dick's last words, she felt compelled to say something. 'You'll meet plenty of girls, too, I expect,' she interposed nervously.

'Perhaps; but they won't be *you*,' Dick blurted out with a timid gasp, gazing straight into her eyes; and then recoiled, aghast, at his own exceeding temerity.

Mary blushed again and cast down her eyes. 'Don't let me take you out of your way any farther,' she said after another short pause, just to cover her confusion. 'I really must get back now. Mrs Tradescant'll be so angry.'

'Oh, no; you can't go just yet,' Dick cried, growing desperate, and standing half across the path, with a man's masterful eagerness. 'Now I've once begun with it, I must say my say out to you.—Miss Tudor, that very first day I ever saw you, I thought a great deal of you. You could tell I did by the mere fact that I took the trouble to make such a fool of myself over that unhappy book-cover. But the more I've seen of you, the better I've liked you. Liked you, oh, so much, I can hardly tell you. And when I went up to Oxford about this Scholarship, which has given me a start in life, I thought about you so often that I really believe I owe my success in great part to you. Now, what I want to say before I go—he paused and hesitated; it was so hard to word it—'what I want to say's just this. Perhaps you'll think it presumptuous of me; but do you feel, if I get on, and recover the place in the world that belongs by right to my family,—do you feel as if there's any chance you might ever be able to care for me?'

He jerked it out, all trembling. Mary trembled herself, and hardly knew what to answer; for though she liked the young man very much—more than any other young man she'd ever yet met—she hadn't thought of him to herself in this light exactly—at least not very often. So she stood for a moment in the corner of the path by that bend in the field where the hedge hides and shelters one, and replied diplomatically, with sound feminine common-sense, though with a quiver in her voice: 'Don't you think, Mr Plan-

tagenet, it's a little bit premature for you to talk of these things when you're only just going up to Oxford? For your own sake, you know, and your family's too, you ought to leave yourself as free and untrammelled as possible: you oughtn't to burden yourself beforehand with uncertainties and complications.'

Dick looked at her half reproachfully. 'Oh, Miss Tudor,' he cried, drawing back quite seriously, 'I wouldn't allow anybody else in the world to call you a complication.'

He said it so gravely that Mary laughed outright in spite of herself. But Dick was very much in earnest for all that. 'I mean it, though,' he went on, hardly smiling to himself. 'I mean it, most literally. I want you to tell me, before I go up to Oxford, there's still some chance, some little chance in the future for me. Or at anyrate I want to let you know what I feel, so that—well, so that if anybody else should speak to you meanwhile, you will remember at least—and'—He broke off suddenly. 'Oh, Miss Tudor,' he cried once more, looking down at her with a mutely appealing look, 'it means so much to me!'

'You're very young, you know,' Mary answered, with a good woman's subterfuge, half to gain time. 'I think it would be very foolish, both for you and me, to tie ourselves down at our present ages. And besides, Mr Plantagenet'—she played with her parasol a moment—'I don't want to hurt your feelings, but I'm not quite sure—whether or not I care for you.'

There was a tremor in her voice that made her words mean less than they seemed to mean; but she felt it too. This was all so sudden. Nevertheless, Dick seized her hand. She tried to withdraw it, but couldn't. Then he began in eager tones to pour forth his full heart to her. He knew he had no right to ask, but he couldn't bear to go away and leave the chance of winning her open to some other fellow. It must be for a very long time, of course; but still he could work better if he knew he was working for her. He didn't want her to say *yes*; he only wanted her not quite to say *no* outright to him. This, and much else, he uttered from his heart with rapidly developing eloquence. He was so glad he'd met her, for he couldn't have left Chiddingwick without at least having spoken to her.

To all which Mary, with downcast eyes, very doubtful—though she liked him—whether it was quite right for her to talk in this strain at all to the dancing-master's son, replied demurely that 'twas all very premature, and that she didn't feel able to give him any answer of any sort, either positive or negative, till they had both of them had more time to look about them.

'And now,' she said, finally, pulling out her watch and starting, 'I really mustn't stop one moment longer. I must go back at once. It's dreadfully late. I'm sure I don't know what Mrs Tradescant will think of me.'

'At least,' Dick cried, standing half in front of her yet again, and blocking up the pathway, 'you'll allow me to write to you?'

Yes, Mary thought, yielding, there'd be no harm in that: no objection to his writing.

Dick gave a little sigh of heartfelt satisfaction. 'Well, that's something!' he cried, much relieved. 'That's always something! If you'll allow me

to write to you, I shall feel at anyrate you can't quite forget me.'

And indeed, when a girl lets a young man begin a correspondence, experience teaches me, from long observation, that other events are not unlikely to follow.

ENAMELS.

LIMOGES, the modern capital of the French department of Haute-Vienne, the ancient capital of the Lemovices, and the mediæval capital of the Limousin, gave its name in the middle ages to one of the most beautiful of arts, and one which was very extensively practised in Limoges. The art of Enamelling is indeed very ancient in Europe. Gaulish ornaments have been found that show that at the time of the Roman occupation the principle of applying transparent vitreous matter over metal was known. But the only colour employed was red. In the Frank and Merovingian epoch a good deal of ornament was done by enamelling gold or silver. The splendid mosaic-work of the Byzantine artists had impressed the imagination of the Franks, and they attempted, not by any means rudely, to adapt mosaic-work to personal ornament, and to combine with it the method of vitrifying the coloured compounds over the metal they desired to enrich.

But the great age of enamels began in Europe in the twelfth century, when the term by which enamelling was known was 'Opus Limogiæ, labor de Limogia,' Limoges being considered as the great centre of the manufacture.

Long before, however, Limoges had been famous for its jewellers, and it was but a short stride from encrusting gold with precious stones to encrusting it with vitrified paste. St Eligius was a native of a village in the Limousin, and worked as apprentice to a goldsmith in Limoges, who was also Master of the Mint there. About 600 A.D. he went to Paris, and was placed with Bobbo, Treasurer to Clothair II. The king wanted a throne made of precious metal, and probably enamelled, for no one was found in Paris who knew how to do the work desired, and the task was confided to Eligius. Eligius found he had sufficient silver to make two seats. When they were done, he gave one to the king, who greatly admired it, and ordered another. Then Eligius produced the second throne. The king was so struck with his honesty that he immediately advanced him to be Master of the Mint, and gave him his entire confidence. After Dagobert succeeded to the throne, Eligius continued in his office, and occupied himself as well in hammering out gold and enamelled vessels for his master. Some specimens of his handiwork have been preserved. He was elected and ordained Bishop of Noyon in 640, and died in 659. The Abbey of Chelles possessed in the seventeenth century a large chalice that Eligius had wrought; and though this was destroyed at the Revolution, a description left of it leaves no doubt that it was richly enamelled. Other workshops for enamels were founded, one at Treves; another, under Bishop Bernward, at Hildesheim; later on, Cologne endeavoured to rival Limoges in the production of enamels.

Of enamels there are two sorts, entirely distinct. The first are the encrusted enamels, and the second are the painted enamels. Enamelling consists in applying to a metal surface a powder composed of pounded silice—or to put it in the simplest form, of glass coloured with metallic oxides, and then fixed by fire. Thus it is obvious that the transition was easy from letting coloured glass into gold or silver settings to melting the glass into its place so that it adhered at the back. The earliest enamels tell their own story—they are 'cloisonné,' that is to say, precisely as jewels were set in a framework of metal, so frameworks of metal were fashioned to contain the glass melted into these cells. This was the construction of 'cloisonné' enamel: first of all a fine band of gold was soldered on to the base, standing up from it at right angles, and contorted to form an outline such as was desired to be given to the ornamentation. If green was to be the colour for leaves, then each leaf was formed of the band and closed to contain the green. Each petal of a red rose would in like manner be enclosed so as to form a gold pocket in which the red paste would be melted into glass. Specimens of cloisonné enamel of European manufacture are rare; the Louvre collection comprises hardly more than one example, but that is a magnificent one, the cover of a book of the Gospels.

The jewel of King Alfred is in cloisonné work, probably of Byzantine manufacture, for the Anglo-Saxon jeweller who mounted it covered the enamel with a plate of glass as something very rare and precious. The earliest specimens are certainly Byzantine; such is the iron crown given to the Cathedral of Monza by Queen Theodelinda, who died in 625; such also the votive crown in the Treasury of St Mark's, Venice, on which is represented Leo the Philosopher, who died in 911. The fine reliquary at Limburg on the Lahn was brought there from Constantinople by a crusader. It had been executed for Basil II. before 976. The golden altar front at San Ambrogio, at Milan, which is also decorated with cloisonné enamel, is Byzantine, and dates from 825. All these enamels were the work of Byzantine artists, and are all framed by fine ribbons of gold. It is known that so late as the eleventh century, Desiderius, Abbot of Monte Cassino, in Italy, was obliged to send for workmen from Constantinople to fashion an altar frontal for him in coloured glass on metal, which was to represent the legend of St Benedict. However, the treatise of the monk Theophilus, who lived about that same time, either in Lombardy or in Germany, describes the manner of decorating gold and silver work by means of enamel set in the cloisonné fashion, so that though in Southern Italy there may have been no enamellers, this was not the case in the northern parts of Europe. In fact, at Essen, in Germany, there are still preserved some most interesting enamels of this description made in Germany for Mathilda, the Abbess of Essen, who ruled that convent between 974 and 1013. As an inscription on it names her brother Otho, Duke of Swabia, who died in 982, the enamel cannot be of a later date.

Cloisonné work was also called 'émail de plique,' from the folds formed by the fine gold ribbon that enclosed the several coloured glasses.

As may be supposed, this was a somewhat clumsy proceeding; only very flat surfaces could be so treated, and the back plate had to be thick and solid, that there might be no parting at the joints. A further advance was made by the adoption of 'champlevé' enamelling. Again the artists were led on to this development by the easiest transition. It occurred to them that they would gain all the same effect at far less cost of time and patience, if, instead of soldering a series of pockets on to the surface of metal, they removed such portions of the surface as they desired to ornament with colour, dug out pockets, and then filled these little pits with the enamel. Thus the artists were able to decorate rounded surfaces, and were no longer confined to such as were flat. In a church near Limoges is an eucharistic dove of copper gilt, standing on a plate. The wings have been scooped out in parallel lines, and coloured paste let in to represent the feathers of rainbow tint. So also the disc on which the dove stands, and the plumage of the back are enamelled by colours dropped into sunken receptacles.

Now the enamellers found that some of their colours were transparent, others were opaque. Their greens and reds and blues were of the former description; but white, yellow, and turquoise were opaque. This gave great variety and beauty. The deeper the engraving of the metal the intenser the depth of colours of the translucent enamel; consequently, it was possible to give to drapery a wonderful intensity of darkness in shadow and of brilliancy in lights where the gold ground shone through the shallow glass. Thus came into use, chiefly if not exclusively in Italy, the translucent enamels, of which a few superb examples remain, notably at Orvieto. But in champlevé enamel as ordinarily practised in France and Germany we have opaque and transparent colours employed side by side with charming effect.

The metal disc that was to be enamelled was treated both with hammering into relief and cutting out of the surface with the chisel, sinking for enamels, whereas the human figure was usually raised in relief. Thus treated, the figures were of copper gilt, and the enamel-work served as a background to throw them up. Every colour is surrounded with a thin rim of metal, that is the surface uncut away.

The champlevé enamel held its own till the end of the fifteenth century; but already, towards the later half of that century, a third modification of the art came in: it was that of painted enamels. In this new form assumed by the art the entire surface was covered over with a coating of white, black, or deep blue, and the subjects were painted thereon, the transparent colours floated over the white, and white laid film on film over the black. Finally, the whole was in many cases touched up with gold. To heighten effect, gold or silver foil was introduced under the transparent colours for dresses, giving a tinselly appearance, very inferior to the splendour produced by varying depth of cutting under the enamel.

The reason why painted enamels came in was that in the sixteenth century there was a great accession of wealth and influx of the precious metals into Europe. Hitherto, gold had been rare,

and the great monasteries, cathedrals, and parish churches had been content with copper-gilt ornaments and vessels, and these had been enriched artistically with enamels; but when gold became more common, then the great churchmen and the nobles as well exchanged their copper-gilt vessels for those of the most precious metal, and these latter they did not care to have overlaid with colour. Accordingly, the art of the enameller was threatened with extinction. The transformation of the art saved it. The metal was employed as a mere panel on which to paint a subject.

When the ground was black, a light film of white was washed over it, except in such points as were to be left black; this was subjected to fire and fixed; then the plate was again treated with another coating of white of still less extension; and finally a subject was produced in 'grisaille'—that is to say, in white of various shades from high pure white down to faint gray. If the finger be passed over the surface of these grisaille paintings, it is sensible of the elevation of the lights. As many as twenty or thirty of these coats are often superposed. Finally, the grisaille painting was either left as it was, a study in black and gray and white, or was washed over with transparent colours.

The most beautiful work of all is almost certainly the plain grisaille with just the faces and hands put in in colour and with the use of gold to touch it up. There are plates representing the several seasons, rose-water dishes and cruet, candlesticks, &c., in grisaille that are marvels of renaissance beauty. The Louvre and the Hôtel de Cluny at Paris contain great collections.

At Limoges, families arose, the Limosins, the Penicauds, the Reynauds, the Courteys, the Laudins, the Nouaillers, which became illustrious, and whose works of art are now eagerly sought after and bought at a price beyond their weight in gold. In 1890 a portrait by Leonard I. Limosin representing Louis de Gonzaga sold for ninety-seven thousand francs. There are several magnificent portraits by this artist in the Louvre, amongst them Francis II., Henry II., the Constable Anne de Montmorency, and Melanchthon.

But the process of laying layer upon layer of white, and subjecting the plate to fire after each, was vastly laborious and risky, and necessarily the cost was very great. This process was accordingly abandoned for hatching in the shadows with black. The effect is immeasurably inferior, but it rendered the enamels cheaper, and the artist had finally to struggle against the introduction and spread of porcelain. Faience was nothing but enamelling on earthenware; and earthenware whitened and decorated on its glazed white surface everywhere thrust out the costly copper dish and ewer, chandelier, and salt-cellar.

It is somewhat melancholy to watch the end of the struggle under the Nouaillers, who turned out vast quantities of enamel of very little artistic value and of little beauty at a low price, and finally gave up the contest. Nevertheless, enamelling continued to the beginning of the present century; it was resorted to mostly for portrait-painting and miniatures in brooches. Recently it has somewhat revived, and furnaces have been relighted at Limoges, where some beautiful work is now done, which is happily in considerable

demand. The art is one very easy of acquisition, and which may be practised by any one in his own home if he can devote for the purpose two small rooms, one as studio, the other for the necessary furnaces. And enamel-work sells. It is in request for brooches and personal ornaments. Large subjects, vases for the chimney and candlesticks, are in less demand; and an enameller in Limoges told the writer that he had abandoned the making of articles that were necessarily costly; but that of small enamels costing not more than five to sixteen pounds he could sell as fast as he made. Would it not be well for ladies in quest of a remunerative occupation to take up this beautiful art?

BABY JOHN.*

By the Author of *Laddie*; *Zoe*; *Rose and Lavender*, &c.

IN SEVEN CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.—LUCY.

And ye shall walk in silk attire,
And siller hae to spare,
Gin ye'll consent to be his bride.

A COLD day early in March, with a cruel, north-east wind blowing, and a few scattered snowflakes falling out of a leaden sky.

'Cold, ain't it?' the women said as they met at the corners of the streets, and drew up their shawls over their heads and hurried on, not even waiting for the little bit of gossip which, as a rule, caused them to ignore all other considerations, such as urgent business, crying baby, swearing husband, kettle boiling over, or even a sharp shower of rain.

But a north-east wind dulls even the appetite for gossip, and when the mill-bell rang at twelve o'clock, and the hands turned out for dinner, they did not linger round the gate or at the corner of Mill Lane, as their usual custom was, but went running off with their arms rolled up in their aprons, and the corners of the little shawls they wore over their heads in their mouths, to keep the wind from making its cold, penetrating way under them.

And yet there was more to be talked about that day than was the case generally, for report said that Mrs Craddock, the wife of the mill-owner, was dying. 'She as used to be Lucy Coles,' the mill-girls would have added; for only eighteen months before she had been one of the hands, running home to dinner just as they were doing now, with a shawl over her curly hair, and quite up for a long slide on a piece of ice where the water had frozen in the gutter.

A pretty, silly, little thing was Lucy Coles—a bit giddy, the folks said—and only kept straight by steady, sober-sided Alice Reynolds, who looked after her as sharp as an old hen after her one chick, and kept off the lads who would have come after Lucy's pretty face. A regular born old maid, the girls called Alice Reynolds; and they said it was a shame (that it was!) of her to keep Lucy out of all the fun.

And sometimes Lucy herself would rebel, and go off with a noisy party down to the town meadows, when there was a steam roundabout or

some shows down there, or would follow along the street with the other giddy ones when the militia marched through the town. But these rebellious fits did not last long, and she would soon come running back and fling her arms round Alice's neck, and kiss away the cloud on her kind, plain face, and with it the heartache of anxiety that always set in when Lucy was out of sight.

Mr Craddock, the mill-owner, was a middle-aged man, with a grave, severe, and somewhat surly manner, which awed the impudence out of the girls, and silenced the chatter of tongues directly he came in sight. He lived with his old mother in a house adjoining the mill, and instead of employing an overseer, as most of the other mill-owners did, saw to it all himself, and was constantly about in the mill or in the little office by the door.

'And I wish he wouldn't,' the girls said. 'As sure as ever there's a bit of larking, there he comes! He's all over the shop! Why can't he be like Dobson down town, as leaves it all to that foreman, and only comes in nows and thens in lavender kids and patent leathers. My! ain't he a masher?'

But, in the long run, the girls agreed that Craddock was not such a bad sort for a master. He was very fair, if he was a bit hard, and fairness is a quality which inspires respect, and wears better than generosity. And there was never a word of scandal against him; and that is saying a great deal for a man in a country town where gossip spares neither youth nor age, poverty nor riches.

Whether it was his little sharp-eyed mother, or his own surly manners, that procured him this immunity, I do not know; but certainly there was not another man, old or young, in Felsby, who could have stood so often by Lucy Coles's loom and kept her nearly every Saturday, on one excuse or another, for a few minutes' chat in the office, without setting all the tongues in the mill wagging, and a good many outside it.

Not even Alice Reynolds noticed it, or, at anyrate, noticed anything remarkable about it; and if she ever thought about it at all, set it down rather to his dissatisfaction with the girl's want of skilfulness in her work. And when she had waited for Lucy outside the office on pay day, she would try and devise in her wise, little head what she should do if Lucy got her leave, and whether, by strictest economy, she could keep them both out of her earnings.

It had really come to that, she felt sure one day, when she had been kept waiting longer than usual in the mill-yard, till all the girls had scattered and the foggy evening had stolen on, making Alice's shawl seem more thin and threadbare than she had reckoned it, when she had decided that it would last another year, and that Lucy must have a new jacket. And this conviction was strengthened when Lucy came out with a slow step, quite unlike the run and bound with which she generally came down the few steps, throwing her arm round Alice's waist and spinning her round, and making that staid, little, old-maidish person go prancing off in a sort of gallopade step.

And when she caught a glimpse of Lucy's face under the gas-lamp at the gate, and saw that

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it was troubled and grave, that the eyes were wide and frightened, and the pretty, little mouth drawn into thoughtful lines, she never doubted what had happened; but tucked her hand under the girl's arm, and set off briskly home through the fog, proposing that they should go to the reckless extravagance of sausages for supper.

Lucy said nothing till they got out of High Street and turned into Grape Gardens where their lodging was, and which was not important enough to have a gas-lamp allowed it, and so was in darkness, except where here and there an open door or uncurtained window threw some warm light on to the fog; but Alice could feel the girl's heart beating with great throbs against her hand, and she thought it was all from the pain of being turned off.

'Alice,' at last Lucy burst out, 'I've got something to tell you.' She stopped as she spoke, and drew Alice in front of her, laying her hands on her friend's shoulders, and bending her face down close to hers, for Lucy was a good bit the taller.

'Tell me? Why, bless the girl! do you think I don't know? And there! it ain't nothing to trouble about! I've a-seen it coming this ever so long.'

'Have you?' Lucy answered. 'Well, you've been sharper than me, then, for when he asked me just now, it struck me all of a heap, and I didn't a bit know what to say.'

'There weren't much to be said anyway, as I can see, but just "thank you," and come away. I don't hold with begging and praying to be kep' on; it don't do no good.'

'Kep' on?'

'Yes. That's about it, ain't it? as you've got the sack.'

Lucy gave a long laugh, and shook the small, thin shoulders her hands were holding.

'No, it ain't; you're just wrong: you ain't so clever after all. Got the sack! No, it will be me giving the sack to any one as don't please me. Kep' on, indeed! I shan't need to touch a shuttle again, and I'll just dip my hand in the strong-box and help myself when I want some money.'

'What?'

'Ay, you may well say what? I said it when he asked me to marry him.'

'Who?'

'Why, Craddock, the master. There! you needn't wriggle them shoulders and sniff that way. Gentle folks' courting ain't a bit like ours, leastways his ain't. I'd never a-known what he meant by it. He hardly as much as looked at me, but got as red as anything, and kep' scribbling on his blotting-paper, and he says'—

'Well?'

'He says, "How would you like to be my wife?" says he. And I thought as I hadn't heard right, seeing as my breath was took away by its being so sudden like, and I says, "What?" for all the world just as you did this minute. And he says again, "How would you like to be my wife?" and I as near as anything laughed out, it seemed so funny like to hear him as were always so grave and serious, and not a bit like courting, let alone marrying. But I didn't. I only says, "You wouldn't go for to marry a girl like me;" and he says, "Why not?" And I

says, because he were a lot older, and master, and me only just one of the hands. He were a bit vexed about the age, and said he weren't as old as he looked; and as for being master, so he were, but his father weren't nothing better than a mill hand, and his mother a factory girl.

'And then I says, "And there's your mother;" and he says, "She can't hinder even if she's a mind to, and we wouldn't live along of her; but I'll take a pretty place outside of the town, and fit it up all new, and you should have a carriage to ride in, and plenty of nice silk gownds, and pretty things, and a servant, so as you shan't have to put your hand to nothing." Only to think, Alice, of me setting up in my own drawing-room in a silk gownd with a gold ring on my finger!'

The girl stopped breathless; and Alice, too, drew a long breath, as if all this grandeur were too much even to imagine.

'There's no mistake?' she said at last; 'he don't mean nothing but what's right and fair?'

'No, that's all right enough, but'—

'Well?'

'It's all very grand and fine, but I don't know but what I'd as lief rub along with you.' And then she burst into a sudden passion of tears, and clung to Alice and sobbed; and then as suddenly recovered her spirits, and darted off to get a bloater for supper, and cooked it herself, though Alice was generally the one to prepare their meals; and she laughed and talked nonsense, and made fun about this solemn lover of hers, and about what she should do when she had a grand house of her own, and Alice came to visit her.

She, too, was the first to fall asleep that night, with a smile on her lips, which lingered there when Alice, more than once in the night, struck a match, to see how the time was passing, which goes so slowly and heavily to watchers, and slower still when full of anxious thought, as was the case with her. Any one might have thought that it was Alice who was going to take this important step, and that Lucy was an unconcerned spectator; for after she had once told Alice, she seemed to have no further serious thought or anxiety on the subject, but treated it all as a joke, and would not let Alice pull a long face or talk solemn, as she called it.

CHAPTER II.—A FRIEND.

You were so far away,
Beyond all help from me;
And so, when skies were gray,
And clouds lowered threateningly,
And the wailing storm wind blew,
My heart went out to you.—K. TYNAN.

That was eighteen months ago, and now, on this cold March day, the report crept about in the mill that Mrs Craddock, 'she as used to be Lucy Coles,' was dying. I do not know how the news came to Alice Reynolds. I do not think, careless as many of the mill-girls were about giving pain, and little as they liked Alice, whom they described as a stuck-up piece of goods and a born old maid, they would have ventured to strike her to the heart with such a piece of news.

'Not as she'd have any cause to feel of it much,' they whispered to one another; 'seeing as Mrs Craddock turned her back on all her

old friends, and ain't been to see Alice once since the wedding. No, nor Alice ain't crossed the door-step of that smart villa where she's quite the fine lady, folks says.'

Anyhow, Alice knew, she sometimes fancied she felt without being told, when anything went wrong with Lucy. It was only fancy, of course, and a very good thing for her that it was not reality, for she would have had many an ache at her heart during those eighteen months on Lucy's account; for the marriage had not turned out happily, and Lucy herself, in a mind dulled with weakness and pain, felt almost glad that it was so near an end, in spite of the natural clinging to life in the young, and for the matter of that, in the old also.

It was quite true, as the mill-girls had said, that Lucy's marriage had separated her and Alice. Alice had made up her mind to this—at least she thought she had—from the very first, even that first night when she lay awake with Lucy sleeping so peacefully beside her. And she told herself that it was only natural, and she quite expected it, and she did not really wish it otherwise, when day after day went by, and Lucy neither came nor sent to her.

But in spite of having expected it, and being so perfectly resigned to it, she felt it very sorely, though she would have quarrelled with her best friend who said so; and she grew to have a nervous dread of meeting Lucy or even of hearing her name, and she hurried away from the groups of girls, who, you may be sure, had plenty to say of the young madam. She kept more and more by herself, and took to going home to Grape Gardens by a circuitous route, along dirty back lanes and alleys, to avoid the chance, which once befell her, of being passed by a briskly trotting pony driven by a man in livery with some one sitting beside him, though who it was Alice only guessed; for she turned and stared hard into a corn-chandler's shop, as if her whole interest were engrossed in the white chalk horse and a sample of oats on which her unseeing eyes were fixed.

She left off going to the church where she and Lucy used to go together, and went far out into the country to churches in the villages round, to avoid the risk of seeing Lucy and her husband; and on pay nights she would rush into the office when her turn came and hurry out again, hardly looking at the master, for fear he should think she was waiting for a word from Lucy, or was expecting to be treated with peculiar consideration because she had been his wife's friend.

Once he called after her when she was leaving the office, but she pretended not to hear, and then suffered agonies of remorse for fear Lucy wanted her. And it was the night after this that she paid her first visit to Apsley Villa, the house which Mr Craddock had taken on his marriage, and which Alice till then had scrupulously avoided.

Even now she got no farther than the gate, where she stood for nearly half an hour, looking at the white stucco front, which appeared to her very imposing, with its bow-windows and glass porch filled with flowers; and she watched till a light appeared in one of the up-stairs windows, and some one came and drew aside the blind and looked out, and then she slipped away, afraid of being noticed, and sure that the face looking out

was Lucy's, though in fact it was the house-maid's.

She had caught a bad cold that first winter she was alone (she was always a frail, little thing), and was obliged to stop at home a few days; but she went back to work long before she was really fit, for fear Lucy should hear and be unhappy, or come and see her in spite of her husband's wishes. And she would smother her cough when Mr Craddock was within hearing, and draw up her head, and walk briskly as she passed the office door, as if her limbs were not aching with weariness.

But to-day there was no need for any pretence, for the office was empty. Mr Craddock had not been there all day, and perhaps it was this absence of his that made her more attentive to the stray words that reached her ears from time to time, and convinced her that something was seriously wrong at Apsley Villa.

She was among the last to leave the mill, and when she got out into the lane, all the hands had dispersed; for, as I have said before, the wind was so cold and searching, that not even the most inveterate gossip would care to defy it. But Alice wrapped her shawl tightly round her, and without a moment's hesitation set off right in the face of the wind, along High Street, without taking the turn down into the back streets, which had been her way home of late, and which afforded now some protection from the wind, and she went straight on towards Apsley Villa.

It was getting dusk, and the lamps were being lighted along the streets and along the Mellingham Road, for Apsley Villa did not stand far enough out of Felsby to be beyond the reach of gas and other town advantages. And this time she did not stop at the gate, but went in, and along the short drive to the front door. A carriage was waiting there; but, undeterred by this, and undistracted by the sweetness of the hyacinths, primulas, and narcissus with which the porch was filled, and which she could hardly have passed at another time, she rang the bell.

Apsley Villa was nothing surprisingly grand; but certainly Alice Reynolds, in her mill dress stained with oil and much wear, and with a faded plaid shawl over her head, did not look altogether appropriate standing in the porch among the flowers, with the lamp shining brightly down upon her, and revealing pitilessly the shabbiness of her appearance; so perhaps the smart parlour-maid was to be excused for her feeling of indignation, more especially as the coachman on the brougham outside was looking on with some surprise and amusement.

'Well to be sure! some folks has impudence!' said the parlour-maid, tossing her head with its white cap and long streamers. 'We ain't nothing for you. Master don't give nothing to tramps.'

'I ain't no tramp. I wants to know how Mrs Craddock is.'

'Then, if you're from the works and wants to see master, you did ought to know better than to come to the front door.'

'I didn't know as I didn't ought to come to this door. And I don't want to see the master; it's the missus as I wants to see.'

'Then you just can't. She's that ill that nobody don't see her.'

'Will you tell her as I'm here?' Alice made

a step forward into the hall, with a determination which made the servant make way for her involuntarily, though the next minute she resented this fresh piece of 'imperence.'

'Now, my good woman, you'll have to be off, or I'll call the master to you. You can't see Mrs Craddock' (as may be fancied the terms between poor Lucy and her servants had been a little strained, and a smart parlour-maid could hardly bring her mouth to call a mill-girl 'missis'); 'she's too ill, and I can't take no message.' The servant's voice assumed a more civil tone as she went on, for a door behind had opened, and a gentleman came into the hall.

It was the doctor, and he looked at Alice as he passed, and then stopped. 'What does she want?'

'She's a girl from the mill, sir, and she's wanting to see the missus; wanting to beg most likely, but I've been telling her she's too ill, poor dear, to be troubled.'

'Did you know she was ill?' asked the doctor.

'Yes, that was just why I come. She and me used to be friends in old times, pretty well like sisters, and I've nursed her many a time, and I knows just all her fancies when she's ill, and Lucy had a-many fancies, and I've always a-humoured her as far as I knew how.'

'Take her up,' said the doctor, and when the servant hesitated, he added, 'I'll make it all right with your master,' and stepped back into the room he had just left, while the servant with great unwillingness led the way up-stairs.

At another time Alice would have been keenly alive to the softly carpeted stairs, to the coloured panes in the window she passed, and to a large glass bowl with goldfish in it on the landing, but she did not even notice them; nor, when the bedroom door was opened at the servant's knock, and a hospital nurse, after a whisper about 'Doctor says,' admitted her to what must certainly have been the most luxurious bedroom Alice had ever seen, did she see anything but Lucy, her Lucy, lying there motionless in the bed, with a white wan face and closed eyes, all alone.

It was that loneliness that had been in the doctor's mind, quite haunting him as he left the house, and it was this that made him stop and look at Alice with a strange sort of intuitive feeling that with her the poor, young, dying girl might not be so alone. And yet it would have been hard to say why this loneliness should have impressed him, seeing that she had an excellent and kind nurse always in attendance, and a husband who had not left the house all day, and was in great anxiety about her condition, and a mother-in-law who was ready to take the nurse's place or share her watching, and yet the doctor went away quite sore at heart at the thought of her loneliness, and Alice's first feeling was 'all alone.'

It was quite contrary to all the theories of the hospital nurse to disturb a patient who, for the first time for many a restless, painful hour, was lying quiet if not asleep; to have the bedclothes, which had just been arranged with hospital precision, tumbled and disarranged by two arms, in sleeves faded and stained by factory work and wearing into a hole at the elbow, which clasped

the patient close, and drew her head to rest on a shoulder on which was a patch of a somewhat different shade from the rest of her dress.

But we all have to pocket our theories sometimes, and confess that we cannot shape all circumstances to meet them, and so the nurse's remonstrances died on her lips, when she saw the patient's eyes open with a life and brightness they had not had for days, and heard her voice, stronger than she had had any experience of hitherto, say, 'Alice, old girl, why, it's never you?'

With a wisdom which ought to have been favourably noticed on her certificate, she made no protest against this very irregular proceeding, but turned to the fire and busied herself with something rolled up in flannel in a bassinette, and left the two friends undisturbed, and when it was time for medicine or food, she brought it to the bedside and did not resent its being taken from her by Alice, and seeing her own patient coaxed into taking what she knew no entreaties of her would have prevailed upon her to touch. She was a real good nurse and no mistake, and I should like to have her to nurse me if I were ill.

They did not say much; it does not need words between loving hearts. A gentle pressure of the arms that clasped Lucy, a tender, rocking motion of the shoulder on which the weary young head rested, a feeble clasp from a weak, wasted hand that had lost all sign of the factory work, and on which the massive wedding ring seemed too heavy; that was quite enough.

And when, an hour or two later, a step sounded outside, and a knock came at the door, the nurse whispered to Mr Craddock, in answer to his inquiries for his wife, that she was sleeping quietly, and drawing back let him look in at her and see her with her head on Alice's arm, and her fingers twisted in the shabby fringe of her friend's shawl, as if to prevent her slipping away while she slept. 'She is better,' said the nurse.

IN A REFORMATORY SCHOOL.

'WHAT place is this?' I heard a man ask another the other day, as the two were passing one of our rural reformatories. 'It's a Reformatory School' was the answer. Evidently the inquirer was ignorant of the meaning of reformatory, for the second man explained in answer to another question: 'It's a place as they put kids in what nip anything.'

To the majority, no doubt the words 'reformatory school' bring hazy notions of youthful criminals, hard work, poor living, and prison discipline—in short, a life of misery dragged out for four or five years. I will endeavour to show what five years in a reformatory really mean; and, without entering into any of the questions which philanthropists and men of sentiment continually raise with regard to the efficacy of the work, I will give a faithful outline of a boy's life and training while under detention, so that the public may judge for themselves what the outcome of such training is likely to be.

No boy is admitted to a reformatory after he

is sixteen years of age, nor until a qualified medical man has certified that he is fit for physical training. These institutions are not hospitals, and have no scope for dealing with any but those who can bear the same discipline as the majority. Neither can a lad be sent to one of these schools until he has undergone punishment for the crime of which he was convicted, and, once within the walls, he is never reminded of his past misdeeds. Steady hearty work, honesty, and prompt obedience are the fundamental rules in all schools, and to the credit of the teachers and taught, it is but rarely indeed that they are defied. When we bear in mind that the boys dealt with—with few exceptions—were utterly incorrigible and unamenable to all authority—in fact, brought up to beg and steal, having no knowledge of any existence but that in which drink, dirt, and squalor were inextricably mixed—the change that is wrought in a boy by five years' steady discipline is wonderful.

To bring the reality of what I write as closely home to my readers as possible, I will describe the work as I see it carried on every day. The school is a small one, certified for fifty boys, and is situated in the midst of an agricultural district. Attached to it is a farm of fifty acres, which serves to supply the boys with work during the greater part of their time—neither plough nor reaping-machine forming any part of the property of the institution. When not required on their own land, the boys are hired out by the neighbouring farmers; and their labour is eagerly sought after. All the domestic work of the school is also done by them—cooking, scrubbing, washing, sewing, mending, and darning. It is a pleasant sight to see them start off to work in the morning. Every boy knows just what he has to do, and he goes to it knowing that if it is well done he will have a word of praise and recognition; but if the contrary, that the reprimand will come as surely. 'If a thing is worth doing at all, it is worth doing well,' is a truism that every lad is made acquainted with; and it is the earnest endeavour of those in charge to train the youths to see the truth of it.

Every one is encouraged to put forth all his energy whether at work, in school, or at play. Discipline is maintained without too much form, and true English home-life is, as far as is compatible with circumstances, infused into the system. Half-past five is an early hour to turn out of bed, yet at that time the bell calls all up. It takes but a short time for them to dress, open their windows, make their beds, march down to the lavatory for a good wash, and then begin the real work of the day with two hours' lessons in school. School is a great trial to most newcomers, for many boys when first admitted do not know the letters of the alphabet, and mastering the elements of the English language is tedious work for them. They would much prefer two hours' hard digging; but what must be cannot be avoided, and the progress they make is surprising. When lessons are over there is half-an-hour's play, then breakfast, a short Scripture lesson and morning prayers.

Now for parade in the yard. Each lad falls in, and stands to attention, while numbers are called out, and boys told off for their different duties during the forenoon. Mayhap twenty are going to work for some farmer who knows that boys like a bun or a glass of milk between meals, and who is not above exchanging a cheery 'Good-morning' with them when he meets them; while the others are distributed to suit the requirements of the house and farm according to their merit and ability.

A lad's great ambition is to be promoted to a monitorship, and those boys who are striving hardest to gain this are given definite duties, which they keep so long as their conduct entitles them to do so, or until they are raised a scale higher.

At half-past twelve the bugle sounds, as a signal to leave off work; and hungry lads come in to find a substantial meal awaiting them in their dining-room. When every one has finished, grace is sung, and all troop off to play, sometimes at football, sometimes at cricket, according to the season. Oftentimes all may be seen busy on their little garden plots, which in the summer are gay with many-hued flowers. Ask a boy the name of any plant among them, and it will be strange if he does not know it and something of its history as well. At two o'clock, work begins again, and usually lasts until half-past five, when again the bugle sounds to finally call all in for the day. Each lad as he comes in goes straight to the lavatory and makes himself spruce and tidy for the evening; and then, after half-an-hour's good fun, he is thoroughly ready for his supper. But the day's work is not finished yet, for there is another hour and a half in school, and no one is sorry when the bell rings for evening prayers and it is time to be off to bed.

A week's good work earns a half-holiday on Saturday, and sometimes a night in the course of the week, when slates and lesson-books are left in the cupboard, and draughts, puzzles, and games take their place; or perhaps it will be a night's band practice, for the school can boast of a 'drum-and-fife' band, and not one of the boys but likes to think he is a musician.

Officers and lads are on the best of terms, and there is a strong feeling of sympathy between them. The majority of the boys would as soon think of flying as of taking an undue liberty with any of their instructors. When a case of insolence does occur, it is generally from some youth who has not been long enough in the school to know what the consequences of such conduct are likely to be.

Ingrained habits, however, are not eradicated in a few weeks, and bad boys don't develop into full-fledged angels all at once. The best of masters may well feel discouraged at times. A boy who has been going on well for some time has been found pilfering; another has been detected at wanton mischief; or it may be that a boy who has had every confidence reposed in him suddenly absconds at the instigation of one of the black-sheep of the school. A well-regulated system of rewards and punishments has done much to put down petty crime within the walls, and every moral influence is brought to bear upon the boys that can help to keep them in the paths of rectitude and truth.

Every inmate may, if he likes, earn a shilling a month by gaining the maximum number of marks—one hundred and forty-four. If a lad loses twelve marks, he loses one penny, and his chance of being a monitor or duty-boy for the month. If guilty of a serious offence, a youth makes the acquaintance of the best of all remembrancers, which, after all, in spite of what sentimentalists say, is the most wholesome of all correctives for hardened offenders. Every case of corporal punishment is taken note of, and is posted up in the schoolroom, that all may read. If a boy knows his friends are coming to see him when his name is there, he looks very glum indeed.

Sunday is a day of rest. All attend the village church morning and night. In the afternoon, the boys enjoy a quiet chat among themselves, read their library books, or have a story read for them.

Every season brings its own work and enjoyments. In the winter they prepare the land for the spring, thresh the autumn crops, and finish off the numberless oddments that are left for that time of the year. Then there is many a jolly hour's sliding when Jack Frost is kind; and, occasionally, that delight of every school-boy's heart, a regular snowball battle. This is the season, too, when concerts are got up, and how hard all practise that there may be no hitch on those auspicious evenings! No need to describe the work of the spring. Every one knows what that means to the farmer. But what matters it for hard work when you see your labour reducing all to order, in readiness for the seed which must soon be sown. Then, when seed-time is over, how eagerly all look for the first appearance of the young leaves above the ground. In their gardens, every little morsel of green is watched with an interest that those whose lives have more changes might well envy. Nor are the duty-boys idle indoors. This is the time of scrubbing, painting, and whitewashing, for spring sunbeams have an ugly knack of showing up begrimed corners, and all must be made clean and bright after the winter's smoke and fog.

Then comes summer with its long days of heat and sunshine, when cricket takes the place of football in the playground, and hoeing and weeding keep every one busy all day long.

The season they like best is autumn; and for days before they commence reaping there is much talking of former prowess with the sickle. When they do begin, their whole energy is given to their work, and two extra meals a day are only a just compensation for the extra tear and wear of muscular tissue. Every lad does his level best, and all work as one, for are they not reaping their own corn, gathering in their own sheaves? They sowed the seed, they watched it grow to maturity, and now they are striving to garner it in its due time; and were you in the neighbourhood when the last load is carried, you would hear such a clamour of vociferous cheering as might well make you say, 'Something pleases the reformatory boys very much to-day.'

Nor are the lads without their special gala days: Easter Monday, sundry birthdays, Harvest Home, Christmas Day, and even Examination Day, are all times to be remembered long after they have left school.

Thus pass the weeks, months, and years. Every day separates the boys more and more from their past life. Their moral characters develop under the firm guidance of cool heads and warm hearts; and although there are cases which are almost hopeless, there is no boy but learns all that is needful to enable him to earn an honest living and lead a decent life. As far as is possible the school authorities endeavour to keep in touch with every lad, and use the moral influence they have acquired over him long after his school-life has come to an end.

VEGETABLE PEPSINE.

VEGETABLE Pepsine is the name very aptly given to the juice of the unripe fruit of the Papaw (*Carica Papaya*), a plant fairly well distributed throughout the tropics. The papaw is a handsome tree, and would well serve as an ornament to gardens; but it would leave very little room for the growth of shrubs and bushes, as it absorbs an incredible quantity of moisture. When not topped, its cylindrical stem attains a height of ten to twenty feet, crowned by a number of large leaves. It is a very quick grower indeed, and the flower unfailingly becomes a fruit, so that almost daily every period of growth from the bud to full ripeness may be observed on the tree.

The useful properties of the papaw plant have long been known to the various natives, and have been taken advantage of by them, as can be seen by reference to the works of travellers who can themselves vouch for the accuracy of the accounts they narrate. Thus Drury, in *The Useful Plants of India*, states that old hogs and poultry which are fed upon the leaves and fruit, however tough the meat they afford might otherwise be, are thus rendered perfectly tender and good, if eaten as soon as killed. Browne, too, in his *Natural History of Jamaica*, says that meat becomes tender after being washed with water to which the juice of the papaw tree has been added; and if left in such water ten minutes, it will fall from the spit while roasting, or separate into shreds while boiling. In his *History of Barbadoes*, Griffith Hughes mentions that the juice of the papaw tree is of so penetrating a nature that if the unripe peeled fruit be boiled with the toughest old salted meat it quickly makes it soft and tender. Karsten also tells us that boiling meat with the juice of the papaw is quite a common thing in Quito. Captain S. P. Oliver, writing in *Nature*, July 10, 1879, says: 'In Mauritius, where we lived principally on ration beef cut from the tough flesh of the Malagasy oxen, we were in the habit of hanging the ration under the leaves themselves; and if we were in a hurry for a very tender piece of fillet, our cook would wrap up the undercut of the sirloin in the leaves, when the newly-killed meat would be as tender as if it had been hung for a considerable time.'

It is not surprising that the attention of medical men abroad was drawn to the wonderful solvent action exercised by the leaves and fruit of the papaw tree. They soon commenced using the juice from the fruit in simple cases of

indigestion; and when they found good results follow, they extended their experiments to more complex disorders. Surgeon B. Evers, writing upon Indian Medicinal Plants in the *Indian Medical Gazette* in 1875, mentions some cases in which he used it satisfactorily in enlarged spleen and enlarged liver. Out of sixty cases which he treated, thirty-nine were cured; in eighteen the results were not reported; and in three cases of enormously enlarged spleens, relief was afforded. The juice was administered as follows: a teaspoonful was mixed with an equal quantity of sugar, and the mass divided into three boluses, of which one was taken morning, noon, and evening. For children, a single drop of the juice was given as a dose mixed with sugar.

The juice of the papaw has been used with very great success in many other complaints. In Mauritius it is regarded as one of the most successful remedies for intestinal worms, a single dose being usually sufficient for a cure.

Attention was first drawn to the remedy in this country about 1879. Dr T. Peckolt, who made a thorough study of the plant when he was abroad in Brazil, succeeded in extracting the active principle from the juice of the fruit, to which he gave the name of Papayotin. In the following year Drs Bouchut and Wurtz investigated the plant, and separated the active principle, to which they gave the name of Papaine. This proved to be identical with Dr Peckolt's Papayotin, so that the two terms may be regarded as synonymous. Dr Bouchut also made a very important discovery which opened an entirely new field for the use of papaw. He found that both the diluted juice and Papaine had the property of digesting living tissues, normal or pathological, such as adenomata and cancer, and converting them into peptones in exactly the same way as dead ones. This knowledge was very soon turned to account. Surgeons commenced to treat abnormal growths with Papaine, and found it most efficacious in removing the false membranes of croup and diphtheria. As a rule, solutions of one in ten were employed for painting the throat, and in some instances Papaine was also given internally.

About the same time, a well-known London surgeon, a specialist in skin diseases, tried its effect upon an obstinate case of eczema with marked success. His prescription was composed of twelve grains of Papaine and five grains of powdered borax in two drachms of distilled water; this was painted on the parts twice daily; and in less than a month the hard horny masses of heaped-up epidermis had entirely disappeared from the skin, and the texture was left quite normal.

We ought not to conclude this notice of papaw without mentioning that the natives and residents abroad find the ripe fruit a delicious dessert. Dr Peckolt, whom we have already referred to, has given us some interesting data from an alimentary point of view in a paper he published upon the Papaw Plant some few years back. He says: 'This herbaceous tree is in Brazil a constant companion of the banana, and is never wanting near the huts of the natives. And rightly do the Indians honour this useful and most grateful tree, specially selected by Providence for people averse to any cultivation, for

without the slightest care or labour after a few months' growth it yields harvests the whole year through. Notwithstanding that in respect to nutritive value the fruit cannot compete with the banana, its use makes a refreshing change.' There are three varieties known, and of these the 'Mamao melao' is regarded as the best.

In Brazil, Dr Peckolt says, 'the tree is scarcely cultivated, or with but little care, its continual planting, like that of the banana, being self-effected, but with this difference, that instead of shoots from the roots, it is done by the seeds of the fruit falling on the ground. The tree is simply left to stand where the seed has been planted, either by the use of the fruit as manure, or by the agency of birds; the tender young plants brave all weathers, and are very tenacious of life, are not eaten by animals, and after becoming ten inches high, are not prevented by injury to leaf or bark from growing luxuriantly and almost perceptibly to the eye, even more rapidly than the banana. The fruit, like the banana, is collected in the full-grown but still green condition, so as to ripen in the house. If perfectly ripe when taken from the tree, the flesh, especially in the neighbourhood of the skin, is bitter; moreover, the ripe fruit is difficult to secure against destruction by birds.'

THE FLOWER-GIRL.

THE cold wind nipping at her feet,
She loiters in the busy street
Forlorn and lonely,
And proffers there with wistful eye
Pale blossoms to the passers-by—
A flower-girl only.

Yet never has her young life known
The dells and valleys where have blown
The flowers she fingers.
She knows not of the charms that cling
About the woodland ways, when Spring
On Summer lingers.

Her little foot has never pressed
The dewdrop on the gowan's breast
At eve or morning;
Nor did she ever yet behold
The genial Autumn's fruitful gold,
The plains adorning.

The lilies that she holds for sale
Are not, in sooth, so sickly pale
As her young face is—
A face that speaketh eloquent
Of life in thrall of poorth spent
Down sunless places.

She sees not in the flowers she sells
Young April twinkling on the fells
Or in the wild wood;
But we, to whom they speak of Spring,
May here some bit of sunshine bring
To cheer her childhood.

THOMAS MORTON.

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THACKERAY'S LONDON.

THE influence of the great centre of national life upon our literature may be traced in the writings of many of our foremost novelists and essayists, some of whom, like Dr Johnson or Charles Lamb, have left on record their love for London's busy streets or quiet nooks and corners; while others, such as Dickens, have invested the local habitations of their characters with almost as great an interest as attaches to the characters themselves. Thus we seem as familiar with the old prison of the Marshalsea as with Little Dorrit, with Golden Square as with Ralph Nickleby. In Thackeray's works it is the west end of the town which is more especially illustrated, and it is more often the personality of the inhabitant than the house itself which leaves an enduring impression on the reader's mind—facts which may serve to explain why so little has been written on the London of Thackeray when compared with that of Dickens. Yet Thackeray's knowledge of London, the foibles of its fashionable life, and the humours of its clubs, was extensive; and the various localities in which he from time to time took up his abode are mostly to be found depicted in his novels and sketches—such as the Charterhouse, where he passed his school-days; or Kensington, in which the later years of his life were spent. Few schools have been more immortalised in literature by an old pupil than has the Charterhouse by the great novelist—that Hospital of Gray Friars with its memories of Addison and Steele, where the 'Codd' Colonel stood among the poor brethren uttering the responses to the Psalm for Founder's Day, and where he murmured his final 'Adsum.' Here Thackeray sent Philip Firmin, Clive Newcome, and little Rawdon Crawley; and it was in the chapel of his old school that he himself made his last appearance in public to commemorate with other old Cistercians the praises of Thomas Sutton, the Founder.

The neighbourhood of Covent Garden was familiar to Thackeray, and he has described it

with picturesque accuracy: 'the two great national theatres on one side; a churchyard full of mouldy but undying celebrities on the other; a fringe of houses studded in every part with anecdote and history; an arcade often more gloomy and deserted than a cathedral aisle,' and its 'rich cluster of brown old taverns.' At the Bedford Hotel he was a frequent visitor in his youthful days, though it was then only in name the old coffee-house which had been once 'the emporium of wit, the seat of criticism, and the standard of taste;' when every night, with its crowd of 'polite scholars' and wits, jokes and bon-mots were echoed from box to box. It was more particularly patronised by theatrical celebrities, among whom Sheridan and Garrick were the most famous.

Close by, in the north-west corner of Covent Garden, was Evans's Hotel and Music-hall, which appears in the *Newcomes* under the transparent disguise of the 'Cave of Harmony,' whither the Colonel took Clive, and found so much to object to in the singing of Captain Costigan. From the date of its building in the reign of Charles II., this house was destined to undergo many changes of fortune. At one time it was the home of Sir Kenelm Digby, then of that Admiral Russell who, in 1692, defeated the French fleet off La Hogue; and was opened in 1774 as a family hotel—one of the first of the kind in London. After one or two other changes in the proprietorship, the Hotel passed into the hands of Evans of Covent Garden Theatre; and the musical entertainments soon became famous, and continued to be a feature of the house after 1844, when it had become vested in John, more popularly known as 'Paddy' Green. Thackeray was one of the many men of letters who frequented the house; and it has been told us how one day, when the *Newcomes* was in course of publication, Lowell, who was then in London, met him in the street, serious in manner, and with looks telling of weariness and application; and how, in response to the kindly look of inquiry in the poet's eyes, he said: 'Come into Evans's, and

I'll tell you all about it. I have killed the Colonel.'

Another house of lyrical talent was the tavern in Maiden Lane known as the 'Cider Cellars,' for many years the chosen resort of the bohemian world, and the favourite haunt of Professor Porson. This was no doubt the prototype of the Fielding's Head, at which was held the little club called the 'Back Kitchen,' where it will be remembered Pen and Warrington listened to such airs as the *Brown Jug* or *The Good Old English Gentleman*, interspersed with those of a different type.

'Le monde où l'on s'amuse' is described in many a page of Thackeray's works, and in one of the *Roundabout Papers* he gives us a list of his favourites of song and of the drama in his youthful days, when Sadler's Wells and the Adelphi were at the height of their fame, when Taglioni danced, and such singers as Sontag and Malibran were to be heard at the Opera. Vauxhall is frequently mentioned in his novels with the hundred thousand 'extra' lamps which were always lighted; the fiddlers in cocked hats, who played ravishing melodies under the gilded cockle shell in the midst of the gardens; the comic and sentimental ballad-singers; the country-dances; and the hermit who always sat in the illuminated hermitage. Here it was that the Sedley party was so disturbed by the conduct of Jos, under the influence of the rack punch. Vauxhall was also the scene of the visit of Arthur Pendennis when he met Captain Costigan and his guests from Shepherd's Inn. It was Uncle Newcome who took the children to Astley's, and laughed at the clown's well-worn jokes at the representation of the 'Battle of Waterloo.'

The Temple, with its old-world courts and cloisters and its numerous associations, had a peculiar fascination for Thackeray as for Dickens and other writers. About the year 1846 he seems to have occupied chambers at 10 Crown Office Road, Temple, his friend Tom Taylor having a set of rooms in the same house. Here, in Lamb Court, Pen abode with his noble-hearted friend Warrington, and was visited by his uncle, Major Pendennis, who had great difficulty in climbing up the abominable black stairs to the third storey, to be mistaken at last for the beer which Warrington had been anxiously expecting. Here, too, in the *Newcomes*, we find the same occupants visited by the Colonel and Clive. It will be remembered, likewise, that the Hon. Mr Deuceace, the youngest son of the Earl of Crabs, is described by James Yellowplush as 'a barrystir—that is, he lived in Pump Court, Temple: a vulgar nay-brood witch praps my readers don't no. Suffiz to say it's on the confines of the city, and the choasen abode of the lawyers of this metrapolish.'

Shepherd's Inn in *Pendennis* might be any of the quaint old Inns of Chancery which are so fast disappearing from modern London. Thackeray has described with more minuteness than usual the quadrangle, approached by curious passages and ambiguous smoky alleys on which the sun has forgotten to shine. 'Slop-sellers, brandy-ball and hardbake vendors, purveyors of theatrical prints for youth, dealers in dingy furniture, and bedding suggestive of anything but sleep, line the narrow walls and dark case-

ments with their wares. The doors are many-belled; and crowds of dirty children form endless groups about the steps, or around the shell-fish dealers' trays in these courts, whereof the damp pavements resound with pattens, and are drabbled with a never-failing mud.' Clement's Inn as it was half a century ago, in the days when the law-courts were yet at Westminster, appears to be indicated by the description. Captain Costigan had his abode at this Inn, and pretty Fanny Bolton dwelt at the porter's lodge.

The more remote or less fashionable districts of London do not figure largely in Thackeray's later works, nor must we look there for descriptions of the poor and their dwellings, the seamy side of life being generally depicted in his novels in connection with impecunious gamblers of high degree. *Catherine*, his only story of 'low life,' was written as a protest against the then prevalent fashion of painting its often sordid and mean details in attractive and at the same time unreal colours. Ikey Solomon of Horsemonger Lane is supposed to tell her sad history. In the jail here it was that Moore and Lord Byron paid a visit to Leigh Hunt, who was suffering for having indiscreetly styled the Prince Regent an 'Adonis of fifty.' The out-at-elbows Colonel Crawley was for some time confined in Sloman's sponging-house in Cursitor Street, Chancery Lane. This place, splendid with its huge old gilt cornices and dingy yellow satin hangings, in contrast to its chained and fast-barred door, has also been described by Disraeli in *Henrietta Temple*. The Fleet, with its memories of *Pickwick*, was where Barry Lyndon passed the end of his days in the company of his old mother. Here, too, Captain Shandon was very much at home, and lived as a king, adored by his wife; to which circle Arthur Pendennis was introduced in the course of his literary career.

Thackeray's early married days were spent in Great Coram Street, near the Foundling Hospital, and many of the streets and squares in that neighbourhood, as well as about Smithfield, are to be found in his works. The happy possessor of the great Hoggarty Diamond dines with the Roundhands in Myddelton Square, Pentonville—the name of which commemorates the inventor of the artificial New River. In the same story the Samuel Titmarshes are made to reside in a genteel house in Bernard Street, Russell Square. In one of the *Yellowplush Papers*, Mr and Mrs Altamont live in Cannon Row, Islington, in as comfortable a house as well could be, 'carpeted from top to to; pore's rates small, furnitur elygant, and three deomestix.' In Russell Square was the well-known home of the Sedley family, and Thackeray is said to have once pointed out to a friend the identical house in which he had located them. The vast and melancholy house in Fitzroy Square, 'cheerfully ornamented in the style of the end of the last century with a funeral urn in the centre of the entry, and garlands and the skulls of rams at each corner,' was tenanted by Colonel Newcome; while in Howland Street, close by, Clive went to live with his wife and mother-in-law when misfortune fell on him.

It is, however, in Mayfair, St James's, and other districts of the West End that we meet with the majority of the novelist's characters. Dr Firmin and Philip lived in Old Parr, that is,

Old Burlington Street, whence the fashionable world had fled, finding it too dismal. In Gaunt Square, Lord Steyne had his town palace. Some have recognised Berkeley Square in the description of this spot with its mansions passed away into dowagerism—tall dark houses, with window-frames of a lighter red, and blank iron 'extinguishers' that still flank the lamps over the steps. It was in Great Gaunt Street, leading out of the Square, that Becky Sharp first made the acquaintance of the eccentric Sir Pitt Crawley; and in Curzon Street, Mayfair, that she lived as the wife of the impecunious Rawdon in the snug and complete bachelor's residence with its geraniums in the window and carved bronze knocker. Not far away—in Queen Street—that veteran of fashion, old Lady Kew, abode, and might even sometimes have been found, when London was supposed to be a desert, cowering over a bed-candle and a furtive teapot in the back drawing-room. Conveniently situated for her ladyship's devotions was Lady Whittlesea's Chapel, where the Rev. Charles Honeyman officiated. Park Lane is represented by Lady Ann Newcome and Miss Crawley with her pug-dog; while Mrs Hobson Newcome lived in Bryanston Square. More interest perhaps attaches to the Bury Street lodgings of Major Pendennis, the daily scene of his elaborate toilet.

Pall Mall, the 'sweet shady side' of which was the favourite haunt of the beaux and dandies of the Regency, was familiar to Thackeray, who began and finished *The Luck of Barry Lyndon* while staying in St James's Street. No more congenial district could have been found for the worldly-minded old Major, who loved to station himself in the great window of Bays's Club—the bow-window of White's—with half a score of old bucks similarly recreating themselves—old fogies who, Pen unkindly suggested, should be set up in wax at Madame Tussaud's in a Chamber of Horrors by themselves. The humorous side of club-life is admirably portrayed in the *Book of Snobs*. A member of the Athenæum and the Reform, Thackeray was particularly partial to the smoking-room of the Garrick Club, then situated in King Street, Covent Garden. It was here, at the annual dinner held on Shakespeare's birthday, that he said, 'We the happy initiated never speak of it as the Garrick: to us it is the G., the little G., the dearest place in the world.' It was at Willis's Rooms, the old Almack's, in King Street, Pall Mall, that he delivered, in 1851, his lectures on the English Humorists. In the vicinity of Brompton and Kensington his life as a successful author was mostly passed. Becky Sharp on her marriage retired to snug little Brompton lodgings; and in a cottage in a street leading from the Fulham Road, with the romantic title of St Adelaide Villas, Anna Maria Road West, old Mr Sedley hid his head with his wife and daughter when the crash came. There is a touch of Dickens in Thackeray's description of this neighbourhood, 'where the houses look like baby-houses; where the people looking out of the first-floor windows must infallibly, as you think, sit with their feet in the parlours; where the shrubs in the little gardens in front bloom with a perennial display of children's pinafores, little red socks and caps; and where little porter pots hang on the railings sunning themselves.

In 1847 Thackeray went to live in Young Street, and once pointing out the bow-windowed cottage to an inquiring friend, is said to have remarked: 'Go down on your knees, you rogue, for here *Vanity Fair* was penned; and I will go down with you, for I have a high opinion of that little production myself.' Here he also wrote *Esmond*; and one of the houses close by, in Kensington Square, has been chosen as the home of Lady Castlewood and Beatrice. In 1862 Thackeray removed from Onslow Square, where the *Newcomes* and the *Virginians* had been composed, to the house he had built himself in Palace Green, still remaining in the old court suburb with its leafy trees and gardens, to which he was so much attached. Here it was that the completion of *Denis Duval* was cut short by his lamented death in the following year.

BLOOD ROYAL.*

CHAPTER VIII.—AT 'OXFORD COLLEGE.'

'WELL, I don't know what you fellows think, but as far as I'm concerned,' Trevor Gillingham remarked, with an expansive wave of his delicate white hand, 'my verdict on the Last of the Plantagenets is simply this: the Prince of the Blood has been weighed in the balance and found wanting.'

It was a fortnight later, in Faussett's rooms in the Chapel Quad at Durham (Chapel Quad is the most fashionably expensive quarter), and a party of raw lads, who took themselves for men, all gathered round their dessert, were engaged in discussing their fellow-undergraduate. The table groaned with dried fruits and mandarin oranges. Faussett himself raised to his lips a glass of Oxford wine-merchant's sherry—our famous Amontillado as imported, thirty-six shillings the dozen—and observed in a tone of the severest criticism: 'Oh, the man's a smug; a most unmitigated smug: that's the long and the short of it.'

Now, to be a smug is, in Oxford undergraduate circles, the unpardonable sin. It means, to stop in your own rooms and moil and toil, or to lurk and do nothing, while other men in shoals are out and enjoying themselves. It means to avoid the river and the boats; to shun the bump-supper; to decline the wine-party. Sometimes, it is true, the smug is a curmudgeon; but sometimes he is merely a poor and hard-working fellow, the sort of person whom at forty we call a man of ability.

'Well, I won't go quite as far as that,' one of the other lads observed, smacking his lips with an ostentatious air of judicial candour, about equally divided between Dick and the claret. 'I won't quite condemn him as a smug, unheard. But it's certainly odd he shouldn't join the wine-club.'

He was a second-year man, the speaker, one Westall by name, who had rowed in the Torpids; and as the rest were mostly freshmen of that term, his opinion naturally carried weight with all except Gillingham. He, indeed, as a Born Poet, was of course allowed a little more license in such matters than his even Christians.

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'Up till now,' Faussett put in, with a candid air of historical inquiry, 'you see every Durham man has always as a matter of course subscribed to the wine-club. Senior men tell me they never knew an exception.'

Gillingham looked up from his easy-chair with a superior smile. 'I don't object to his not *joining* it,' he said, with a curl of the cultured lip, for the Born Poet of course represented culture in this scratch collection of ardent young Philistines; 'but why, in the name of goodness, didn't he say outright like a man he couldn't afford it? It's the base hypocrisy of his putting his refusal upon moral grounds, and calling himself a total abstainer, that sets my back up. If a man's poor in this world's goods and can't afford to drink a decent wine, in Heaven's name let him say so; but don't let him go snuffling about, pretending he doesn't care for it, or he doesn't want it, or he doesn't like it, or he wouldn't take it if he could get it. I call that foolish and degrading, as well as unmanly. Even Shakespeare himself used to frequent the *Mermaid* tavern. Why, where would all our poetry be, I should like to know, if it weren't for Bacchus? Bacchus ever fair and ever young? War, he sang, is toil and trouble; Honour but an empty bubble; Never ending, still beginning; Fighting still, and still destroying; If the world be worth thy winning, Think, oh, think it worth enjoying.' And Gillingham closed his eyes ecstatically as he spoke, and took another sip at the thirty-six Amontillado, in a rapture of divine poesy.

'Hear, hear!' Faussett cried, clapping his hands with delight. 'The Born Poet for a song! The Born Poet for a recitation! You men should just hear him spout Alexander's Feast. It's a thing to remember! He's famous as a spouter, don't you know, at Rugby. Why, he's got half the British poets or more by heart, and a quarter of the prose authors. He can speak whole pages. But Alexander's Feast's the thing he does the very best of all. Whenever he recites it, he brings the house down.'

'Respect for an ancient and picturesque seat of learning prevents me from bringing down the roof of Durham College, then,' Gillingham answered lightly, with a slight sneer for his friend's boyish enthusiasm. 'Besides, my dear boy, you wander from the subject. When the French farmer asked his barn-door fowls to decide with what sauce they would wish to be eaten, they held a meeting of their own in the barton-yard and sent their spokesman to say, "If you please, M. le Propriétaire, we very much prefer *not* to be eaten." "Mes amis," said the farmer, "vous vous écarterez de la question." And that's your case, Faussett. The business before the house is the moral turpitude and mental obliquity of the man Plantagenet, who refuses—as he says on conscientious grounds—to join the college wine-club. Now, I take that as an insult to a society of gentlemen.'

'What a lark it would be,' Faussett cried, 'if we were to get him up here just now, offer him some wine, to which he pretends he has a conscientious objection—unless somebody else pays for it—make him drink success to the cause of total abstinence, keep filling up his glass till we make him dead drunk, and then set him at the window in a paper cap to sing *John Barleycorn*!'

Gillingham's thin lip curled visibly. 'Your humour, my dear boy,' he said, patting Faussett on the back, 'is English, English, essentially English. It reminds me of Gilray. It lacks point and fineness. Your fun is like your neckties—loud, too loud! You must cultivate your mind (if any) by a diligent study of the best French models. I would recommend, for my part, as an efficient antidote, a chapter of De Maupassant and an ode of François Coppée's, every night and morning.'

It was Trevor Gillingham's cue, indeed, always to treat his fellow-students at Durham College as mere young Englishmen who had never seen anything of the great European world where he himself had received the rudiments of his education. *They* had not been brought up in the diplomatic service; *they* had not been hurried about the face of the Continent from Madrid to Constantinople, and from Stockholm to Athens: *they* had not picked up French with their mothers' milk, nor lispied in High-German from their earliest infancy. It was something, Gillingham felt, to have been dandled on the knees of Roumanian and Servian queens, or to have been held at the font by the orthodox hands of Russian princesses. And he never let his contemporaries at school or college forget his superiority in that respect. He had painted over his door with his own hand the proud words of the Psalmist, 'Reginæ erunt nutrices tuæ.' So he despised Faussett for not being as cosmopolitan and enlightened as himself, and he had a low opinion of Oxford altogether as a rather provincial English university.

Faussett, somewhat abashed, retired for a moment into himself. He busied himself meanwhile with handing round the mandarin oranges.

'Plantagenet's not a man of the world, you see,' Gillingham went on after a short pause, puffing away at a contemplative cigarette, with a proud consciousness that he himself was wholly different. 'That's not his fault, of course, and nobody blames him for it. The poet is born, not made, we know: it's perfectly true; but the man of the world is made, not born; he owes his qualities to the society in which he has been brought up, and the people with whom he and his forebears have associated. Still, when a fellow comes among gentlemen, no matter from what origin, he should "behave as sich;" he should have gumption and tact enough to find out instinctively what are the things one should do and what the things one should leave undone, so as to fit him for the superior groove in which he is thenceforth to hold his orbit. I hate unadaptiveness; it's a mark of a low unprogressive nature. The wise man moves with his time and adapts himself to his company. If he happens to be in Spain, he's a pillar of the bull-fights; *cosa d'españa*, you know—*cosa d'españa*! If he comes to England, he's a Vice-president of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. When he's at Rome, he does as Rome does; when he's in Geneva, he renounces the Pope and all his works as a most dangerous heresy.' And Gillingham leaned back in his easy-chair with a self-satisfied face, and blew forth a blast of pale blue tobacco smoke, conscious that he had spoken like a man of the world himself, and merited the admiration of his attentive listeners.

'But if Plantagenet's poor,' one more tolerant lad put in, apologetically, 'it's natural enough, after all, he shouldn't want to join the club. It's precious expensive, you know, Gillingham. It runs into money.'

The Born Poet was all sweet reasonableness. 'To be poor, my dear Matthews,' he said with a charming smile, turning round to the objector, 'as Beau Brummell remarked about a rent in one's coat, is an accident that may happen to any gentleman any day; but a patch, you must recognise, is premeditated poverty. The man Plantagenet may be as poor as he chooses, so far as I'm concerned: I approve of his being poor: what so picturesque, so affecting, so poetical, indeed, as honest poverty? But to pretend he doesn't *care* for wine—that's quite another matter. There the atrocity comes in: the vulgarian atrocity. For I call such a statement nothing short of vulgar.' He raised his glass once more, and eyed the light of the lamp through the amethystine claret with poetic appreciation. 'Now give the hautboys breath,' he cried, breaking out once more in a fit of fine dithyrambic inspiration; 'he comes! he comes! Bacchus, ever fair and ever young, Drinking joys did first ordain. Bacchus' blessings are a treasure; Drinking is the soldier's pleasure. Rich the tr-r-reasure, Sweet the pleasure; Sweet is pleasure after pain.'

And when Gillingham said that, with his studiously unstudied air of profound afflatus, everybody in the company felt convinced at once that Plantagenet's teetotalism, real or hypocritical, simply hadn't got a leg left to stand upon. They turned for consolation to the Carlsbad plums and the candied cherries.

But at the very same moment, in those more modest rooms, up two pair of stairs in the Back Quad, which Dick had selected for himself as being the cheapest then vacant, the Prince of the Blood himself sat in an old stuffed chair, in a striped college boating coat, engaged in discussing his critic Gillingham in a more friendly spirit with a second-year man, who, though not a smug, was a reader and a worker, by name Gillespie, a solid Glasgow Scotchman. They had rowed together that afternoon in a canvas pair to Sandford, and now they were working in unison on a chapter or two of Aristotle.

'For my own part,' Dick said, 'when I hear Gillingham talk, I'm so overwhelmed with his knowledge of life, and his knowledge of history, and his extraordinary reading, that I feel quite ashamed to have carried off the Scholarship against him. I feel the examiners must surely have made a mistake—and some day they'll find it out, and be sorry they elected me.'

'You needn't be afraid of that,' Gillespie answered, smiling, and filling his pipe. 'You lack the fine quality of a "guid conceit o' yoursels," Plantagenet. I've talked a bit with Gillingham now and again, and I don't think very much of him. He's not troubled that way. He's got an extraordinary memory, and a still more extraordinary opinion of his own high merits: but I don't see, bar those two, that there's anything particularly brilliant or original about him. He's a poet, of course, and he writes good verses; every fellow can write good verses nowadays; the trick's been published. All can raise the flower

now, as Tennyson puts it, for all have got the seed. But as far as I can judge Gillingham, his memory's just about the best thing about him. He has a fine confused lot of undigested historical knowledge packed away in his head loose: but he hasn't any judgment; and judgment is ability. The examiners were quite right, my dear fellow; you know less than Gillingham in a way; but you know it more surely, and you can make better use of it. His work's showy and flashy: yours is solid and serviceable.'

And Gillespie spoke the truth. Gradually, as Dick got to see more of the Born Poet's method, he found Gillingham out: he discovered that the great genius was essentially a *poseur*. He posed about everything. His *rôle* in life, he said himself, was to be the typical poet: and he never forgot it. He dressed the part; he acted it: he ate and drank poetically. He looked at everything from the point of view of a budding Shakespeare, with just a dash of Shelley thrown in, and a suspicion of Matthew Arnold to give modern flavour. Add a tinge of Baudelaire, Victor Hugo, Ibsen, for cosmopolitan interest, and you have your bard complete. He was a spectator of the drama of human action, he loved to remark; he watched the poor creatures and the pretty creatures at their changeful game, doing; loving, and suffering: he saw in it all good material for his art, the raw stuff for future plays to astonish humanity. Meanwhile, he lay low at Durham College, Oxford, and let the undergraduate world deploy itself before him in simple Bacchic guise or Heracleian feats of strength and skill.

Dick saw more of Gillespie those first few terms than of any one else in college. He was a thorough good fellow, Archibald Gillespie, and he had just enough of that ballast of common-sense and knowledge of the world which was a trifle lacking to the romantic country-bred lad fresh up from Chiddingwick. He helped Dick much with his work, and went much with him on the river. And Dick worked with a will at his history all that year, and pulled an oar with the best of them: though he found time, too, to coach a fellow undergraduate going in for 'Smalls,' which increased his income by ten whole pounds, an incredible sum to him. When he thought of how hard it used to be to earn ten pounds at Mr Wells's in the High Street at Chiddingwick, no wonder Oxford seemed to him a veritable Eldorado!

In spite of hard work, however, and frequent tight places, that first term at Oxford was a genuine delight to him. Who that has known it does not look back upon his freshman year even in middle life with regretful enjoyment? Those long mornings in great lecture-rooms lighted up with dim light from stained-glass windows; those golden afternoons on the gleaming river or among the fields towards Iffley; those strolls round the leafy avenues of Christ Church walks; those loitering moments in Magdalen cloisters! What lounging in a punt under the chestnuts by the Cherwell; what spurts against the stream on the river by Godstow! All, all is delightful to the merest full-blooded boy; to Richard Plantagenet's romantic mind, stored with images of the past, 'twas a perpetual feast of fantastic pleasure.

He wrote to Mary twice a week; he would have written every day, indeed, if Mary had

allowed him; but the lady of his love more prudently remarked that Mrs Tradescant would be tempted to inquire in that case as to the name and business of her constant correspondent. He wrote her frankly all his joys and griefs; and she in return quite as frankly sympathised with him. Boy and girl as they were, it was all very pleasant. To be sure, it was understood and arranged on both sides beforehand by the high contracting parties that these letters were to be taken as written on purely friendly grounds, and as the lawyers say, 'without prejudice;' still, as time went on, they grew more and more friendly, until at last it would have required the critical eye of an expert in breach-of-promise cases to distinguish them at first sight from ordinary love letters. Indeed, just once, towards the end of term, Dick went so far as to begin one short note, 'Dearest Mary,' which was precisely what he always called her to himself in his own pleasant day-dreams; and then he had the temerity to justify his action in so many words, by pleading the precedent of this purely mental usage. But Mary promptly put a stop to such advances by severely beginning her reply, 'Dear Mr Plantagenet;' though, to be sure, she somewhat spoilt the moral effect of so stern a commencement by confessing at once in the sequel that she had headed her first draught with a frank 'Dear Dick'—and then torn it up, after all, being ashamed to send it.

When Dick read that deliciously feminine confession, consigned in blushing ink to fair white maiden note-paper, his heart gave a jump that might have been heard in Tom Quad, and his face grew as red as Mary's own when she penned it.

THE CHINA TEA-CLIPPERS.

THE crimson flag of the British merchant service has flown at the peaks of many famous ships since it was hoisted aboard the first of the Black-wall Liners; but never has that glorious bunting 'terrific burned' over a more renowned fleet of vessels than the China Tea-clippers. The little 'fruiters' which raced home from South Spain and the Western Islands with the golden products of the orange grove and the raisins of the sunny Murcian vineyards, won great fame in their day. Such names as the 'Jack o' Lantern,' 'Susan,' and 'Lady Rebow' will kindle the heart of the old sailor, and carry him back in recollection to the period of his first going to sea, when he recalls the picture of those yacht-like clippers, streaming down the bay like a flight of graceful seabirds under their widespread wings of canvas. Dainty little vessels they were, to be sure; schooner-rigged for the most part, and wonderful sailers. But they seldom went farther than a week's run from soundings, and this, together with their slender size, prevented their ever attaining the significance which attaches to the great ship, rendered majestic to the eye by her towering heights, and heroic to the mind by the length of her voyages.

The tea-trade with China was first thrown open by our war with that nation in 1842. The

Americans then possessed a magnificent fleet of sailing-ships, hailing chiefly from Boston and Baltimore, which no British vessel afloat could rival. Our ocean liners at that period were of the old frigate-built school; bluff, homely craft, very dry and comfortable to be on board of in a gale of wind, but never celebrated for their speed. The Yankees, on the other hand, were introducing the new form of clipper-building into their yards; and the vessels which, in 1845-46, they despatched from New York to the Whampoa were not to be surpassed, indeed, scarcely approached, by anything that we could send to compete against them. Then, again, by first carrying a cargo to California, which paid them something like five pounds a ton, it answered their purpose to cross to the Chinese ports, load with tea, and bring it to the Thames or Mersey at a rate which it would have ruined our shipowners at home to accept. Thus it was that for the first few years in the history of the China tea-trade the Americans practically enjoyed a monopoly in supplying the markets of the world.

But British enterprise was not very likely to sit down long under this state of things. Others were reaping the fruits which we had shed our blood in China to secure. The Navigation Laws had been repealed; Free Trade was in operation, and it seemed strange that with these great commercial advantages we could not successfully compete against the Americans. What was wanted first of all was for our shipwrights to turn out vessels that could hold their own against the Yankee ships. Brother Jonathan gave us the idea of clipper-building, and we were not above borrowing it. By way of experiment, Messrs Hall of Aberdeen constructed a large schooner on the lines of the famous Baltimore clippers, named her the 'Torrington,' and in the year 1846 sent her to engage in the coasting-trade with China. Her voyage proved such a success, that other vessels of the same class, but of greater burden, followed in quick succession. The 'Torrington' was the first of the British China clippers: the vessels which had preceded her, such as the 'Euphrates,' 'Foam,' 'John o' Gaunt,' and the 'Monarch,' were all of the type still known among sailors as 'tea-wagons.'

For quite ten years after the launch of the 'Torrington,' however, the Americans remained our masters in this particular trade. When they found that we had begun to compete with them, their builders went to work to construct the magnificent set of ships which may be described as belonging to the later Baltimore clipper school. There was nothing afloat under British bunting to rival such vessels as the 'Challenge,' 'Sea Witch,' 'Oriental,' and at least a score of others. Occasionally, one of our ships would beat a celebrated Yankee clipper; but these triumphs were so few that they merely served to accentuate the superiority of their craft over our own. For instance, there was the memorable race from Whampoa to the Thames in 1851 between the two Baltimore clippers 'Flying Cloud' and 'Bald Eagle' and the English ship 'Ganges.' The former vessels sailed three days ahead of the 'Ganges.' A great deal of excitement was created in China by the race, the Americans, from their prestige, being the universal favourites. The south-west monsoon was strong, and the 'Ganges'

made a long passage to the Sunda Strait; but, when she passed Anjer signal station, nothing had yet been seen of her rivals. She arrived in soundings on December 16th, after a passage of one hundred and eight days.

A well-known Aberdeen ship-owner who was on board at the time tells the story of the race up Channel in Lindsay's *History of Shipping*. 'On the following morning at daylight we were off Portland, well inshore and under short sail, light winds from north-east, and weather rather thick. About eight A.M. the wind freshened and the haze cleared away, which showed two large and lofty ships two or three miles to windward of us. They proved to be our American friends, having their stripes and stars flying for a pilot. Captain Deas at once gave orders to hoist his signals for a pilot also; and as by this time several cutters were standing out from Weymouth, the "Ganges," being farthest inshore, got her pilot first on board. I said that I would land in the pilot boat and go to London by rail, and would report the ship that night or next morning at Austin Friars (she was consigned to my firm). The breeze had considerably freshened before I got on board the pilot cutter, when the "Ganges" filled away on the port tack, and, contrary to his wont, for he was a very cautious man, the captain crowded on all small sails. The Americans lost no time, and were after him, and I had three hours' view of as fine an ocean race as I can wish to see. The wind being dead ahead, the ships were making short tacks. The "Ganges" showed herself to be the most weatherly of the three; and the gain on every tack inshore was obvious; neither did she seem to carry away behind in forereaching. She arrived off Dungeness six hours before the other two, and was in the London Docks twenty-four hours before the first, and thirty-six hours before the last of her opponents.'

It was much about this period that the famous China house of Jardine, Matheson, & Co. caused to be constructed for them a ship with lines quite as fine as those of any American craft afloat, and of stouter scantling. She was named the 'Stornoway,' and was the first of the far-famed race of Aberdeen clippers. The 'Chrysolite,' a ship of very similar type, was launched shortly afterwards. But these vessels were scarcely equal to holding their own against the Baltimore clippers, few of which were less than double their tonnage. Our shipbuilders, however, were experimenting in the right direction, and gaining in confidence. Their next attempt was a vessel called the 'Cairngorm;' she proved herself not only a swift sailer, but a staunch ship, and by delivering her cargo in superior order, speedily obtained a preference over her American competitors. The English ship-owners began to grow hopeful again. In April 1853 the 'Joseph Fletcher' arrived in the Thames, one hundred and four days from Shanghai. This was the swiftest passage yet made by a British tea-clipper, and created a good deal of enthusiasm.

But it was not until the year 1856, when the 'Lord of the Isles,' one of the earliest iron vessels built in this country, raced home from Foochow against two of the most famous Baltimore clippers of the age, and beat them both by some days, that our ships re-established their ascendancy in a trade which the Americans had long been

bidding fair to monopolise. From this time the stately Yankee craft began to disappear one by one from off the seas, followed by the regretful memories of many British jacks, who had loved the honour of rivalling such ships and such sailors as those which dashed across the oceans under the stripes and stars during the two middle decades of the century. The revolution of the wheel of fortune was slow, but complete. Between the years 1845 and 1855 British merchants were chartering American clippers to bring freights of tea from China to supply the London markets: not more than twenty years later, nearly the whole of the tea imported into the United States was carried by English ships. That we drove the Americans out of the trade by our own superiority no one would be so foolish as to affirm. Had they chosen to continue competing with us, there is no doubt that they would have sent forth ships quite capable of giving a good account to the most celebrated of our own clippers. As seamen, we at least admit them equal to ourselves; as shipbuilders they taught us many valuable lessons.

In 1860 we had got the great bulk of the China tea-trade into our hands again, and a fleet of famous vessels was gradually springing up in this traffic. There was the 'Challenger,' specially built by Mr Richard Green, ten years earlier, to compete with the Yankee clipper 'Challenge,' which she was most successful in doing; the 'Falcon,' 'Kate Carnie,' 'Crest of the Wave,' 'Spray of the Ocean,' and several others whose names are quite historic in the annals of our mercantile marine. But by the time our Yankee neighbours had ceased to be rivals to us in this particular trade, a keen competition had sprung up among our own ship-owners. Freights in the tea-trade usually ruled very high; but in addition to this, extra inducements were held out to the owners of swift ships in the shape of racing premiums, and heavy prizes for the earliest deliveries. The result was that China clipper-sailing, stimulated by such strong commercial considerations, grew into a sort of mania: the builders were put to it to produce vessels which nothing afloat could touch, and as a consequence they launched a set of ships of such beauty, and possessed of such extraordinary sailing qualities, that the world had never seen their like before. Steele of Greenock and Hood of Aberdeen were particularly famous for the clippers they turned out. The first-named firm it was that, in 1865, sent forth the 'Sir Lancelot,' the pride and wonder of the whole race of tea-clippers.

This ship went manned by a crew of thirty hands, commanded by Captain Richard Robinson. It was in the season of 1869 that the 'Sir Lancelot' made the swiftest passage ever recorded of any tea-clipper. She left the anchorage at Foochow on the 17th of July with a full cargo of tea for London; and on the 10th of October sighted the Lizard, and entered the English Channel. Four days later she was berthed in the West India Docks, having completed a voyage of nearly 15,000 miles in eighty-nine days, and maintained an average of over one hundred and sixty miles a day through all the vicissitudes of weather which every ship meets with upon a long ocean passage.

This voyage of the 'Sir Lancelot' was ten days

quicker than those of the 'Serica,' 'Ariel,' and 'Taeping' in the great homeward race from Foochow of 1866, and eight days quicker than the celebrated passages of the 'Spindrift' and 'Ariel' in 1868. The nearest approaches to it are the runs made by the clippers 'Thermopylæ,' 'Titania,' and 'Halloween.' The first-named ship came home from Foochow to London in 1869, sailing about five weeks before the 'Sir Lancelot.' She was making her maiden voyage, upon the outward passage of which she had covered the distance between Melbourne and the Thames in sixty days. She then crossed to Shanghai in twenty-eight days, the quickest run on record. Leaving Foochow shortly afterwards, this wonderful vessel accomplished the voyage to London in ninety-one days. The 'Thermopylæ' was one of the Aberdeen clippers; she was about sixty tons larger than the 'Sir Lancelot,' although built very much upon the lines of that vessel. The 'Titania,' a Greenock-built ship of a less burden than either of the two foregoing vessels, made a famous passage in the race of 1871. Perhaps none of the China clipper-matches excited more interest than this particular one, because of the notoriety of the ships engaged in it. The 'Thermopylæ' left Shanghai on June 22d; the 'Forward Ho' sailed from the same port two days later; and the 'Undine' on the 27th. On the 1st of July the 'Titania' left the anchorage at Foochow, by which time the first of her competitors had got the start by the whole length of the China Sea, and the other two were many leagues ahead. Notwithstanding this, the 'Titania' arrived in the Thames on the 2d of October after a passage of ninety-three days, the 'Thermopylæ' coming in on the 6th, the 'Undine' on the 16th, and the 'Forward Ho' on the 20th of the same month. The 'Halloween' was another of the swiftest of these famous ocean racers. In 1874 she made a memorable passage: eighty-nine days from Shanghai to Deal. But this extraordinarily quick voyage is perhaps partly attributable to the fact of her having sailed at a time of the year when the monsoon was strong and favourable, whereas the usual period for the leaving of the China fleet was between the months of May and August, during which the monsoon is adverse. The 'Halloween' was one of the very few China clippers ever built upon the Thames. She was launched at Greenwich in 1870, and was a most beautiful model, of nine hundred and twenty tons burden.

The China clippers were a fine school for seamen. The greatest dexterity of navigation was called for in sailing these crack ships. If a man were reckless, and permitted his desire to 'carry-on' to get the better of his judgment, he stood to dismast his ship and hopelessly ruin his chances of a smart passage. Mishaps were frequent. Studding-sail booms and skysail poles were carried away with as little compunction as a sailor would feel in snapping the stem of a clay pipe. The 'Cutty Sark,' whilst racing almost neck to neck with the redoubtable 'Thermopylæ' in 1872 lost her rudder off the Cape; yet she contrived to arrive in the Thames only a week behind her competitor. Occasionally one of the most notorious of the racers would make an inordinately long passage. The 'Challenge' in 1869 was one hundred and forty-eight days in

coming home from Shanghai, having been exceptionally unfortunate in the weather she met with. In the previous year she had occupied one hundred and thirty-one days in making the same passage, the 'Forward Ho' one hundred and twenty-eight days, and the 'Titania' one hundred and twenty-six days. This was the season (1868) when one of the greatest of all these ocean regattas was run. Between May 28th and May 30th, six ships started—five from Foochow, and one from Whampoa. They were the 'Lahloo,' 'Taeping,' 'Ariel,' 'Spindrift,' 'Sir Lancelot,' and 'Undine.' Never was there a more exciting match, saving, perhaps, the race of 1871. Heavy wagers were laid, and the progress of the ships most eagerly watched as they passed the various signal stations. Then they were lost sight of for a long while; until one fine morning from the summit of the Portland cliffs were seen two stately-looking vessels in the offing, sweeping up Channel under a prodigious spread of white wings. 'The first of the China clippers!' went the cry; and the news was wired to London and circulated among the excited brokers of Mincing Lane before even the numbers of the distant ships had been made out. They proved to be the 'Ariel' and the 'Spindrift,' ninety-five days from Foochow; and forty-eight hours later they were both snugly berthed in the London Docks.

But from the day in 1863 when the steamship 'Robert Lowe,' of 1250 tons, commanded by Captain Congalton, left Hankow loaded with teas for London, the China clipper was doomed. She held her own for at least twelve years after this; but her knell had been sounded by the screech of the 'Robert Lowe's' siren, and her disappearance was only a matter of time. A few of these beautiful vessels still survive, but they are no more than the relics of a vanished type. When the last of them goes, she will carry with her the tender recollections of a race of sailors who are rapidly growing fewer; and as the old salt turns from the shadowy memory of some gallant spectacle of swelling canvas and rushing hull to the sight of the modern wall-sided steamboat, thrashing along deep with the first of the season's teas, he may well be excused for heaving a sigh in lament of the China clippers.

BABY JOHN.*

CHAPTER III.—BABY.

'Where did you come from, Baby dear?'

'Out of the everywhere into here.'

'Where did you get your eyes so blue?'

'Out of the sky as I came through.'—G. MACDONALD.

IN the old days before Lucy was married—not such very old days either even now—she used to talk of all she should do when Alice came to stop with her in the beautiful house that her rich husband was going to give her; and the two girls would laugh, and try to imagine, what was really inconceivable to them both, being waited on by servants, and not having to put their hands to anything. Alice, to be sure, had sighed as often as she laughed, having a foreboding of the separation this marriage would make between them; but now, here it was actually come to

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pass, only far more delightful than the brightest and wildest anticipations.

No fine servants to awe and trouble them, no critical eyes or ears to note what they did and what they said, not even the grand husband to throw the shadow of his presence on their sunshine; there they were, those two together, in what seemed to Alice splendid luxury, though Lucy, more accustomed to her surroundings by this time, used to try to convince her that it was nothing like so fine as the drawing-room; and she used to incite Alice to steal down and have a peep just to see the pictures and the big looking-glasses and the piano and all. The nurse did not stay very long after Lucy began to recover; but though it was delightful to be alone, they had both grown so fond of her that they quite regretted her leaving, and Lucy cried when she kissed her, and said, 'Ain't she a dear? bless her!'

The doctor came every day, but he was so kind and so pleased to see Mrs Craddock slowly but surely recovering her strength, that his visits were quite a pleasure.

And then it seemed to Alice that everything that heart could wish was to be arrived at by just ringing the bell; and there was a smiling, rosy-faced, country girl who brought up what was wanted, who was not so alarming as the tall parlour-maid, who, however, now was very different when she came in contact with Alice, having had impressed upon her by master, doctor, and nurse, that it was as much as her place was worth to make herself unpleasant to the person who had seemed to call back Mrs Craddock from the very gates of death.

I will not undertake to say that she did not vent her feelings freely in the kitchen at the indignity of having to wait on a common, low, mill-girl, she 'as was used to gentle-folks, and only came to Mrs Craddock just to oblige, as she wouldn't stop beyond her six months were it ever so, though they went on their bended knees and doubled her wages.'

But Jessie, the under-housemaid, had none of these dignified feelings, nor had she been so long in service as to be shocked at sundry little fancies in the sickroom which Travers, the parlour-maid, would have known at once were not such as ladies, even in their moments of greatest unbending, gave way to, such as a bit of fresh watercress for tea—I think they called it 'crease,' and spoke of having it 'to' their tea—or even twopennyworth of periwinkles, over which, I am sorry to say, the doctor surprised the two girls.

Though he shook his head doubtfully over the desirability or digestibility of such food, he was yet fain to condone it for the sake of the peal of laughter that greeted his ears as he opened the door, and the bright look on Lucy's pretty, delicate face as she held up in triumph on a large pin, for Alice's inspection, a curly, black body which she had successfully extracted from its shell.

But I have not mentioned the greatest and most entirely satisfactory delight of that bedroom at Apsley Villa. In all their anticipations of Alice's visits to Lucy after her marriage, they had never included in the delightful programme a real, live, little baby, Lucy's very own baby, and so by natural consequences more than half Alice's; the dearest baby, with tiny hands and

wonderful little feet, with toes like dainty shells, and a small face, over which the two girls pored with an admiration that was almost worship.

Baby had a soft down over the head that was a delight to touch, and of which Alice and Lucy talked as if it were abundant tresses that might be plaited or curled or otherwise arranged according to the latest fashion—in fact, it was just such a baby, neither more nor less, as the many thousands of little babies born every day, as seen by their mothers' eyes.

The two girls wanted no other occupation or interest all day and all night long; but the baby did not undertake to afford active amusement for more than two or three hours out of the twenty-four, being a placid creature and much addicted to peaceful slumbers, which his mother and Alice reluctantly agreed were better in the pretty bassinette than in the arms of either of them.

The only time during the day when a sense of uneasiness or constraint came into the pleasant atmosphere of the room was in the evening, when the door-bell rang and they knew the master of the house had returned. He went off too early in the morning to disturb his wife, though as a matter of fact she was always awake, and gave a little sigh of relief when she heard the door close after him. He did not come in in the middle of the day, but went to his mother's for his luncheon; but in the evening, when he came in from the mill, he always came up to his wife's room for a few minutes, and Alice went away and left them together.

Lucy might have been quite gay and like her old self all the afternoon, but as soon as his ring came at the door, her spirits seemed to die away, and she began to feel languid and tired, and her voice sounded dull and weak. These interviews were never very long, and Alice fancied there was as much relief in the step that went downstairs as in the face she found lying back among the pillows.

At first Lucy said nothing about her husband to Alice, and Alice asked no questions; but as the days went on, and Lucy was gradually regaining strength, and each day saw some slight step towards convalescence, which must needs put an end to this happy, peaceful existence, she began to talk of those eighteen months of married life, of which Alice knew so little, and to fret over the prospect of going back to what it had been before.

'I don't want never to get well, Alice,' she would say; 'no, nor he don't wish it neither. When I was so bad, before you came, and made sure I was going to die, I used to say to myself, well, anyhow, I'll be out of my way.'

'Weren't he kind to you?'

'Well, he weren't so to say unkind. I sometimes thought I'd a deal rather that he were. Don't you mind, Alice, that Sarah Giles, whose husband knocked her about so—he were a brute—and yet, when they'd made it up after one of them breezes, there she'd be setting on his knee with a black eye maybe, as he'd given her, and she'd fight the first that said a word against him. Well, mine was sick to death of me, and just put up with me the best he could. I don't know why ever he wanted to marry me for. I'd never have thought of it. Why couldn't he a-let me be?'

'Were the old lady nasty to you?'

'No, she'd a-liked to be, but he wouldn't have that, and we didn't see much of her. When I was ill, she came and sat up with me one night, but I'd a deal rather have been left alone. She kep' sighing and shaking her head, and muttering to herself, for she's terrible pious, but I knew she'd rather by a long way I died; and she said once when she gave me a drink, as we did ought to be resigned, if it was the will of the Lord. But there! I couldn't help thinking it's not so easy to be resigned when one's real fond of any one. You wouldn't a-been resigned, would you, my darling? not easy like, would you? And she were a bit too willing to think it were the will of the Lord to take me out of her son's way, as if it weren't never the will of the Lord to be kind and let one live. But there! I'm beginning to think I'd be as resigned as she is if I was to go now we've had this nice little time together, you and me, as must come to an end sooner or later. Oh, Alice, don't you wish it could go on just as 'tis for ever, just you and me and baby, baby and you and me? But I can't a-bear to leave him. I'd like to take him with me, bless him! him and you, if we could all go together. There! he's wakin'! Give him to his mother.'

The mere thought of recovery retarded its progress: the doctor's suggestion that she should come down-stairs for an hour sent up her temperature; and a proposal that, if the weather continued so bright and mild, she might go for a drive before long, took away her appetite, and made her languid and depressed.

I think the doctor divined the cause of these relapses, and felt sorry for the girl who clung so to the old friend of former years, and yet he felt that the situation could not be prolonged indefinitely, and that, as soon as Mrs Craddock was sufficiently recovered to go back to ordinary life, Alice's presence at Apsley Villa could not fail to be an embarrassment.

For Alice—even though she wore her Sunday dress every day, and with tidy collar and cuffs and smooth hair, did not look so rough and wild as she did on the first night of her arrival—would never look like anything but a mill-girl, nor would she if she had consented to Lucy's constant entreaty that she would take some of the dresses hanging in the wardrobe and alter them to fit herself. She absolutely refused to take anything, though it gave her continual amusement to explore the treasures that wardrobe contained, and spread out the dresses about the room, and discuss the colour and material and style, and the occasions on which each had been worn, giving Lucy for the first time some enjoyment in her various possessions.

Lucy, like most pretty girls, had been fond of a bit of finery in the old days, when a new ribbon meant sometimes going without butter on her bread, and a smart wing for her hat had to be saved up for for weeks; so Alice was quite surprised to find how little pleasure all these pretty things seemed to have given her, and how she hardly seemed to remember all the trinkets that lay in her drawer in the jeweller's boxes and pink cotton wool, looking as if they had hardly been opened since they were given; while a little trumpery gilt locket with A on it, which Alice had given her once on her birthday, was

treasured, and had evidently been worn on a little real gold chain which belonged by rights to a handsome pendant set with pearls.

'I wouldn't lose that,' Lucy said, 'were it ever so! I dropped it one day on the stairs, and my! didn't I make a racket till it was found. I remember so well the day you gave it me, and how it took me all by surprise, you kept it so close. You *was* sly, and pretended you hadn't a penny to spare for a present, and you was so sorry; and I was quite took in, and said, "Never mind, I didn't want no present;" and there! when I woke in the morning, was the little box on the pillow between you and me, and you pretending to be asleep, only I could hear you smiling in a whisper.'

Lucy had learned to talk better English than this during her married life; but when she was with Alice, she fell back into the old forms of speech, for there were no critical ears to listen, or eyebrows to rise, or mouths to twitch with irritable or patient endurance.

It was the doctor who suggested the idea that a change was what Mrs Craddock wanted to set her up again; and proposed she should go to Beston, a little place on the east coast.

'Of course, you couldn't get away from business,' he said to Mr Craddock. 'Why don't you get that girl to go with her, and take care of her and the baby? She'll want a good deal of care for some time yet, and that girl is a capital nurse, and has a head on her shoulders, which is not such a common thing among women.'

So one evening, when Alice came back into the room after a longer than usual interview between the husband and wife, she found Lucy, not as she expected tired and depressed, but with bright eyes and eager face; not stretched limp and languid on the sofa, with her face turned away from the light, but standing at the open wardrobe, reaching for a box on the top shelf, to see if a certain hat would do to wear at the seaside.

'Oh, Alice, only to think! it's too good to be true, you and me and baby—only us three—he's not going, he can't leave the mill. When he first began to talk of it, I thought he meant to go too, and I felt so bad, just as if it would be the death of me; but when he said he thought you and me might manage if he couldn't get away, I could almost have given him a kiss, I was so pleased, or got up and danced for joy. You've never seen the sea, Alice, and you'll love it, that you will, and so shall I. He took me to the sea once, but I didn't care a bit about it; there wasn't any one to talk to, or say what I thought of it, and I was fretting to come back and see you, or anyhow have a chance of seeing you. But only to think of you and me all to ourselves. We're to have lodgings; it will be just like old times, only no horrid old mill, and we shall do just what we like all day long, and have baby to ourselves.'

That was the culmination of everything, heightened by the dread that had been growing as she grew better, that a regular nurse would have to be engaged for her darling—a grand, frightening nurse like Travers, who would take the baby clean out of her hands, and keep him shut up in a nursery where his mother would only be admitted on sufferance, and who would absorb all the exquisite delights of washing, and feeding, and rocking him to sleep.

'Do you think he noticed as you didn't care to go as long as he was going?'

Mr Craddock was always spoken of as 'he' between the girls; the only other he who was ever mentioned being baby, and the personal pronoun in his case was spoken in such a different tone, that there was never any mistake as to who was meant.

'Noticed? Not he. Bless your heart, he don't care!'

But 'he,' going heavily down-stairs to his solitary dinner, said to himself, 'She will be glad to get away from me, poor child!'

DREAMS AND PERCEPTIVE ILLUSIONS.

DREAMS form a world of their own, with no discoverable links binding them to the other facts of human experience. The very name suggests something far distant and shrouded in mystery; to the memory phantoms and apparitions are conjured up; the sleeper feels he has been the actor in scenes no less real than those of waking moments although the sights and sequence of events are of an unknown realm. The mind not drawing its knowledge from without will be free to follow the wildest play of the imagination, and will reflect the individual's temperament and mental history. The interpretation of the different sensations will depend on the sleeper's character, for during sleep every man has a world of his own, although when awake we all have a common world.

Authorities differ as to whether the nerve-centres are ever so lowered as to break the continuity of our conscious life. While the metaphysician holds that the soul as a spiritual body can never be inactive, the psychologist and physiologist teach the doctrine of deep unconscious sleep. Against the theory of unbroken mental activity it is urged that many never dream. This objection may be answered by remembering that our sleeping life is so different from our waking life that what occurs in the former may readily be forgotten in the latter. The fact that on being suddenly roused most persons are found to be dreaming, is probably due to the dream being developed during the moments of awakening. A man may resolve to awake at a certain hour, and succeed in doing so, but his success is mainly owing to his being in a state of mental perturbation which renders him liable to be disturbed by slight stimuli. The truth appears to be that a minimum degree of intensity is always present in the nervous substance, and this is especially the rule where we lose all recollection of the dream. We awake in the night, the remembrance is clear; in the morning, all trace has disappeared.

The brain is not only the organ of thought, but it equally stimulates and directs our whole body during our waking moments. In sleep, however, the brain is relatively torpid, and the movements taking place then almost entirely depend upon the spinal cord and peripheral ganglia, the brain retaining its conscious and automatic actions, although losing its stimulating

power. By physiologists the spinal cord is regarded under a twofold aspect: it is a conductor, and transmits messages to the brain, and brings back the motor excitation; as a nerve-centre it is the seat of reflex action, and these reflex actions are automatic, unconscious, and co-ordinated. Reflex actions are movements in parts of the body brought about by sensations coming from that part and acting through the intermediary of some nerve-centre other than the brain. The reflex act is physiological, and differs from the intelligent act, which is psychological, in the fact that the former is unconscious and the latter conscious. Some authorities state that 'where there can be no consciousness because the brain is wanting, there is, in spite of appearances, only mechanism.' Others observe: 'Where there is clearly selection, reflection, and physical action, there must also be consciousness in spite of appearances.'

Dreams are classified with hallucinations, as they have no basis of actual impression for their starting-point; whereas illusions have, and the parallelism between dreams and insanity has been pointed out by Kant, who remarks 'that the madman is a dreamer awake.'

The day-dreams and castles in the air built by every one of an imaginative nature are far more extravagant than the false beliefs of the insane; with the sane however, the dream scenery does not last long and the stimulus of light and sound soon dissolves it. A nightmare gives us a very good idea of what an insane delusion is like. The ancient Greeks believed that their dreams were pictures laid bare to the eye of the soul by some of the gods. The African savage holds that in dreaming his higher self then travels to unfamiliar lands; the North American Indian believes that man possesses two souls, and during sleep one remains in the body, while the other rambles at pleasure through unknown regions; the Dyak, that there is one soul which is absent during sleep, and that the dreams represent what is seen by that soul in its wanderings. Others believe that dreams are sent by the good spirit presiding over our destiny to warn us of an impending danger; and many to-day hold this view, although modern science, by careful study of the close connection existing between mental life and bodily operations, has attempted to solve the problem by proving that our dream-imagery is mostly drawn from our every-day experiences. The power which cements into a coherent mass our disconnected dream-images is called 'creative fancy,' and this is said to be derived from the fantastical force of the soul.

Internal or external nervous stimulation is a great source of dreams. Scherner relates the case of a love-sick youth who was allowed to whisper his name in the ear of his obdurate mistress whilst she slept, with the result that she contracted the habit of dreaming of him, which led to a happy change in her feeling towards him.

A cold foot suggests an image of ice and snow. Moonbeams will sometimes lead those of a highly religious temperament to believe that they are visited by angels. Over-eating at supper will cause dreams of a terrifying nature. The sensation of being grasped by some invisible being is due to the sleeper seizing his own arm.

When we attempt to flee from some approaching danger, and cannot, the limbs are lying in an awkward position, and a certain amount of muscular strain is present. The horrible feeling of falling down from some height is caused by the involuntary extension of the sleeper's foot. Change of pressure on the retina will develop lovely plains bedecked with beautiful flowers and tenanted by birds of gorgeous plumage. Where we believe we are being crushed by some great weight, the cause is most likely due either to the closeness of the air or the mouth being covered with the bedclothes. The throbbing of an aching tooth has been mistaken for the stride of an avenging giant. If our skin is acting abnormally, and at the same time there is a subjective visual stimulus, the resultant is a combination of both; and we imagine there is an insect creeping over us. If a tale rivets our attention it tends to awaken a vivid recollection of the facts disclosed, and may thus easily lead to a dream. It is not only one's own daily experiences which supply the ground-work of our dreams, but the thoughts communicated by others to us are also woven into the scenery of our sleeping life, and this is advanced to explain the peculiar fact of our dreaming of persons or places of which we have no individual experience.

I am inclined to believe, however, that in dream-imagery the delicate threads and shadowy strands of hereditary memory, which in our waking moments are prevented from acting by the energy of the coherent groups of impressions received from the world by our sense organs, now make known their concealed power. Strange forms are visible; events not known to us in waking life are seen to follow one another in regular order, and careful reflection will not bring to light any link that will connect them with our waking hours.

We have most of us at times felt a sense of familiarity on visiting a new locality, although we cannot recall when, where, or under what circumstances we have before seen it. Is it too much to ask one to believe that in such a case our memory is restoring some fragments of our past ancestral life?—perhaps of a time even as remote as when our ancestors used small lozenge-shaped arrow-heads and a hatchet made of flint!—a period when the mighty Mammoth and the Cave-bear roamed in almost undisturbed freedom through the primeval forests!

Perceptive Illusions are false or, rather, mistaken perceptions of the senses: something is seen or heard; but that which the person thinks he sees or hears is not real but false. An hallucination is also a false perception of the senses, but is entirely subjective and is not due to any excitation from the outer world. Thus, when a man sees a stump of a tree and mistakes it for an apparition, he is suffering from an illusion; but if there is no stump, and he pictures to himself the ghost, he is the victim of an hallucination. I am not here discussing the truth of the theory of the idealist, who looks upon those who believe in an external world as existing and not depending on our perception of it, as suffering from a grand illusion of sense. The real, I hold, is the truth, as it exists for average man, free from individual bias and special circumstances favour-

able to error. When a person says of an object that it is a tree, we know what he means, whether it involves an external fact or is illusory. Optical illusions, which are caused by the reflection and refraction of light, are not peculiar to the individual, but arise in all when placed under similar conditions. A stick half immersed in water always looks broken, simply on account of the bending of the rays of light.

As far as the appearance of images and their mode of action are concerned, the waking state is similar to the dreaming. In the former condition the images are not objective; they appear and disappear by the immediate association of ideas, time and space being modified as they are in dreams; but whereas in dreaming the things seen are supposed to have a real existence, in waking they remain ideas. It occasionally happens, however, that these ideas do not remain as mere thoughts, but become so intense that they are held as real; and this result is more likely to take place when we abandon ourselves to a deep train of thought, and being absorbed are by our inattention unconscious; and the same condition of mind is established as in dreaming. When thinking of persons or places they are often imaged before us with such distinctness that we are startled. These vivid but momentary hallucinations are not morbid, for they are seen by those who are sane but happen to be strongly excited by anger, sorrow, or hope. Dante, Milton, Goethe and others gifted with an intense imagination, unconsciously regarded as real the characters they created. Talma declared that he was able to transform his audience into skeletons, thereby giving greater force to his acting; and Abercromby relates the case of a man who could, by strongly fixing his attention, call up any vision with such vividness that it seemed real. Thus, then, there is no hard and fast line between sleeping and waking.

All forms of illusions are due to carelessly performed synthesis, as when a man on a hot summer's day looks in a stream and 'sees' the delicious coolness, thus performing an act of imaginative construction. To the impression which his sense of sight gives him he adds what prior experience has bequeathed to his mind. 'In perception,' says Sully, 'the material of sensation is acted on by the mind, which embodies in its present attitude all the results of its past growth.'

The state called 'hypnagogic hallucination' is that in which the images appear to be real although the subject is still partially awake. Every thought then assumes body and form, and when awakening from a vivid dream, the figures of our dream are sometimes seen moving and projected against the wall.

The following is a good example of an illusion. 'On a small three-legged table beside my bed,' says Vignole, 'there was a little oval mirror, on which hung a woman's cap, which fell partly over the glass; there was also an easy-chair, on which I had thrown my shirt before going to bed, while my shoes were as usual on the floor. I awoke towards morning, and as I chanced to look around the large room in the uncertain light of a night-light which was almost burnt out, my eyes fell upon the easy-

chair. Immediately I seemed to see a head above it, corresponding to the mirror, and a vague confused image of a person seated there. . . . On further examination, the face and person stood out more clearly, and the features became more distinct the longer I looked. Finally I saw before me a man dressed in white, of an athletic form, sitting on the easy-chair, and looking fixedly at me. . . . The image appeared to me so real and distinct, that on rising from the bed and gradually approaching it, its form did not vanish even when I was near enough to touch the object which produced it. An analysis showed that the features, limbs, and position corresponded in every point with the folds and relative position of the articles of dress which had formed it.'

A like mistake in an imaginative individual would lead to the firm conviction that an apparition had been seen.

To be the victim of an illusion is, according to some, a sufficient reason to be excluded from the circle of sane men; but the careful observer knows that this is not true, for momentary fatigue or relaxation of attention will prevent the perceptions being rational; and it is not only in the undisciplined mind of the savage that we find illusions prominent, but also in the cultivated intelligence of civilised communities. Most of us, when we have allowed our imagination free play, have detected images of animals in the clouds; and it is no unfamiliar experience to be called upon to observe likenesses to the human form in mountains and rocks: these occupations are favourite ones with the insane. The explanation is that there is a tendency to regard any object of perception as subjective and causative, and the mind, which is unconsciously exercised, constructs a resemblance of the image already impressed on it. All faint sensations are liable to be wrongly classified, and it is in these hazy impressions that most illusions take their rise. Thus, when looking through a window at some distant object, a fly on the pane may be mistaken for a bird. When there is an echo, we sometimes fancy our call is answered by some one else, and this is because, by a process of suggestion, the second sound brings before us the image of a second shouter. Cold and smooth surfaces frequently appear to be wet, and this is due to the confusion of two impressions when near each other, wetness being a compound sensation, consisting of touch and temperature; as the feeling is caused in the majority of cases by surfaces moistened by a cold liquid, we speak of it as a sensation of wetness.

If a train is travelling quickly, and we watch the apparent motion of the landscape, when we look at some stationary object, as the carpet, it seems to move in the contrary direction, this being due, according to Helmholtz, to the tendency of the sense organs to go on doing what has already been done, and that while we fancy we are looking steadfastly at the carpet we are in reality moving the eye over the surface. On looking at the stormy clouds on a moonlight night it is the moon that seems to scud along; and it is only when we fix our gaze on her that we observe that she is stationary. Wundt suggests that experience has made it far easier for us to think of small objects like

the moon moving rapidly than of large masses like the clouds.

If a nervous stimulation is continued for a lengthened period, it ceases to have any effect: the noise of a mill is not heard after a time, and perfect silence is the result. A man who has had his leg amputated frequently has some sensation arising which he refers to the lost member, and this is due to sensation arising at the sensory centre, and not by excitation of the peripheral fibre. If we hit the ulnar nerve at the elbow, we feel the tingling in the fingers, and not at the seat of injury.

The imitation of solidity and depth in painting is a curious illustration of the mode of production of illusions. Some pictures will give the eye a representation of a scene in which the objects have the distinctness of proximity with the magnitude of distance. According to Helmholtz, a picture representing a Bedouin's white garment in brilliant sunshine will, when seen in a fairly lit gallery, have a degree of luminosity reaching only to about one-thirtieth of that of the actual object; whereas a painting representing marble ruins illuminated by moonlight would in the same gallery have a luminosity ten to twenty thousand times greater than the reality. The observer does not, however, notice these great differences, for his imagination, which displaces conscious sensation, is held captive by the vivid representation. 'The mystery of the process, however,' says Sully, 'greatly disappears when it is remembered that what we call a conscious "sensation" is really compounded of a result of sensory stimulation, and a result of central reaction, of a purely passive impression and the mental activity attending to this and classing it. This being so, a sensation may be modified by anything exceptional in the mode of central reaction of the moment.' When we see the eye in a portrait following the spectator as he moves, the trick is due to the painting being a flat projection and not a solid, so that wherever the observer stands it presents the front view of the object represented.

Permanent traces of familiar experiences are left on the mind, and thus a clever draughtsman can with a few rough lines indicate the face of any well-known individual; for the mind of the spectator will, at the slight external suggestion, supply the mental image. At the theatre, if the acting is good, there is a cumulative effect; and towards the end of the play the illusion becomes most marked, for we have come to see what purposes to represent an actual series of events, and by anticipation the mind becomes slightly excited, and emotion is the great disturber of intellectual operations. When two discontinuous stimulations follow each other closely, the effect is that they appear continuous: in conjuring, if the observer is specially asked to note two successive actions separated by a very narrow interval of time, to him it will appear as if they were continuous. From this fact, and from the attention being bribed beforehand by vivid expectation, the eye fails to see the slightest movements which would have given the clue to the performance of the trick.

Healthy mental life is so nearly related to abnormal mental life, that in different ways our slight illusions frequently lead to hallucinations

almost as well marked as those occurring in insanity; but when the mind is normal, by the corrective effect of reflections, the illusions are fugitive; whereas in abnormal states certain false ideas become fixed and persistent by the suspension of judgment and reflection. If we habitually allow our imagination to become overheated, the best of us are liable to illusions; but if we live in a healthy atmosphere, and keep free from mental excitement, we can look upon the occasional failure of the mechanism of the mind as an inseparable accompaniment of its general efficiency.

A PAIR OF GRAYS.

ONE terribly cold winter's morning, Ivan Ivanovitch, Chief of Police, was walking up and down his comfortably furnished office, apparently deep in thought; and not very pleasant thought either, to judge from the dark frown which disfigured his usually handsome face, and the occasionally angry stamp he gave with his foot. It was not often that the suave polite Ivan allowed himself to show any indications that his plans had not turned out to his entire satisfaction. No! he was far too politic for that; otherwise, he would not have stood in the high position he did at present, of chief of police in N—. His income amounting to many thousand roubles a year, possessed of unbounded influence, allied through marriage to some of the first Russian families, respected by his equals, regarded with trembling awe by his inferiors, what more could a man wish for?

But listen! Once during the winter, the Governor of N— was accustomed to hold a grand reception, which was attended by the élite of society, the highest civil and military officials, the foreign diplomatic corps, in short by all the rank and beauty that N— could boast. Up the gaily-decorated sledges would dash over the crisp hard snow, the silver trappings of the horses glittering in the sun, the occupants smiling and nodding as they sat wrapped to their eyes in splendid furs—all smiling and nodding except Ivan Ivanovitch. And yet his sledge was one of the handsomest and most admired; his pair of glossy coal-black horses not to be matched in beauty or swiftness by any of those which they passed so triumphantly on the road. But Ivan knew that presently the sound of other sledge-bells would be heard, their music ringing out in the clear cold air, and the loveliest pair of grays would come dashing by, leaving him, the great man, far behind, and pulling up at the stately entrance, amid general exclamations of wonder and admiration.

This is the vision constantly before his eyes. Why had not fate assigned to him those splendid grays? But fate or no fate, by fair means or foul, those grays he must and would obtain before the next reception, now only one week distant. Never did anything appear more improbable. His rival, a rich land-owner, whose estate lay some miles from the town, had refused all offers, even the most exorbitant prices. Take them by force he could not, by stealth still less. They were known too generally. He was at his wits' end. And so he paced up and down his luxuri-

ously furnished room, revolving in his mind all the different schemes he had thought of during the last few days, only to give them reluctantly up as hopeless and impossible.

The office of the 'Chief of Police' formed part of a huge building situated just outside the town—not a cheerful place to look at; its windows barred with iron; the great heavy doors only opening an instant to swing back, with a dull clang, cruelly suggestive of hopelessness to those within. Even the bright winter's sun, as he shone on strong bolt and bar, regardless of all the terrible misery and despair those walls enclosed, failed to give any appearance of cheerfulness to the place.

But he shone directly into the room where stood, fuming and impatient, the man in whose hands lay the keys of this 'living tomb,' on whose word depended the life and liberty of its inmates, enticing him with its warm rays to look out for a moment on the clear cold day. And indirectly those same warm rays brought liberty and life to one who had despaired of both.

Seconds grew into minutes, minutes into hours, and still Ivan stood by the window, till the darkening twilight warned him that if he did not bestir himself, his last idea, the last chance of attaining his cherished object, would fail him for ever.

The next day the whole population of N— were thrown into a state of wildest terror and confusion, for S—, the notorious burglar, who had only been captured with the greatest difficulty and danger, had somehow managed to effect his escape during the night.

It was a terribly cold night, the thermometer registering many degrees below zero,* the huge icicles—some of them measuring as much as one or two feet long—hanging from the trees, the trees themselves looking like spectres in the black darkness. Not a night for man or beast to be out. So thought at least a man as he trudged steadily on through a dense pine forest, his heavy tread leaving scarcely any impression on the hard snow. He was wrapped in a sheepskin cloak such as is usually worn by the peasants, and his fur cap was pulled well over his ears, almost concealing the upper part of his face. His rough beard and long straggling black hair were encrusted with ice, and over his shoulders, slung on a stout stick, he carried two large stone bottles. Long and patiently had he continued his way, without turning to right or left, without meeting a single human being.

The moon had now risen, her clear cold beams turning that dark forest into a veritable fairyland. Not a bare branch or twig was to be seen; not a breath of wind stirred the deep stillness. The slender pines and massive firs might have been carved out of silver, so stately and motionless they stood, the whole scene peaceful and pure, a strange contrast to the heart of him who passed, the one dark spot in all this loveliness. But at last a distant sound fell upon the silence—the sound of tinkling bells—and a rough wooden sledge drawn by two miserable animals came in sight. It was moving slowly in the same direction as himself, and its occupants, two sturdy stolid-looking peasants, were returning from the market. They at first gazed stupidly and some-

what askance at the stranger, as he begged for a lift by the way, explaining that he wanted to reach a village ten miles off by the morning. The sight of the stone bottles decided them; and they willingly made room, and offered him some share of the coarse sacking with which they were covered.

The stranger laughed, and said he had something better to keep the cold out, at the same time uncorking the bottles and offering one to each of his companions. They contained the strongest kind of spirits, the best 'vodki.' How it burnt in their throats, till they almost seemed on fire inside. No thought of cold now. The stranger kept plying them more and more, urging them to drink where no urging was needed, himself taking care to put the stone bottles now and then to his own lips. Gradually they got emptier and emptier; a drowsy feeling came over the men; the stranger watched them stealthily till they sank back utterly oblivious of all and everything around them. Then he who was watching them slid quickly from the sledge, and hastily but quietly cut through the thick ropes which take the place of harness, and silently disappeared with the submissive animals into the forest.

A few hours later a cry of 'Fire!' was raised on the estate of Count C—. How it originated no one could tell. The 'dvornik' or porter had looked carefully round before turning in for the night. Everything had been in order; the different buildings all safely secured and locked. True, at this season the wood was so dry, the lofts in the roofs so packed with hay, that the slightest spark would be sufficient to ignite them. Some careless servant, perchance, had, while lighting his cigarette, dropped a match, which had smouldered unperceived, till it burst suddenly into flame. The reflection could be seen for miles round. Everything was soon in the wildest confusion; servants hurried hither and thither; the wells were pumped for water—all in vain—every drop was frozen; and the flames unchecked mounted higher and higher. The stables appeared to have caught first, and when discovered, were already one mass of fire. The beautiful occupants, the pride of their master's heart, had perished.

The next day the strictest inquiries were made, but with no result. Simply a piece of carelessness, it seemed, with terribly disastrous consequences. No one dreamed of connecting the complaint of two drunken peasants, that they had been robbed of their wretched animals that same night, with the untimely end of the famous 'grays.' Why should they? There could be no possible connection between the two.

At the Governor's reception that winter, Ivan Ivanovitch, amid general exclamations of admiration and astonishment, smiling and nodding, dashed up in his splendid sledge, drawn by the loveliest pair of grays imaginable. Count C—, who stood at the entrance talking to a high official, turned hastily to his companion. 'Confound it!' said he. 'If I had not seen with my own eyes their very bones lying charred and blackened in the stables, I could have sworn these were my horses alive again.'

S—, the famous burglar, was never recap-

tured. Some say he escaped to America, where he bought land and settled down as a comparatively rich man. How he obtained the means and money remains a profound secret.

REMARKABLE BEDS.

As the Eskimo sleeps on moss and skins, so even wealthy ancient Romans were content to repose on leaves and straw. Ere long they improved on hints taken from conquered nations, filled beds with delicate down, or stuffed them with the finest wool, till they attained the highest pitch of luxury in the appointment of their couches. Richly-carved wooden frames inlaid with ivory or silver, and finally with gold, sustained cushions, pillows, and counterpanes of gold and purple—a striking contrast to the flock-filled trusses of their plebeian brethren. The old Greeks used beds supported on iron frames; while the Egyptians had couches shaped more like easy-chairs with hollow backs and seats.

Climatic considerations must be taken into account by different nations in their bed-making arrangements. The Russian day and night hugs sheepskins round him; and the Pacific islander finds in palm-leaves a sufficient coverlet. In the tropics, mats of grass answer the same purpose. The East Indian unrolls his portable mattress, and in the morning literally takes up his bed and walks off with it. The Chinese use low bedsteads, often well carved; while the Jap, with an uncomfortable wooden rest for his neck, stretches himself on a matting, and has a lighted paper lantern for company.

German beds are furnished with a huge pillow or upper mattress, which answers the purpose of ordinary bed-clothing. Travellers agree that there is not enough of the Continental bed—that, in fact, it ends too quickly.

Europeans living in the East soon become acquainted with the slender iron bedsteads with tall iron rods, designed to support the mosquito curtain which seldom really answers its purpose.

On view in one of the early London Exhibitions was a Chinese bed ornamented with all sorts of curious and elaborate cabinet-work, the greater part of which consisted of inlaid mother-of-pearl. How useless and extravagant ornaments may be heaped upon a single domestic article was proved by the grand bedstead exhibited in the Austrian department. The enormity of its bedposts, of which there appeared to be at least a dozen rising in spires of different heights, with the high relief of the carving, and the massive magnificence of the whole design, and the finish of the carving in all its parts, made this bed appear not unlike a great model of a Gothic cathedral.

Some of our very wealthy American cousins appear to be puzzled in what new form to lavish their money. A brass bedstead inlaid with real pearls was recently made for a lady in New York. On a brass rail which runs across the top the owner's name is wrought in pearls. Still more of a curiosity is the 'Silent Alarum Bedstead, to turn any one out of bed at a given hour,' the production of an inventive genius in London some years ago. This amusing contrivance assumes a degree of density in the sleeper which

no alarm can affect, or else a singular amount of luxurious weakness of purpose. The bed therefore acts the part of Resolution for the sleeper; and having been set overnight for a given hour in the morning, the said incorrigible sleeper finds the bed revolve so as to tilt him out; and a bath being placed by the bedside, he may at once be relieved of all need for summoning a resolution either to get up or take a plunge.

Another remarkable and, we should say, more generally useful bedstead—exhibited in the Workmen's Exhibition at Paris—was made so that it can be taken down and put up again in the short space of half a minute. By a curious combination of springs, the bed can be instantaneously surrounded with curtains, a washstand wheeled inside, and the occupant go through his or her toilet without being seen. By another spring the bed is turned into a canopy suited for invalids, who have no need to stir to perform the transformation.

We are told that M. Thiers died in a little iron bed scarcely larger than a child's, which he had used for fifty years. It was wheeled into the small drawing-room where he had breakfast. He took it with him on his tour through Europe in 1870.

An interesting historical relic will be familiar to all who have visited Holyrood Palace, where may be seen the four-poster bedstead of Scotland's beautiful and luckless Queen, in its faded splendour and melancholy suggestiveness of misfortune and decay.

The darkness and secretiveness of Richard III.'s character had an illustration, strange as it may appear, in the construction of his bed. Among his camp baggage it was his custom to carry a cumbersome wooden bedstead, which he averred was the only couch he could sleep in; but in which he contrived to have a secret receptacle for treasure, so that it was concealed under a weight of timber. Quite a romance could be made out of its subsequent history. After the battle of Bosworth, Richmond's victorious troops pillaged Leicester; but the royal bed was neglected by every plunderer as useless lumber. The owner of the house, afterwards discovering the hoard, became suddenly rich without any visible cause, and became Mayor of Leicester. Years afterwards, his widow, who had been left in great affluence, was murdered by her servant, who had been privy to the affair; and at the trial of this culprit the whole transaction came to light. Concerning this bed a public print of 1830 states that 'about half a century since the relic was purchased by a furniture-dealer, who slept in it for many years and showed it to the curious. It was well preserved, being formed of oak, and having a high polish.'

Many great personages seem to be careful that their importance should be reflected, as it were, in the luxurious appointments of their sleeping apartments. True, it is said that on one occasion when a Persian ambassador was shown into his bedroom in a certain hotel, where a grand canopied state-bed had been prepared for him, he supposed it was a throne in his audience chamber, received his visitors seated on it, and retired to sleep on the carpet in the corner of the room. But Eastern potentates show as a rule a much greater appreciation of costly beds. A remarkable bedstead

was made in Paris for an Indian Prince, who paid thousands of pounds for it. It was constructed partly of silver, with large female figures at each corner, each holding a delicate-looking fan. The weight of the sleeper's body sets certain machinery in motion which causes the figures to keep the fans gently in motion—an ingenious luxury in a hot climate. By touching a spring, a large musical box is made to give forth soft music as a further incentive to slumber. Another bedstead made of silver is said to have been occupied by the German Emperor during his visit to the Sultan. It had Oriental curtains of surpassing richness, heavily embroidered with gold. What a contrast this presents to the simple iron camp beds affected by Prince Bismarck, Moltke, and other renowned leaders!

Among numerous presents sent to a Shah of Persia by one of the Russian Emperors was a bedstead of extraordinary magnificence. It is said to have been entirely made of crystal, and was accessible by steps of the same material all worked in imitation of large diamonds, incrusting in a solid frame. On each side there were spouts made to eject scented water, which by its murmuring invited sleep. It was crowned by a large chandelier, which spread light around, so as to give to the whole the splendid appearance of millions of diamonds reflecting their brilliancy at once. This unique piece of furniture was produced, we are told, at the imperial manufactory of St Petersburg.

In these days, royalty does not seem to concern itself so much about such magnificent sleeping-couches. It is well known that our gracious sovereign always includes a bed among her travelling belongings, which is sent from Windsor Castle whenever Her Majesty goes anywhere. It is said to be a perfectly simple bedstead of maple wood, with plain hangings arranged as a tent, muslin curtains, and a hair mattress. Two beds were manufactured at the Castle works, one of which was placed in the Queen's cabin on board the *Osborne*, and the other sent in advance to the Schloss occupied by Her Majesty in Darmstadt. The royal visitor is said sometimes to leave her bed as a sort of souvenir. One, we are told, is at Dunkeld, and others at Baden and Coburg.

SUMMER'S LATER FLOWERS.

ERE yet the glowing Summer says 'Farewell,'
She leaves a trail of sweet and peaceful light;
In tints subdued she decks the mountain height,
And o'er the woodland weaves a glowing spell.
Oh, faint and few the choristers which tell
June's faded hours of glory and delight!
The faint, sweet airs and tones betoken flight
Of many gladsome gifts, beloved well.

Yet, can a mortal stand unmoved and feel
The laughing hours of bloom and bee go past?
Oh wondrous hour of pathos, solemn, vast!
Let this great aspiration o'er me steal:
'That as my life doth near its close, the last
Faint hours may glow with undiminished zeal!'

WILLIAM JOSEPH GALLAGHER.

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OUR CATHEDRAL CLOISTERS.

AFTER viewing a cathedral, mounting to the full height of its topmost tower, perchance descending to its low, dim, short-columned crypt, pacing its aisles and transepts as well as its mighty nave, and the choir with its ambulatories, conning its countless chapels, perusing its monuments, considering its stained glass, and lingering in the galilee last of all, if there be one, there still remains another pleasure in connection with it—a loiter in the Cloister. The fresh air, the green garth, or 'paradise,' as it was often called, in the centre, the open-traceried arcading, the stone-vaulted or open-timbered roof, as the case may be, the wide smooth-paved foot-walks, the vistas they afford—all tend to give these secluded places an ineffable charm.

In old times the cloisters were not so unfrequented as they are now. They served as communications to various parts of the great establishments to which they belonged; and they were used for special purposes. There were many doorways opening into them, not always in similar places in every case, but intended to suit the general convenience in the same way. Often, the doorway to the chapter-house, or of the vestibule giving access to it, was placed in the east walk of the cloisters; that of the parlour was also sometimes there; on the north or south sides, according to their position, another doorway, and in some instances two, opened into the cathedral; the refectory, treasury, and slypes were also frequently entered from the cloisters; and thus there was much coming and going where a footfall is now seldom heard. In one spot was, generally, a lavatory. In front of some of the window-like arches, secluded in compartments or tiny chambers they called 'carrels,' scribes sat at their lifelong tasks of copying the manuscripts that were then the literature of the world, and of occasionally adding to their number by new works. Twenty of these carrels are still to be seen in the south walk of the cloisters at Gloucester. And in the north walk in the same

quadrangle, near the refectory door, is the vast washing-place with a recess for towels. It is claimed for this beautiful cloister that it was the building in which fan-tracery in stonework for vaulting was first used. It is a square quadrangle, and each walk is about a hundred and forty-five feet long, a little more than twelve feet wide, and about eighteen feet high. The east walk has ten large windows, of which nine are divided by mullions into eight lights; and the other three sides have ten six-light windows in each. All of these are now glazed; but it has been thought they may have been unglazed at first, and protection from the weather gained by some other means. It would be difficult to devise a presentment of more elegant and antique sumptuousness in a similar space.

In the cloisters at Durham the lavatory is in the centre of the cloister-garth. It was originally octagonal, with a dovecot on the top of it, and documentary evidence has been preserved that states the stone of which it was built was bought of the abbot of Eggleston-on-the-Tees. The curious work known as the *Rites of Durham* mentions it particularly as a fair laver, or conduit, for the monks to wash their hands and faces at, covered with lead, and all of marble, except the outermost walls, with many little conduits or spouts of brass, and twenty-four cocks of brass round about it; and the same authority mentions there were seven fair windows of stonework in it, and on the top of it a dovecot covered with lead, all of workmanship fine and costly. There were carrels before each arch or window for the north walk; and there was also a receptacle for such books as were in most frequent use.

The dimensions of the quadrangle are about the same as those of the Gloucester example. There is, however, a great difference in the matter of construction; for, instead of the delicate fan-tracery in stonework, timber is used for the roof. There were still older cloisters here than those we now see; but these date from the end of the fourteenth and commencement of the

fifteenth centuries. In the refectory, now used as a library, are all the items that are left of the personality of St Cuthbert, the source of the honours and wealth of the bishopric. In a glass case, as in a glass sarcophagus, are placed his embroidered stole and maniple, with the cross that rested for so many centuries upon his breast.

At Lincoln the gray hoary cloisters are placed between the two transepts on the north side of the choir. They are also roofed with oak, and their rich traceried windows are of fourteenth-century workmanship. One side has suffered grievously from insufficient foundations; and the walls in other places are somewhat out of the perpendicular. At Chester the cloisters are also in picturesque decay. The walls on the north and west sides are Norman. On the east are the chapter-house and its vestibule of thirteenth-century workmanship.

The Worcester cloisters are built on the south side of the nave. These are also of fourteenth-century workmanship with traceried windows of geometric designs. There were, however, Norman cloisters here, as at Durham, before these were erected, for in the south-west corner of the quadrangle is a Norman lavatory. Water was brought to this from Henwick Hill in the neighbourhood down to the days of the Rebellion, when the pipes were used for ammunition. There are three slypes in these cloisters. One of them served also as the parlour, where the brethren might see those with whom they were permitted to converse; another led to the infirmary; another, southwards, to the outer court; and there is a winding stair in the north-west angle which gives access to the library over the south aisle of the nave.

The cloisters at Norwich are on the south side of the nave of the cathedral. They are vaulted with stone, and enriched with sculptured representations of biblical subjects and scenes from the lives of saints. Close to the refectory door in the southern angle of the west walk is the lavatory. In the eastern walk is the door leading to the chapter-house, which is all that has been preserved of that fabric. Only the northern wall, too, of the refectory is left standing, the hand of the spoiler having had free play in this edifice. At Canterbury the cloisters were rebuilt in the fifteenth century, the authorities retaining a few fragments here and there of Norman work and the Norman passage called the Dark Entry. At Exeter they have been partly restored on the south side for the purpose of a library. At Wells the cloisters form three sides of a quadrangle of which the fourth is the whole length of the nave of the cathedral. At Oxford they are well maintained.

Of a different tone are the cloisters of Westminster Abbey. They are not of the soft ashen-gray hue of those of the smiling southern counties, nor of the steely gray of those of the north, but black and white, according as the parts are protected from the soot and rain or exposed to them—absolutely as black and white as an engraving of them. Only those who have turned into their quiet precincts from the rush and roar of the crowded thoroughfares near at hand can realise their peaceful calm and their severe beauty. In a register in which the clerk

of the works recorded facts relating to his duties there is mention of a middle tread in connection with an interment in the cloisters, and thus we learn that these walks were paved with a pathway of squared stones down the centre; whilst, perhaps, the others were placed diagonally to distinguish these more particularly from the rest; and it has been noticed there was also a course of square stones against the walls. This middle tread was a device to keep processions in straight lines; and was also used in the ambulatories in the cathedral, though the large number of interments, with the consequent disturbance of the pavement, had almost obscured it and caused it to be forgotten before recent investigations brought the fact to light.

Of all the incidents that these cloisters have seen few have been more out of the way than the robbery of the king's treasure kept there in 1303, when forty-eight monks as well as the Abbot were sent to the Tower, and some of them kept there for two years. The passing to and fro of William Caxton and his assistant printers when they set up their first press in the Abbey is another departure from the more usual slow-pacing of hooded figures, or grand processions of ecclesiastics in brodered raiment, or swift hurrying backwards and forwards on the occasions of royal ceremonials.

The mention of interments brings to mind that another use is occasionally made of cloisters. At Gloucester there are fragments of incised tombstones in different parts. One near the chapter-house door shows the upper portion of an ecclesiastic with an abbreviated lettering that is understood to represent John de Stanton. In the south walk an arched recess appears to have been made in the walk on purpose to receive another tombstone with a cross incised in it and the letters W. B. And there are few cloisters in which similar memorials are not to be noticed.

There is sometimes a second cloister attached to a cathedral, when one is distinguished from the other as the Bishops' Cloister, or the Vicars' Cloister, or the Little Cloister, or by some other appellation. They are all generally square; but we have examples of an oblong form and of a single straight way, or walk. The diversities in the different buildings surrounding them are thought to have typified the differences that we are assured exist in celestial mansions; the four walls to have represented renunciation of self and the world, and devotion to eternal pursuits and the love of God; the bases of all the columns to have typified Patience; and the whole closed-in square to have suggested Contemplation. Look at them as we may, it is certain they are a delightful legacy left to us all. The Vicars' Cloister at Hereford is especially interesting. It is a hundred and eight feet long, and about eight feet wide. There are a few tablets to the memory of the dead on the inner wall, which is otherwise without break and void. The outer boundary, instead of being a wide open series of arches, as is most frequently the case, is also built of solid masonry up to a certain height, when it is pierced with a row of eight three-light windows, having seven canopied niches between them, supported on brackets. The chief feature is the open-timbered oaken roof, which is richly moulded and very curiously and cunningly

carved on the tie-beams and principal rafters. Each beam has a different subject, such as a wild boar pursuing a squirrel or a bird, or with a saddle on its back; a stag pursued by a dog; swine, fish, foliage; an owl and a mouse; human figures; and an ox with human hands. There is a figure carrying a shield with a different device upon each in the centre of every beam, and the whole forms a vista of open perforated work that is of rare occurrence.

Salisbury cloisters are more superb. The four covered galleries or walks are a hundred and ninety-five feet long and eighteen feet wide; and the green enclosure they surround is about a hundred and forty feet wide each way, and has two cedar trees growing in it. The beautiful arcades are formed by clustered columns placed at certain intervals, on which are raised lofty pointed arches filled in with rich tracery above, and by smaller arches below, which are subdivided again, and ornamented with more tracery. Between each superior arch is a strong buttress projecting into the garth. As in the case of the cathedral close by, all is plain sailing. There are no alterations to explain, no mutilations to deplore. There is one jubilant and serene expression of the utmost perfection possible to the builders of it. We could scarcely take leave of the subject in a more pleasant place.

BLOOD ROYAL.*

CHAPTER IX.—A SUDDEN RESOLVE.

'Now, then, young gentlemen, choose your partners!' Mr Plantagenet murmured, with a bland and inane smile. ('Strike up the violin, Maud!' aside.) 'Bow, and fall into places. Eight bars before beginning. No, *not* yet, Miss Tradescant.—Explain to this young lady, *if* you please, Miss Tudor, that she must always wait eight bars—eight bars exactly—before she begins to *chasser*.—That's right. Just so! Advance in couples—right, left—right, left—right, left—down the middle.—Very nicely done, indeed: very nicely: very nicely. Now!—yes—that's it. Change hands, and over again!'

A year and more had passed, and Mr Plantagenet's face bore distinct signs than ever of his ruling passion. It was coarse and red under the bland exterior. Maud watched him intently now on the morning of lesson days to see he didn't slink away unobserved into the bar of the *White Horse* before the appointed hour for the meeting in the Assembly Rooms. Once let him cross the threshold of the inn, except to enter the big hall where he received his pupils, and all was up with him. On such occasions, Maud was compelled with grief and shame to stick a notice on the door: 'Mr Plantagenet is indisposed to-day, and will be unable to meet his usual classes.' Nobody else ever knew what agony those notices cost the poor shrinking girl: but on the next appointed afternoon, Mr Plantagenet would be at his place again as if nothing had happened, and would murmur plaintively, with one hand on his left breast, and the other

on the bow of his faithful violin: 'My old complaint, ladies and gentlemen; my old complaint! I suffer so much from my heart. I regret I was unable to receive you on Wednesday.' Everybody in Chiddingwick knew quite well the real nature of Mr Plantagenet's 'old complaint'; but he was an institution of the place; and everybody pretended to believe in it and to sympathise with him.

On this particular day, however, in the middle of November, Mr Plantagenet seemed even more consequential and more dignified than usual, if such a thing were possible. He received Lady Agatha's little girls with princely condescension. Maud, who stood by trembling, and watching him with dismay, as he fiddled with a will on his well-tried violin, wondered to herself, with a mute feeling of terror in her heart, what on earth could have put her father into such visible good-humour. She didn't discover the secret till the end of the lesson. Then Mr Plantagenet, rising with great importance and a conscious smirk, observed in his suavest and most professional tone: 'I'm sorry to say, young ladies and gentlemen—and you, Miss Tudor—I won't be able to give the usual lessons next Tuesday and Wednesday. The fact of the matter is, I shall be away from Chiddingwick. It doesn't often happen that I take a holiday; but on this occasion I shall be away from Chiddingwick. Long and close attention to the duties of a harassing and wearisome task has undermined my constitution; you can sympathise with my feelings: and next week, I propose to give myself a well-earned repose, in order to visit my dear son at the university of Oxford.'

It was a perfect bombshell. To Maud, sitting by wearily, with her small violin clasped in her bloodless hands, the announcement came like a thunderbolt: he was going to Oxford! She turned deadly pale at once, and clutched the bow of her instrument with a spasmodic action. Mary Tudor, sitting near, noticed the pallor on her cheek, and guessed the cause of it instantly. The two girls looked up: for a second their eyes met; then Maud let hers drop suddenly. Though on that one dearest point Dick had never taken her into his confidence, Maud had guessed the whole truth during last Christmas vacation; and if anything could make the cup of her bitterness even bitterer than it was, 'twas the thought that Dick's friend, Dick's future wife perhaps, should see and understand the full depths of her misery.

Mary had tact enough and feeling enough, however, not to press her sympathy upon the poor wounded creature. With a hasty side-glance, she hurried her charges out of the room as quick as she could, and motioned to the other governesses to do the same for theirs with all possible expedition. Two minutes later, the big hall was fairly cleared, and father and daughter stood face to face in silence.

If Maud had followed only the prompting of her own personal feelings she would have sat down where she was, covered her face with her hands, and cried long and bitterly.

But her sense of duty towards her father prevented her from so giving way; she couldn't bear to let him see how deeply, for Dick's sake, she dreaded the idea of his going to Oxford. All

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she could do was to look up at him with a scared white face, and murmur in a terrified half-articulate tone: 'Oh, father, father, you never told me of this. What on earth do you mean by it?'

Mr Plantagenet eyed his daughter askance out of the corner of his eyes. He was more afraid of Maud than of any one else on earth; in point of fact, she was his domestic keeper. But he tried to assume his jaunty happy-go-lucky air for all that. 'Well, my dear,' he said, examining the strings of his fiddle with profound attention, 'I haven't had a holiday for a very long time, away from Chiddingwick; and I'm tired with the duties—the duties of my very exacting profession—and I felt I needed a change; and I haven't been up to Oxford since your brother Richard entered into residence as a member of the university. Now, I naturally feel a desire to see my son in that position in life which a Plantagenet ought to occupy. And so, the long and the short of it is'—Mr Plantagenet went on, shuffling about, and glancing up at her anxiously—'the long and the short of it is, as you heard me inform my class just now—I think next week of allowing myself the luxury of a trip to Oxford.'

Maud rose and seized his arm. His grandeur and indefiniteness positively alarmed her. Did he think she would be taken in by such grandiose words? 'Now, father,' she said boldly, 'that sort of talk won't do between us two, you know, at a serious crisis. This is important, very. You must tell me quite plainly what you mean by it all. Does Dick know you're coming, and why do you want to go to him?'

Mr Plantagenet, thus attacked, produced from his pocket a rather dirty silk handkerchief and began to whimper. 'Has it come to this, then?' he cried with theatrical pathos—'has it come to this, I ask you, that I, the Head of all the Plantagenets, have to beg leave and make explanations to my own eldest daughter before I can go to visit my own son at Oxford?' And he hid his face in the pocket-handkerchief with a studied burst of emotion.

But Maud was inexorable. Dick's happiness was at stake. Not for worlds, if she could help it, would she have him shamed by the appearance before all the world of Oxford of that shabby, degraded, disreputable old man in the guise of his father. 'We must be practical,' she said coldly, taking no notice of his hysterics. 'You must explain what this means. I want to know all about it. How have you got money to go up to Oxford with; and all those bills unpaid; and Mrs Waite still dunning us for the rent from last quarter? And where are you going to stop? And does Richard know you're coming? And have you proper things to go in? Why, I should think the very pride of a Plantagenet ought to prevent you from going to a place where your son lives like a gentleman, as he is, unless you can afford to go in such clothes as won't disgrace him!'

Thus put upon his mettle, Mr Plantagenet, deeply moved, at first admitted by slow degrees that he had taken proper steps to replenish his wardrobe for this important occasion. He had ordered a suit of good clothes, very good clothes, at Wilkins's. And they would be paid for too,

the Head of the House added proudly. Oh, he wasn't quite so devoid of friends and resources in his old age as his undutiful daughter appeared to imagine. He could sometimes do a thing or two on his own account without asking her assistance. He had money in hand—loads—plenty of money for the journey!

The more high-flown and enigmatical Mr Plantagenet grew, the more terribly was poor Maud distressed and frightened. At last she could stand it no longer. Plantagenet though she was, and as proud as Heaven makes them, she couldn't prevent the tears from stealing through and betraying her. She flung herself into a chair and hid her face in her hands. 'Now, father,' she said simply, giving way at last, 'you must tell me what you mean by it. You must explain the whole thing. Where did you get this money?'

Then, bit by bit, hard pressed, Mr Plantagenet admitted, with many magnificent disclaimers and curious salves to his offended dignity, how he had become seised of a sum of unexpected magnitude. When he took the last rent of the Assembly Rooms, for the afternoon dancing lessons, to the landlord of the *White Horse*, a fortnight earlier, the landlord had given him a receipt in full, and then, to his great surprise, had handed him back the money. 'You've been an old customer to me, Mr Plantagenet,' Barnes had said—'with real feeling, my dear—I assure you, with very real feeling'—'and a good customer, too, and a customer one could reckon upon, both for the Rooms and the parlour; and I feel, sir, now your son's gone up to Oxford College, and you a gentleman born, and so brought up, in the manner of speaking, it 'ud be a comfort to you, and a comfort to him, if you was to go up and see him. This 'ere little matter of the quarter's rent ain't nothing to me: you've brought me in as much and more in your time, as I says to my missus, with your conversational faculties. It draws people to the house, that it do, when they know there's a gent there of your conversational faculties.' So in the end, Mr Plantagenet, after some decent parley, had accepted the gift, 'in the spirit in which it was offered, my dear; in the spirit in which it was offered;' and had resolved to apply it to the purpose which the donor indicated, as a means of paying a visit to Richard at Oxford.

Poor Maud! she sat there heart-broken. She didn't know what to do. Pure filial feeling made her shrink from acknowledging even to her own wounded soul how ashamed she was of her father; far more did it prevent her from letting the poor broken old drunkard himself too plainly perceive it. All she could do was to sit there in blank despair, her hands folded before her, and reflect how all the care and pains she had taken to keep the rent-money sacred from his itching hands had only resulted at last in this supreme discomfiture. It was terrible, terrible! And Dick, she knew, had had social difficulties to contend with at Oxford at first, and was now just overcoming them, and beginning to be recognised as odd, very odd, but a decent sort of fellow. Mr Plantagenet's visit would put an end to all that. He couldn't be kept sober for three days at a stretch; and he would disgrace dear Dick before the whole university.

However, Maud saw at once remonstrance was impossible. All she could conceivably do was to warn Dick beforehand. Forewarned is forearmed. She must warn Dick beforehand. Sorrowfully she went off by herself towards the post-office in the High Street. She would send a telegram. And then, even as she thought it, the idea came over her, how could she ever allow that fuzzy-headed Miss Janson at the Chiddingwick office to suspect the depth of the family disgrace? and another plan suggested itself. The third-class fare to Broughton, the next town of any size, was eightpence-halfpenny return: telegram would be sixpence; one and twopence-halfpenny in all: that was a lot of money! But still, for Dick's sake, she must venture upon the extravagance. With a beating heart in her breast, she hurried down to the station and took a ticket for Broughton. All the way there she was occupied in making up a telegram that should not compromise Richard; for she imagined to herself that a scholar of Durham would be a public personage of such distinction at Oxford that the telegraph clerks would be sure to note and retail whatever was said to him. At last, after infinite trials, she succeeded in satisfying herself. 'PLANTAGENET; Durham College, Oxford.—E. P. visits Oxford to-morrow as surprise. Take precautions.—MAUD.' That came to sevenpence. But try as she would, she couldn't make it any shorter. Not for worlds would she describe E. P.'s relationship to the Scholar of Durham. And she blushed to herself as she handed it in to think she should have to take the brother of whom she was so proud to take precautions against a visit from their own father!

INSECT WAX.

THOSE who, like the present writer, have had experience of trade in the East, often puzzle over the origin, character, and destination of many strange items of commerce unknown in the Western world. One of the strangest of these oddities of traffic is the White Wax of China; and naturalists have only recently been able to reveal it as also one of the strangest products of Nature. The existence of the commodity and of the Chinese business in it has, however, been known to Eastern traders for a couple of centuries.

As long ago as 1655, Martini mentioned *Albaceres* among the products of the Hu-kwang provinces; and since then, White Wax has been repeatedly referred to by travellers in China. But very little was really known about it until the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce and the Director of the Kew Gardens began to interest themselves in the subject. Some years ago, Mr E. Colborne Baber, Chinese Secretary of the British Legation at Peking, wrote a special Report about Insect White Wax, on his return from a journey of exploration in Western China (the records of which are buried in Blue-books and in the Papers of the Royal Geographical Society). In consequence of the information thus brought to light, Mr Alexander Hosie, of the Consular service in China, was instructed to make a special visit to the White Wax country, to gather additional information on the whole subject of wax

production, and to obtain for Sir Joseph Hooker specimens of the insects, of the trees on which they live, of the wax itself, and of the articles into which the Chinese convert it. And still more recently, the American Minister at Peking has made it the subject of a special Report to his Government.

Mr Denby, by the way, refers to an item on the Chinese Customs' lists which has often puzzled the coast-traders, namely, tigers' bones. One lot of thirteen thousand pounds weight of these bones was entered of the declared value of six hundred pounds—say, roughly, about one hundred pounds per ton. At such a price they cannot be used as manure; for what purpose, then, are they exported from Ichang? To convert into a tonic which fetches a high price, as it is supposed to impart to the invalid some of the strength of the tiger! Almost as high a price is put upon deer-horns, which are supposed to possess exceptional medicinal properties of another kind.

Of White Wax upwards of a million and a half pounds were shipped at Ichang in 1889, and sent in foreign vessels down the Yang-tse river for distribution at the Chinese ports. The value of this mass was stated at about ninety-five thousand pounds sterling. In Shanghai a ton of this wax in its commercial state sells now for about two hundred pounds. Being a clear white wax which only melts at a high temperature—one hundred and sixty degrees Fahrenheit—it is found extremely useful as a coating for candles, to prevent too rapid consumption. It is also used for sizing paper and cotton cloths, as a glaze for silk, and as a polish for furniture and stone ornaments. Besides the quantity just stated as having been shipped down the Yang-tse in foreign vessels, an immense quantity is sent up the river in native junks to the cities of the interior; and a further quantity finds its way across the mountains and down the West River to Canton. In the Canton 'go-downs' the large round white cakes are a familiar sight.

Where, then, does it come from? Largely from what Mr Colborne Baber describes as the richest nook in China—the neighbourhood of the sacred mountain of O-mi or O. As a matter of fact the White Wax is found in at least five of the great western provinces; but the chief area of production is in the province of Se-chuen, in the Valley of Chieu-chang, which is formed by the river An-ning as it makes its way towards the Yang-tse, there called the Golden River. The precise geographical position of the valley of Chieu-chang is between latitude 29° 20' and latitude 27° 11', and it is about five thousand feet above the level of the sea.

In this valley and on the slopes of the surrounding hills grow in greatest profusion what is locally called Chung-shu, or the Insect Tree, which elsewhere is called the Evergreen Tree and also the Crackling-flea Tree, because of the spluttering and popping of the branches when burning. It is an evergreen with thick, dark-green, glossy, ovate and pointed leaves, which spring in pairs from the branches. In May and June it bears clusters of small white flowers, and, later, a dark purple fruit. At Kew it has been identified as a large-leaved privet (*Ligustrum lucidum*).

These trees afford the birthplace and cradle of the wax insect, scientifically called *Coccus pe-la*. In the early spring the bark of the boughs and twigs becomes covered with brown pea-shaped scales, which can be easily detached, and which when opened reveal a flowery-looking mass of minute animals, whose movements can just be detected by the naked eye. In May and June, however, the scales are found to contain a swarm of brown creatures with six legs and two antennae each. Some of the scales also contain the white bag, or cocoon, of a small black beetle, which, if left undisturbed, burrows into and consumes the scales. The Chinese say that this beetle eats the little wax insects; and it appears certainly the case that where the parasite is most abundant the scales fetch a lower price in the first market.

This first market is one of the most curious incidents in a curious history. The valley of Chieu-chang produces the insects, but the wax is produced elsewhere. At the proper season the scales are detached from the *ligustrum*, and made up into paper packets of about sixteen ounces each. A porter's load is about sixty of these packages, and the duty of the porters is to convey them with the utmost speed over the mountains, a distance of two hundred miles, to the town of Chiä-ting, which is the centre of the wax-producing country. The greatest care has to be taken in the carriage of the brittle scales, and the porters must only travel during the night, as the high temperature during the day will develop the insects too rapidly, and they may escape from their natural cages. Wherever they stop for rest, the porters must open up their paper-packets and spread them in cool places; but with all precautions, there is a large percentage of loss upon the journey—the packets usually weighing at Chiä-ting each about one ounce lighter than when they left Chieu-chang. The usual price at Chiä-ting for a pound of scales is about half-a-crown; but in years of scarcity this price has been doubled. A pound of scales ought to produce from four to five pounds of wax; but in bad years only pound for pound is yielded, so that the profits of the industry are very fluctuating.

Between Chiä-ting and the sacred O-mi mountain—which has so often been described by travellers—is a plain, which Mr Hosie describes as an immense rice-field, well watered by the streams from the western mountains. This plain is thickly studded with tree-stumps, from three to twelve feet high, resembling pollard willows. This tree does not seem as yet to have been accurately classified, but it is a species of ash, called by the Chinese Pai-la-shu, or the 'White-wax tree.' It is to these wax-trees that the scales are brought from the insect-trees of Chieu-chang.

The scales arrive in May, and are immediately reweighed and made up into fresh packets, each packet containing twenty to thirty scales, enclosed in a leaf of the wood-oil tree. The edges of the covering are drawn together with a rice-straw, by which also the packet is suspended under the branches of the wax-tree. Then a few small holes are pricked in the packets, so that the insects can find their way out on to the branches of their new habitation.

In due time the insects emerge, and very soon make their way to the leaves which have been

allowed to sprout about the tops of the pollards. They remain among the foliage for thirteen days, and then descend again to the branches and twigs, where the females proceed to make scales for the deposit of their eggs, and the males to excrete the white wax. What connection exists between the two operations is not very certain; for while it is believed that the wax is intended as a protection for the scales, Mr Hosie says he has frequently seen deposits of scales far removed from any white wax.

What the insects feed on is also something of a mystery. For thirteen days, as we have seen, after emerging from their shelters they nestle among the leaves; but all the rest of their time they spend upon the bark of the tree. Whether they feed upon the leaf or upon the sap cannot be said, because no visible mark of insect ravages can be detected on either. The Chinese say that they live upon dew, and that the wax is a kind of insect perspiration!

There are, however, two classes of the insect, distinguished by the Chinese as La-sha, or 'wax sand,' and Huang-sha, or 'brown sand.' The former produces wax, and the latter does not. It is assumed, then, that the La-sha, which are of a reddish-white colour, are the males; and that the Huang-sha, which are of a brownish colour, are the females.

Soon after the insects come down from the green heights, the inner sides of the boughs and twigs, their new resting-places, begin to show a thin white coating, like snow. This gradually spreads over the whole bough, and in the course of about three months should have attained a thickness of a quarter of an inch.

One hundred days is the usual period allowed for the completion of the deposit, and each day during the process the wax-farmer makes the round of the trees under his care, thumping them with a heavy stick, in order to destroy the beetles, which he calls la-kow, or wax-dogs, and regards as the natural enemy of the wax insect.

When the hundred days are expired, the branches are carefully lopped off, and after as much of the wax as possible has been peeled off by hand, the branches are placed in pots of boiling water. The wax melts, rises to the surface, is skimmed off, and moulded. The boiling of the branches, however, produces a darker and inferior wax to that which is removed by the hand. The first hand-gleanings are also thrown into boiling water to be melted, and then skimmed into round moulds, which form the compact round white cakes one sees at Shanghai or Canton.

There is still a third process. After the trees have been stripped of every atom of wax, and every bit of available twig has been boiled, the poor insects, who have meantime fallen as sediment to the bottom of the pot, are then placed in a bag, and squeezed until they yield every atom of wax they may have left in their bodies. The pigs finish what is left of the pilgrims from far Chieu-chang.

The process, nevertheless, is a wasteful one, because the fresh scales which would produce a new generation of insects are destroyed when the branches are boiled. This is why Chiä-ting has to send every year to Chieu-chang for a fresh supply of eggs and insects. Then, again, after

the branches have been lopped off a wax-tree, it cannot be used again for three years—a period of rest which has been found necessary to allow it to recover vigour and foliage. One reason for this period is that sprouts of one or two years' growth are too weak to resist a strong gale, and the Chinese will not risk their precious scales on branches which may be blown or washed away.

What would happen if the wax-tree were left undisturbed? This may be guessed from the following experience of Mr Hosie's: 'On the 27th of August 1884,' he says, 'branches of the *ligustrum*, coated with wax, were brought to me. On removing the wax I found close to the bark a number of minute brown bags, evidently the male *cocci* in a state of metamorphosis. I examined the undisturbed branches from day to day, and on the 4th of September I observed quite a number of white hair-like substances rising above the surface of the wax deposit. These ultimately proved to be the white forked tails of the male insects forcing their way up from the bark, and dislodging, as they emerged, small quantities of the wax. They were now provided with long wings, and after tarrying for a time on the branches, flew away. By the 13th of September they had all disappeared, leaving visible the tunnels from the bark upwards by which they had escaped.'

Needless to say the Chinese permit neither the development of the wings nor the escape!

Only a few years ago as many as ten thousand porters annually were required to transport the packets of scales from the Valley of Chieu-chang to Chiä-ting. One of the sights of the road in the season is still a stream of carriers with long round baskets slung at the end of poles, with a lamp swinging in front. The rate at which these men have to travel, and mostly, as has been said, by night, has been often commented on by travellers, who did not altogether understand the nature of the business they represented. On their way to Chiä-ting the carriers have to cross the Ta-tu river with their precious loads, and towards the end of April the race to the ferry is one of tremendous excitement. Hundreds of men will be competing day by day who shall reach the boat first, for delay is injurious to the precious charge they carry, and the fleetest of foot will bring his freight more safely because more quickly to its destination.

This flight of insect carriers, however, is not now so great and so exciting as it was. Mr Hosie says that a thousand porters per annum will now carry the Chieu-chang supply, instead of ten thousand, as formerly. This seems in part due to the development of the industry in other provinces, but chiefly to the fact that American kerosene is largely displacing the use of candles—of vegetable or animal tallow coated with insect wax—in Chinese households. The present value, also, is only about one-half of the value ten or fifteen years ago.

It would thus seem that the natural oil-wells of America are gradually 'playing out' one of the most curious natural industries in the land of curiosities—China. But insect White Wax is too useful a commodity, and has too many valuable properties, to be dropped out of sight altogether. Without doubt, large employment can be found for it in Europe, where even now it

is not unknown, when it reaches a suitable level of price. A few years ago an attempt was made to introduce the Wax Insect into Algiers, but we have not learned with what result.

In conclusion, it may be mentioned that Se-chuen—the great silk-producing province—has other natural curiosities besides the wax insect. There is, for instance, the Varnish Tree (*Rhus vernicifera*), which in the hilly districts grows to a height of twenty feet, and yields, by incision of the bark near the foot of the tree, a sticky sap, which forms an excellent varnish. It is dark brown as exuded, and becomes jet black by exposure to the air; and it is good both for cementing and varnishing. It has been suggested that if chemical science were applied to make this varnish colourless, it would become an important item of Chinese trade.

Again, there is 'Soy,' which some people used to shudder at as made of boiled cockroaches, but which is really the juice of a bean. But as our object was to tell of wax insects and insect wax—not of hypothetical cockroaches—we must draw the line.

BABY JOHN.*

CHAPTER IV.—SPRING.

When daisies pied and violets blue,
And lady smocks all silver white,
And cuckoo buds of yellow hue
Do paint the meadows with delight.

SHAKESPEARE.

How beautiful that spring was! 'It's just perfect,' Alice used to say, standing on the beach, looking out over such a sunny sea, bright and sparkling, blue and green and peacock, with great indigo shadows from those fleecy white clouds which passed across the blue sky; or pale, shimmering, dimpling silver, with tiny, rippling waves chasing each other to the shore; or rough, tumbling, gray-green with white-crested breakers, coming proudly riding in, and casting themselves on the beach, and dragging back the pebbles with them with a screaming rush.

'Bless the girl!' Lucy used to complain to baby, 'she's never tired of staring at that old sea. She don't take no notice of you and me, as if you wasn't better to look at any day!' Though she herself was not far behind Alice in her fascinated love of it.

But there was not only the sea, but the inland delights of the spring, which were new to Alice, whose lines had always been cast in towns, and whose days had been too full of work since she was old enough to do half-time at the mill, to allow of exploring into the country round, which every year grew farther away as the town spread out its octopus-like arms of brick, spoiling the hedgerows, and swallowing up the trees and open spaces, and annihilating the primroses. In every direction behind Beston, deep lanes with high banks led away, and there were copses with no notice boards that trespassers would be prosecuted, and meadows that were not desirable building lots; and in these deep sheltered lanes, primroses grew as plentifully and beautifully as

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in the first spring in Eden; and in the copses, bluebells and dainty white anemones were in such lavish abundance, that Alice longed for a regiment of the little ones from the alleys of Felsby, 'as might gather them all day, and you'd hardly see the difference.'

Then came the cowslips all over the meadows, and kingcups by the stream; and the girls came back every day laden with flowers, or with shells and bright-coloured pebbles, or ribbons of seaweed from the beach, till the kind, deaf, old landlady entered a protest against the accumulation of such rubbish; and Alice reluctantly agreed to some of the larger stones being thrown away, as there was no denying that they looked very much the same as the other many thousand stones on the beach, now that they no longer lay in the wash of the coming tide, and had to be rescued by a bold dash at the risk of a drenching.

Their lodgings were of quite a humble description, as they soon moved away from those which Mr Craddock had engaged for them, and which, though by no means grand, made the girls feel constrained and ill at ease; and they found a cottage on the outskirts of the little place, the main recommendation to which was that the old woman standing at the gate one day noticed the baby, and declared it to be 'the finest child for its age that ever she seed.'

A woman of such discrimination was likely to be satisfactory in other respects; so when they saw a modest card in her parlour window with 'Lodgings to let' on it (she did not even call them apartments), they went in, and found a clean little sitting-room and bedroom over it, and the terms very moderate, as the season (for even little Beston has a season) had not begun, and Mrs Tripp had hardly hoped to let her rooms for two months to come. Mrs Tripp kept no servant, and was rather deaf; but the girls declared it was so much the better, as she had no objection to little cookings over the parlour fire, which in the other lodgings had been sternly discountenanced, or to their stepping into the kitchen for anything they wanted; and her deafness prevented any annoyance from the baby's crying, for even the most perfect baby will cry sometimes.

She was rather confused in her mind as to which was the mother of the baby; and as Alice, by virtue of her superior age and the old traditions of her relations with Lucy, took the lead and management, Mrs Tripp, as a rule, called her 'mum,' and Lucy 'my dear,' and the girls for fun rather favoured the idea; and, as Lucy recovered her health and spirits, she looked so young and girlish, that it was much easier to imagine Alice, with her more staid and quiet manner, to be the married woman and mother; and as the baby was quite as often in her arms as in Lucy's, it was no wonder that Mrs Tripp was confused.

'Ain't it lovely?' Alice used to say over and over again, the first few days they were there; 'it's just too good! Whoever would have thought, when we was at work in the old mill, with all the row, and the dust, and the heat, and the worry of getting through, that this was going on all the time and we should see it at last? I'm that glad to have seen it all. I shall think of it times and times, and when I goes back'—

But here Lucy always stopped her mouth with a kiss or baby's little hand, and would not let her talk of that terrible future. 'I don't think I'd ever a notion what heaven was like before,' Alice said. 'I've tried sometimes to fancy it, but the nearest I come to it was them gardens up Castle Hill with red geraniums and a fountain, and I don't think I'd turn my head now to look at 'em, leave alone jumping to see over the wall. Ain't it lovely to wake up in the morning and know as it's all there, and nothing to do but enjoy it? One won't feel so strange-like in heaven now. I used to be afraid of that sometimes when I got thinking, for I knew that heaven was bound to be different from Felsby anyhow.'

Alice would wax quite eloquent over the delights of Beston, till Lucy would turn and laugh at her. 'You are a funny girl, Alice! I do believe the sea and the flowers and things is instead of meat and drink to you. You don't eat nothing hardly, and I don't believe you sleeps much neither; for first you're out of bed to look at the moon on the sea, and then you thinks the sun'll be rising, and you must have a peep. And you ain't no flesh on your bones; I could carry you pretty near as easy as I can baby. There'll be nothing of you if you go on this way, and it'll be my turn to nurse you up as you've done me.'

One day they took the baby to be christened. There had been some talk of its being done before they left Felsby; but the weather had been bad, and the question of sponsors a difficult one, for Mr Craddock had naturally wished that his mother should hold the baby at the font, and Lucy, though she did not say so, was resolved that Alice should be his god-mother. So the subject was dropped, and Lucy had now written to ask her husband if he would mind the baby being 'done' at Beston, and whether he had any choice about the name. It was a work of much time and difficulty getting that letter written, for Lucy was not a good scribe, and she was keenly conscious all through of the critical eye that would observe the bad writing and worse spelling. Alice was no great help either, and she did not understand Lucy's feverish wish to send a tidy-looking letter, but was inclined to think that a blot here and there smeared out with the little finger did not matter.

That letter spoilt the whole of one day, and even bid fair to spoil the night that succeeded it; for long after they were in bed Alice found Lucy wide awake, with hot cheeks and bright eyes, agonising herself over some word which she was sure was spelt wrong.

'Do he make fun of your spelling now?' Alice asked.

'No, he don't say nothing. I wish he did, but he looks kind of patient. I shan't never forget as pudding is spelt with two *ds*, from the look he gave when I wrote it down with one on the cook's slate.'

It is certainly a comfort in this age of inventions that the art of sending looks by post has not been discovered, though perhaps unhappy generations to come may invent a means of conveying them in that way; and if Mr Craddock looked patient or shuddered over his wife's letter, it was only known to himself, for the answer

only said that she could have the baby baptised at Beston if she liked, and might give it what name she pleased.

Alice could not at all account for Lucy's wrath on reading this letter, which was thrown across the table for her inspection. It was stiff perhaps, and business-like; but it was not till Lucy caught up the insulted baby out of the cradle and declared he was mother's own little boy, and shouldn't be called 'it,' like a stick or a stone, that he shouldn't! that she realised the cause of offence.

'What shall you call him?'

'Yes, what shall it be? There! I'd almost wish he were a girl, so as we could call him Alice Lucy, or Lucy Alice, after us two. We'll choose just the names as we like best; you shall choose one, and I'll choose another, and then we'll have a third to please us both, for three names ain't a bit too much; folks often has three names, and some of them royal babies have ever so many more, and long ones too. I've a kind of fancy for Reginald. Don't you remember that story in the *Family Herald* as we used to read in Partley's shop, and how we couldn't see over the page just at the most interesting part where the wicked earl had hold of the lady by the hair of her head, and Sir Reginald came rushing in? And you used to have a liking for Arthur. And there's Lancelot too. I suppose it wouldn't do to give him more than three, as he ain't royal, though he's every bit as good as any king or prince of them.'

They talked for hours of what the name should be, and strung together all manner of fine-sounding incongruous names, and wrote them down—not always, I am afraid, quite correctly spelt—to see how they looked, or repeated them to the baby to see if he showed any signs of preference; and finally abandoned the name of Lancelot on account of his crying when it was mentioned, though Alice was not sure that a touch of stomach-ache might not have been the cause of this demonstration.

It was after they were in bed at night, and the baby making comfortable, little, drowsy noises in the bassinette on Alice's side of the bed—for they took it by turns to have the supreme honour of having the baby next them—that Alice asked, 'What's his name?'

'His? Oh! John. Why?'

'Oh, nothing. Only John?'

'Yes, just John alone. I can't think whatever his mother could have been about. It's downright common, ain't it?'

'Perhaps his father's name were that?'

'Yes, it were. I've heard as there have been John Craddocks, father and son, for ever so long.'

And then they said no more.

Sponsors were a difficulty which bid fair to be almost insuperable, as the girls did not like the idea of a man with a wooden leg who lived near the church, and who was generally had recourse to in such emergencies, being ready to undertake the office for half a pint of beer. But ultimately Mrs Tripp turned up a brother who was a coastguard, and he brought one of his mates to oblige the ladies, so the next Sunday they took the baby to the little church at Beston. Much attention had been given to his toilette;

Alice and Lucy between them had ironed his white robe, though a laundress would have done it much better, and they took ever so long to tie up his sleeves with white ribbon to their entire satisfaction.

They had finally decided on Frederick Reginald Arthur as the names he should bear; but just as they passed into the little white-washed porch of the church, Lucy pulled Alice's shawl.

'I've a mind after all,' she said, 'to alter the name.'

There was such sympathy between the girls, that Alice understood directly what was in Lucy's mind.

'Doe now,' she whispered back. 'I'll be bound he'd be pleased.'

And Lucy answered, 'There! I'll leave it to you. Please yourself.'

'Name this child,' said the clergyman presently, and Alice, with a quick look at Lucy's face, named him 'John,' and Lucy gave a little nod, as if she were not displeased.

'And the very best name he could have!' she declared that evening repeatedly, ignoring all her former opinions. 'And whatever do folks want with more than one name, I'd like to know? And now I come to think of it, my father's name was John; and I'd an uncle too, mother's brother, as was the same, and I'd like to call my boy after one of them.'

SOME DUTCH CHARACTERISTICS.

BY CHARLES EDWARDS.

To my mind, the most remarkable features of Holland at present are the multitude of the advertising placards of the Sunlight Soap and the shape of the Dutchmen's noses. The latter is probably an hereditary and in all likelihood an enduring characteristic. But it does not for that reason impress one the less.

A study of Jan Steen's pictures of Dutch home-life some two hundred years ago proves to conviction that in his day the noses of his country-folk were quite as fantastic as they are now. Without their pendulous, heavy, mirth-inspiring organs of smell, the artist's tipsy fiddlers and peasants, quack doctors and housewives, would not make one smile half as much as they do. It is well that the average Dutchman is a good-natured fellow. No matter whether his amiability be due to his phlegmatic temperament or to the reasoned discipline in his soul: the result is the same to the outer world. If he were naturally disposed to be a prey to his passions, there would be something horribly discordant in the broad comedy of his face.

As for the soap, no doubt Holland ought to be as good a market for the stuff as may be found anywhere on the earth's surface. Many of the country dames and damsels look as if they had been brought up on soap and water. Their faces glisten so preternaturally; their pots and pans, the red tiles of their floors, their tables and benches, all bear witness so unmistakably to their cleansing ardour. I suppose a fly in the butter they were churning, or a mired foot on the boards they have but just scrubbed, would be as nearly likely to give them a fit as anything could be. Winter is a terrible time of trial to them. The

snow, at least in the country, is so nice and spotless that it puts them quite out of humour with the results of their own domestic washings.

Of course different standards of cleanliness prevail throughout the different provinces of Holland. It is one thing to be in the home province, of which Amsterdam is the capital; quite another to be in Drenthe, where the peasants are very poor, and have to wrest a livelihood from peat morasses which we in Scotland or Ireland should regard as irreclaimable. In Drenthe I have entered a house the floor of which was grimed with mud and snow clots that would have made an English peasant woman ill at ease. Here, too, the labourer, his wife, daughter, and two boys were drinking coffee out of cups that were not clean; and the lace headgear which the women-folk wore over the silver plates with which custom bids them cover their foreheads would have been improved by a hearty introduction to the wash-tub. As a rule, however, it may be said that soap is in much more demand in the land of dikes than with us.

A certain inscription in the little house at Zaandam in which Peter the Great lived for a time while he was apprentice to the shipbuilding trade, will, I think, bear excellent adaptation to suit the Dutch character. The inscription says: 'Niets is den grooten man te klein'—'Nothing is too small (or trivial) to the great man.' I propose, therefore, to compliment the Dutch people by changing the words to, 'Nothing is too great for these small men;' and by applying them to the inhabitants of the Netherlands.

At first sight it may appear that the mind of the Dutchman is more apt to be engrossed by the care of little things than great. The Dutch domestic artist with an immense appreciation for details is better known to us than the Dutch artist with conceptions like Raphael's or Michelangelo's. But it ought to be enough merely to hint at the history of Holland to prove the contrary. Where else in the world, too, can we find such gigantic works of their kind as the dikes with which the Dutchmen from year to year keep the sea off their land! Where, too, is there such industrious reclamation of square miles of country, which in other lands would have been regarded as hopelessly good for nothing to the end of time! The 'polders,' or cultivated beds of drained marshes or lakes, are now among the best lands in Holland. And nothing more astounds a visitor to the wilds of such provinces as Drenthe than to discover in the midst of vast expanses of flat heath that seems useless except for the stacks of peat which here and there stand upon it, settlements of hundreds and even thousands of men who have fought with the barren heath and conquered it, even as their more inventive brethren have been able to compel the sea to do their bidding.

I refer more particularly to the Dutch penal institutions between Meppel and Heerenveen. It seems genuine wisdom in the authorities to make the State prisoners do for the worst parts of Holland what nature has neglected to do. Little by little the country will all be cultivated; and at no distant date one will be able to traverse it from end to end and find no purposeless spot upon it. Doubtless the æsthete will ask where lies the merit of turning a land into one great

kitchen garden. But I do not care to concern myself with answering a supposititious question of this kind.

In calling the Dutch 'small men' I would limit the application of the words to the men of Holland proper. The Frieslanders and the people of the neighbouring provinces are almost as different from the dwellers between the mouth of the Maas and the Helder as we ourselves are. They are much taller and more stalwart, and their faces have hardly anything of that farcical cast which sets one laughing at a plebeian Dutchman of Rotterdam or Amsterdam. It is an awful charge to make against the thoroughbred Dutchman, but truth prompts me to declare he has no legs to speak of, even as his wife has no waist, and his daughter no ankles. Seated, the average Dutchman is not conspicuously lilliputian; but when he stands, you discover that Nature has played him a wicked trick in abbreviating his thighs. Of course, however, she compensates him in other directions. She has made him nearly as broad as he is long, and given him such a faculty of patience and long-drawn industry as ensures him as much chance of happiness as the most energetic of tall men has at his disposal. To the accomplished Dutchman it is simply delightful to sit in a 'trekschuit,' or passenger canal boat, and travel twenty or thirty miles in this way at two and a half miles an hour, with a landscape before his eyes that differs not in the least at the end of the five-and-twenty miles from what it was when he began the journey. So he may be allowed a box of tobacco to masticate on the way, or half-a-dozen bad cigars to smoke; so he may have a penny glass of gin now and then when the craving assails him, and be freed from all obligation to be polite—he is what the greatest of men have not succeeded in becoming, to wit, a contented man.

The Frieslander is not such a comatose individual. I speak of him especially when he wears his winter humour. In summer he is no doubt enthusiastic enough; but his enthusiasm is of an agricultural order, pivoting about such things as the butter and cheese he makes and sends to us in England, and the beasts he fattens on the nice broad meadows with which nature has so liberally endowed his dear native land. There is a picture in the Museum of Leeuwarden, the capital of Friesland, which shows that in 1430 A.D. there was a measure of refinement in this remote corner of Europe. It shows us a Friesland family eating their dinner—is it not a subject after the very heart of a Dutchman?—and we mark that the women of the house are allowed to take their place at the table, as if they had as much right to a meal as their lords and masters. The costumes and even the details of the ménage are very much less coarse than one would have expected them to be. And there is a fine fat capon upon the table, which somehow makes one think of the great roofed farmhouses about the province, in one of the barnyards of which it was probably fed through a luxurious summer in the first and only year of its lifetime.

I fancy it is in winter, however, that the Frieslander is most apt to stand his full height, and breathe with the fullest contentment. Certainly, it is more than likely to be rare lusty weather. Gone then for a while are all the green

meadows whence the honours of his butters and cheeses—which have taken so many creditable prices in different market-towns—have proceeded. Bound rudder and sail are then the pleasant chocolate and black boats in which the Frieslander passes so many agreeable summer hours, whether in helping to convey his farm-produce to the markets or the seaport of Harlingen, or in disporting himself on the broad meres which dot his province in the south-west, and which provide him with such toothsome eels for his table. The cows are stalled, and the canals are frozen a foot thick. It is time to put on skates and live the merry winter-life.

Now the average Dutchman of the south, though he can skate very well, looks rather foolish on the ice. His short legs and wide breeches are admirable adjuncts to his nose, his thin cocked beard, and the lumpishness of his expression. To be sure, this breadth makes him look important; but if he were less muscular it would be a sad hindrance to him in battling with the wind, which in winter is apt to make skating in one direction something of a trial.

The Frieslander, however, is taller, better proportioned, and in all respects a handsome fellow. The yellow beard he sometimes wears seems to put him at once on a footing of affinity with the other members of that respectable Anglo-Saxon family to which we ourselves belong; quite as much his provincial speech and his blue eyes. He is a most masterful creature when once he has put on those quaint old-fashioned skates of his, and thinks nothing of making a score of miles from one village to another before you and I are out of bed. As for the cold, what cares he for it? He knows he must rely on that lusty circulation of his to keep him from being benumbed, though he clothe ever so lightly, and seems more regardless of his head—which a sealskin cap takes care of—than of his well-shaped body.

A Friesland canal in winter is as lively as anything can be. The ice may not be very good or of unquestionable strength; but no sooner are the boats penned in and the broken pieces of ice sufficiently welded to allow him to skate between them, than his sport begins. It is a feat of honour to be the first in the district to cross the canal when the wintry season is in its youth. The name of the bold lad is remembered for a week or two; and I have no doubt his pluck stands him in good stead in the esteem of the cherry-cheeked damsels of his province, whose eyes dance past one so brightly when the ice festival is in full swing, and journeying is all done upon skates.

But to recur to some more general features of life in this flat little corner territory of Europe. I was amazed to be told by an intelligent Dutchman of a large market-town that there is a vast amount of religious infidelity among his countrymen. At the first thought I should as soon have expected to hear the like charge brought against Scotland. Afterwards, however, when I had gone elsewhere in the land and looked in the churches, and watched the worthy Dutchman at his devotions, it seemed less surprising.

Upon one of these occasions a small incident happened which has driven one particular church—the large one of Groningen—very firmly into my memory. I was smoking a cigar when I

approached it, and naturally I had either to throw the cigar away or put it into my pocket. So I fancied, at least. Having, as I thought, extinguished it, I pocketed it, and followed certain large-bodied ladies who went in procession to their ugly pews in the noble old building, with their maids behind them carrying footstools, in which pans of peat-embers were to contribute to the comfort of their toes. A horrid smell of burning soon made me wonder how the congregation could endure so defective a heating apparatus. It went with me wherever I strolled in the broad aisles and abandoned choir of the church, and latterly became so insufferable that I went outside to breathe more freely. The next thing that happened was an outcry from a working man who pointed at me—and then I discovered that I was very thoroughly on fire. The thick wool of my coat was smouldering right and left, with a lurid line of fire on both sides. The odd thing was that my friend was a fireman, and that the fire station was close at hand. Thither, therefore, we went and the destruction was arrested; and while I sat among the fire-engines and was told their history and their abilities by one fireman, another brought forth needle and thread and gave me a patching I had no cause to be ashamed of.

From this church I wandered to another almost as large and of the same period. Service was going on; the drowsy voice of the pastor could be heard even in the beautiful forlorn choir which had been boarded away from the rest of the church. Once upon a time it had been a magnificent building. Now it was whitewashed, its chiselled work had been beaten to pieces with hammers, the brasses from the ornate gravestones which paved it had long been torn away, and the very excrescences of the scrolls, floriations, and flourishings which adorned the epitaphs had been scratched at and levelled by iconoclastic imbeciles. Texts from the Bible, the Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer, were painted in dark colours upon the glowing white columns of the choir. Where the high altar had been, there was a common table piled with boards and a ladder or two set crosswise. The windows were of common glass, and through a broken pane the chill winter's wind blew upon this cold unedifying scene. And all the while, on the other side of the screen, in the cosy body of the church, there were three or four hundred respectable burghers and their wives in decent Sunday clothes, worshipping in sober brown pews, and keeping themselves comfortable with cushions and stoves. And the men kept their hats on. It is a mournful picture, this succession of wrecked churches wherever one goes in Holland.

For my part, however, I was struck rather by the simplicity of the people than by anything in them which was likely to make them aggressively irreligious. They have an intense love for their unlovely little land. That may be taken for granted. And they have small desire to see the rest of the world, to compare it with the homeland; which alone seems to mark them as a good deal divergent in nature from the main stock whence we also have come. When they are rich, they build themselves pretty little villas, to which they give names much like a child with its dolls. Sometimes the name is a whole text, which must be tiresome for the correspondents of the people

who live in it. Further, they deck the small gardens of their little villas with tiny lakes and fountains, summer-houses in which one person may enter, or two only at a pinch, and bridges not warranted to bear a Dutchman of low degree. These features of Dutch villa-life look strange enough when winter has stripped the surrounding trim-cut little trees of all their leaves, frozen the lakelets, turned the fountains into preposterous images of ice, and covered the baby summer-houses with snow. But in summer they look stranger still. Then the Dutchman and his wife and family may be seen moving about among them, happy as if they were so many children at play. They take tea between the lakelet and the summer-house, and look inexpressible words of felicity at each other. The summer-house itself is of course at the disposal in chief of the elder daughter of the house, and the excellent young man who seems inclined to ask her to marry him. But they cannot always squeeze into it at the same time, which is very tragic.

EXPIATION.

A STORY OF THE CHILIAN REVOLT.

By F. W. EVANS.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

IT was the month of January, the year 1891. Summer in Chili. The Republic was in a state of uneasiness and ferment. The Parliament and the President were embarking on a struggle for the supremacy, a contest which, from the determination expressed on both sides, promised to be bitterly fought out and exhaustive. Partisanship ran high. A wholesome dread of Balmaceda and his merciless method of dealing with his enemies caused many people to conceal their true sympathies; yet there was little doubt but that the adherents of the Congressional party were the strongest in number. The majority of the upper class, with true conservatism, supported the President in his endeavour to attain something like autocratic powers. Among his adherents was Colonel Enrique de Nardez, descendant of an old and ennobled Spanish family. In the war of '64, Nardez did yeoman service; and in all her troubles, Chili had no braver, better defender than he. Enjoying the respect and admiration of all classes, Nardez did not gain, and indeed did not seek, the affection of any. A character stern and unbending, carrying into all the relations of life the strictness of the military martinet, had yet in its innermost recess one spark of truer humanity in a deep-seated and lasting love for George, his motherless son.

Lieutenant George de Nardez held a commission in the navy. Neither expense nor trouble had been spared in his training. A liberal education, concluding at a German university, and embracing a lengthy visit to the United States, had given George broader views and less introspective egotism than the average Chilean. In person he was of average height and average good looks, the latter enhanced by a frank and charming smile. He was as much attached to his father as the latter to him. Their only disagreements were political. George was suspected, and not without reason, of

being more inclined to favour the Parliament than the President. Many sharp words and a few heated arguments had passed between father and son on the subject, without, however, disturbing their mutual affection. Within the last few days, however, a subject of dispute had arisen which threatened graver consequences.

There was at the time residing in the same town a widow lady named Gorman, relict of a prosperous corn-merchant of Santiago, an Irishman, who came to Chili forty years previously to seek his fortune, found it, and, indifferent to the flashing beauty of the Chilean damsels, journeyed home to the Green Island, and brought back as his wife a Scottish girl, whom he found there visiting. The only child of the marriage was a daughter, Ada, who was born in 1871. The mixture of Scottish and Irish blood in her veins had produced a beautiful woman. The best qualities of both nations met in her person; the large, dark, speaking eyes—inherited from her mother—looked out from and lit up a face as clear and delicately complexioned as it is only possible for a healthy happy maiden to possess. Her nose was not of the strictly aquiline type, nor her mouth such an apology for one as we see depicted in fashion plates; but the two soft lips were the most tempting in the world. Without being tall, she had a deliciously shaped figure. Altogether, she was a lovable girl, in manner and character as pleasing as she was physically charming. George de Nardez met her and succumbed. To his intense delight, she proved not indifferent to his society and, after a short courtship, they became engaged, not, however, without the strongest opposition on the part of her mother, who was against the step being taken without the consent or at least knowledge of George's father.

George, however, had pleaded so strongly, urging the unsettled state of the country and his liability to be called away on duty at a moment's notice, that the old lady reluctantly assented to an immediate engagement. It was more difficult to reconcile her to the concealment of the fact from the old Colonel. George was not at fault in thinking his father would be opposed to the match. Truth to tell, the Colonel had other and more ambitious matrimonial views for his son. His heart had long been set on uniting his son to one who could bring not only wealth, but that rank and position which the old aristocrat worshipped. Such a one he had in view for some time, but had not divulged his views until assured of the willingness of the lady's relatives. Learning at last that this assent would not be wanting, he at the next opportunity broached the subject to his son, only to be startled and shocked to find an obstacle in his path of so formidable a nature as George's love for and engagement to another woman.

The two men were sitting in the veranda room of their house in the suburbs of Santiago, when the elder sprang his mine, and the younger the countermine. The Colonel rose to his feet and paced the room with long deliberate strides. He was palpably greatly disturbed and surprised; but in the straight stern lines of his shaven, furrowed face there was no sign of bending from his path. George sat on a chair listening attentively and answering his father respectfully. 'I

cannot, father,' he was saying. 'Even if I was not in love with Ada, I could not now draw back; I have passed my word.'

'That can easily be arranged,' said the old man quickly, pausing in his walk; 'those people will listen to reason.'

'I hope not!'

'You fool—ungrateful fool! is this the reward of all my care and affection?'

'I am very sorry indeed, father, more so than you can'—

'Oh George,' interrupted the Colonel, 'I implore you give up—give up, for my sake, all idea of this—this connection, and take the wife I offer you—handsome, educated, rich, and refined. That is the wife for you, my son, a daughter of our best blood. How can you refuse such an offer, and prefer a'—

'Stop!' thundered George, starting up with an angry gesture. Then, quietly but determinedly: 'Father, I cannot do as you wish.'

'You mean you *will* not.'

'I cannot, and will not. I love Ada with my whole heart and soul. We are betrothed, and, God sparing us, I will marry her.'

'But you shall not!'

'Who—what will prevent me? I am of age.—Oh father! if you ever cared for me, be good to me now. Would you have me take a step which would not only shut out every hope of happiness for me in this world, but would cause me to despise myself for the rest of my days?'

'You talk like a boy. You would forget in twelve months. She, in less.'

George's face lit up with a lover's faith. 'Never, never!' he replied; 'and I will marry her—yes, to-morrow.' This last with sudden impulsiveness.

'You are determined?'

'Yes.'

'Very well, we shall see. Now go!'

When the Colonel spoke in this manner, there was nothing to be done but to obey. After the young man retired, the elder continued pacing up and down the room, displaying, however, more agitation than he had allowed himself to show in his son's presence. He was enduring a great inward struggle. He stopped in his walk every now and then, as though struck by some fresh idea, and then, with an eloquent despairing gesture, resumed his promenade. At length he sat down at a desk and hurriedly wrote a letter. Having folded and directed it, he placed it in his pocket and left the house.

Meanwhile, George, on leaving his father, had walked quickly into the city and wended his way to the house of his betrothed's mother. The ladies were not at home when he arrived; but he elected to wait, and thus gained time to subdue his agitation and attain at least outward calmness before they came in. Control as he might, however, he could not entirely conceal his excitement. Ada was quick to see something untoward had occurred, and it was not long before George had informed them of all that had passed between his father and himself.

The elder lady was, of course, inclined to temporise; and, regarding the Colonel's consent as an almost indispensable condition, would not at first hear of anything but submission and patience.

'I would be patient to wait,' said George—'wait for years, but I know it would be in vain.

Nothing will influence my father. I know him. If I don't marry Ada now, at once, I shall not have another opportunity.'

'I don't understand that,' said the widow.

'My father has enormous influence. He has the ear of the President,' explained George; 'and he will stop at nothing, hesitate at no measure to prevent our marriage. He could have me sent away—practically banished.'

'What do you propose?' said Mrs Gorman, hesitatingly.

'I told my father we would be married to-morrow. Whatever steps he takes, will be in view of that. I must anticipate him. It must be done at once, before he moves.'

'What! to-day? You think to be married to-day?'

'Yes, with Ada's consent.' He turned to his sweetheart and took her hand. 'Will you, Ada,' he asked pleadingly—'will you marry me to-day?'

The girl's eyes filled with tears, and saying 'Yes,' she burst out crying. 'He will take you from me, George, even after we are married.'

'No, not that. When he knows we have taken the irrevocable step, his opposition will cease. He won't fight mountains, and would not stoop to revenge.'

Ada turned an imploring look towards her mother, and that mute appeal moved her more than the man's arguments.

'Well,' she said at length, 'if it can be managed, I consent.—When, where, and how do you suggest?' she continued, addressing George.

'This evening, at San Jose de Ferrara. I will go at once and make all arrangements.'

Ada went up to her lover, and putting one hand on his shoulder, looked straight into his eyes. 'To-morrow, George?' she said; 'let me be my mother's till to-morrow.'

'It cannot be, Ada. To-morrow—to-night may be too late,' replied George.

One moment's hesitation, then Ada yielded; and the widow held out her hand to George, saying, 'As you will.'

The young man kissed them both affectionately, and, promising to be back in an hour, hurried away.

The ladies set about making such preparations as the short time allowed would permit; but even this was curtailed, the sound of great excitement in the streets attracting them to the windows. Crowds of people were out, and speedily the news spread: 'Civil war had broken out!' The Congress troops had taken the field.

Before the hour expired, George returned. He also had heard the news, and hastened to reassure the ladies by his presence. 'This is an additional reason for hurrying the marriage,' he said; 'I have arranged everything.'

A few hours subsequently, a small party of six persons, consisting of George Nardex and his bride, the latter's mother with a lady friend, and two officers in civilian dress—friends of the bridegroom—emerged from the little chapel of San Jose de Ferrara, and entering a couple of hired carriages, drove away.

By this time the streets were in an uproar. The greatest excitement was visible everywhere and in everybody. Shouting and singing, laugh-

ing and drinking; troops marching, bands playing. Strange that nothing but war, cruel war, could cause so much of what looked like joy.

As the bridal party entered the street in which the Gormans resided, usually a very quiet place, they saw that the excitement seemed to be concentrated, centred on one spot, and that the door of Mrs Gorman's house. A small crowd of loungers, strollers, and neighbours had gathered, in the midst of which a number of uniforms were discernible. As the carriages drove up, the crowd parted and became silent. The widow's face assumed an expression of puzzled anger, and she instinctively turned an interrogative look on her son-in-law. The latter's face was as white as death; but curbing his emotion as well as he could, he descended, handed out the two elder ladies, and then turned to assist his bride.

As she came down in his arms, she whispered: 'What is it, George?'

Before he could answer, the officer in charge of the soldiers stepped forward, touched him on the arm and said: 'Lieutenant George de Nardez! I think?'

'The same, sir. What is it?'

'You must come with me. You are arrested.'

'Arrested! On what charge?' The words were words of surprise, but there was no astonishment visible in George's face.

Ada, who had watched his face intently with her arm within his, now withdrew it, and stole it protectingly round his shoulder.

'I arrest you on a charge of being inimical to the Government,' said the officer formally.

'I have just been married,' faltered George, unconscious in his agitation of the irrelevancy of his reply.

'I am deeply, truly sorry to have such a duty to perform and at such an hour,' said the officer; 'but I must carry out my orders. I can only grant you five minutes' grace, and in doing that shall be straining my discretion.'

'May I enter the house and bid my wife farewell?'

'Certainly. I have your parole?'

'Yes. I thank you.'

At the expiration of five minutes, George reappeared and surrendered. One of the bridal carriages was chartered. George took his seat; and then, with his captor by his side instead of his bride, and two armed soldiers for bridesmaids, he was driven away to spend his wedding night in prison.

The military prison to which George was conveyed was but partly filled on his arrival; but within a few hours prisoners began to file in rapidly. The emissaries of the President had, on the first sign of active rebellion, laid their hands on all known or suspected opponents within reach: The young lieutenant passed a very bitter night. In addition to the agony of such a parting and a great anxiety as to his wife's bearing under the shock, he was tormented by the uncertainty connected with his arrest. Was it due to his father's action, or solely to his own political opinions? In the former case, he might hope for a speedy release when the futility of the step became manifest. The morning dragged slowly on without anything arising to resolve this doubt. About noon, however, and before the meal hour, footsteps approached his cell.

The door was opened, and Ada and her mother entered, accompanied by Don Manuel Pulido, a lawyer and friend of the family. George sprang to his feet, and without a word the lovers were in each other's arms. The other two turned away for a moment, respecting alike the bitterness and the bliss of the meeting. Time, however, is precious at a prison interview.

Don Pulido spoke, and addressing George, said: 'I have obtained permission for this meeting with great trouble and some risk. It must only last a quarter of an hour. Make the most of it. Why are you here? Have you been formally charged?'

'No. I know nothing beyond what the officer said when arresting me,' replied George.

'And that was?'

'That I was arrested as inimical to the Government—meaning, I presume, the President.'

'Do you know the Congress party is in open rebellion?'

'I learned it yesterday.'

'That lends seriousness to your arrest.'

'I have reason for thinking my apprehension on that charge was a mere ruse.'

'How? You must be candid.'

George looked at Ada, as though he would spare her. She saw and rightly interpreted the glance, and taking his hand in hers, said: 'Go on, George. I have a right to know everything now, and strength to hear anything.'

'Well, you must know,' said George, addressing Pulido, 'my father was opposed to our marriage. At our last meeting yesterday we had high words on the subject. When he saw I would not yield to persuasion, he threatened to prevent our union at any cost and—I fancy he may have used his influence and caused my arrest in order to attain this object.'

'Is that possible?' said the lawyer.

'Thinking, no doubt,' continued George, 'to frighten me into submission, and relying on his position and influence to prevent any—'

At this moment the cell door was again opened and Colonel Nardez entered. He was evidently prepared to find others there, and bowed courteously to the ladies, while greeting the lawyer by name. He then turned to his son; but the old fearless look was gone from his eyes, and his glance was hesitating and shifty. The old soldier was ashamed, and to cover his embarrassment assumed an overbearing manner. 'Well,' said he, 'I hope you have come to your senses?'

'Have I been without them?' queried George.

'You have been mad!'

'This isn't exactly the place to cure madness.'

'No, but folly—yes!'

'Let me assure you, father, that mine is a folly, if you choose to call it so, that no time will cure or any coercion diminish.'

'Are you aware of the terrible position in which you stand?' queried the elder man.

'I am, and also to whose unnatural action I owe it.'

The random shot hit the mark, and George's spirits rose. He was much the calmer and more collected of the two.

'Why did you defy me?' The Colonel's voice faltered. He began to display great agitation.

'I could not do otherwise, father—could not. Forgive me now for not obeying you in this.'

Take me out of this. I presume that as you had me confined, you can also have me released?' 'God knows,' muttered the father, 'I am myself unaccountably under suspicion now. Oh, why did you defy me?' he reiterated, and there was something in his tone as well as in the words that roused apprehension.

George waited anxiously. In the elder man's mind a struggle was going on. 'Will you give this—this idea—this marriage up?' dropped slowly from his lips, and he looked eagerly into his son's face.

'I cannot—on my honour, I cannot. It is much too late,' replied George firmly.

'Would you rather—remain a prisoner?'

'If that is the alternative—Yes!'

'Will you remain a prisoner until—until some morning you are taken out and shot?' demanded the Colonel in a low voice of suppressed anxiety. 'What will that profit you? You could not marry then.'

'I am not going to marry again,' said George with a ghost of a smile.

'Again! Why, what do you mean?'

George took Ada by the hand, and advancing a step, presented her formally to the Colonel. 'My wife,' said he. 'We were married yesterday.'

The old man started as though he had been struck; then he bowed low. When he stood again upright, all the assumed sternness had passed out of his face, and an ill-concealed anxiety and remorse taken its place. He did not, could not speak. His better nature, his strong natural affection for his son, was conquering the pride and obstinacy of his character. At the moment when the struggle was at its fiercest, Ada threw herself on her knees at his feet, sobbing. The scale was turned. The old soldier lifted the girl gently, looked at her a moment critically, and kissed her. Then turning to his son, he extended his hand with a gesture of reconciliation. For a moment the three were locked together in an embrace. Then the elder loosened himself and spoke. 'I should be on my knees now, praying and begging for pardon,' he said fiercely.

Mrs Gorman and Don Pulido had been silent but interested spectators of the moving scene, but at this juncture the lawyer interposed. 'Permit me,' he said, 'to congratulate you all round on the understanding arrived at. Now, I advise strongly that no time be lost in effecting your son's release. In the present state of affairs, he is in a critical position.'

'You are right,' said the Colonel: 'it must be done at once.'

'May I ask, Colonel,' continued the lawyer, 'if you were instrumental in causing his arrest?'

'Yes,' was the low reply. 'It was only to be a temporary measure.'

'Then you can manage his release speedily?'

The Colonel was silent; a terrible anxiety fastened on the others. 'Yes, I suppose so. I don't know! Oh miserable father that I am! I will go at once; but I fear the shadow of suspicion has fallen on me. God grant I may be mistaken!'

'What steps do you propose to take?' asked the lawyer. 'Can I be of any assistance?'

'I will see Balmaceda at once, and state the entire facts. He can scarcely refuse me a favour.'

'But where is he? He left the capital last night.'

The Colonel bit his lip with vexation. 'I will follow him,' he said. 'I can surely find out his whereabouts. I must see him personally. I could do nothing with any of the others.'

'Then come at once. I must escort the ladies home, and then am at your disposal, if I can be of any use whatever.'

Colonel Nardez turned to his son, and clasping his hand, said: 'Cheer up, George; I have every hope of success. He cannot turn against me or refuse any reasonable request of mine. Be of good heart, my son. Forgive me, if you can now; but I must wait until you are free before I can ask your pardon.'

'You have it freely now, father. Whatever happens, I know you have done nothing but in care of me.'

Steps were heard in the corridor.

'Time is up,' said Don Pulido; 'we have trespassed already.'

Before George could kiss his bride good-bye, the chief of the prison entered accompanied by another official and a warder. 'Colonel de Nardez,' said the first-named, 'you had permission to visit the prison and have an interview with your son. I regret to inform you that your visit must be prolonged.'

'What do you mean?' demanded the Colonel sternly.

'This gentleman will explain,' said the chief, indicating his companion.

'I am the bearer of orders from the President,' said the official, 'ordering the arrest and detention of Colonel de Nardez, who has become suspected of intriguing against the Government.'

'There must be some mistake,' said the Colonel in desperation. 'I am one of his Excellency's friends.'

'His Excellency is become mistrustful of his friends,' remarked the official dryly. 'However, my task is ended.—I leave Colonel de Nardez in your custody,' he concluded, addressing the jailer.

'Permit me,' said the latter, indicating the door.

The old Colonel turned on his son a look of the keenest remorse and appeal, and then followed his custodian from the cell.

No further time was granted to the others, and they were compelled to take a hasty farewell, crushed and desperate at the turn affairs had taken. George still had spirit to whisper: 'Courage, my darling; it will not be for long. Balmaceda will be surely beaten, and then'—A fervent kiss concluded the sentence, and a minute afterwards George was alone.

REFUSE DISPOSAL.

THE rapid accumulation of rubbish is unhappily too well known to need special comment. Every one of our readers is familiar with the constant warfare with refuse in every shape and kind, necessary to maintain our houses and streets in a healthy and sanitary condition. The problem in large cities is a serious one, and the cleansing and scavenging duties of the local authorities, whether viewed in the light of their unintermittent nature, or the serious danger to the public entailed by neglect or failure, are of far greater importance to society than many topics which more readily command attention.

As our readers are doubtless aware, the Public Health Acts impose on every Local Authority the duty of the removal of ashes, dust, and rubbish generally from every house. Into the vexed questions of the best methods of storing that rubbish and removing it, we do not propose to enter; various modes are in vogue, each possessing distinct advantages, and each requiring to be considered in relation to the particular needs and characteristics of any city or locality under consideration. Our present concern is rather the ultimate disposal of the collected rubbish, a problem, we may add, which is occupying the serious attention of sanitary engineers and municipal authorities. As is well known, 'town refuse' is largely used for manurial purposes in agriculture; but not only is this mode of disposal liable to objection on the ground of the unpleasant odour caused, but it is understood that in many cases the value of such refuse for spreading on the land has declined, owing to various causes, such as the improved methods of combustion now in vogue, with corresponding diminution in the quantity of ashes thrown away; whilst the extended use of tinned goods has not merely lessened the amount of organic refuse, but has introduced into house refuse a large body of rubbish whose profitable utilisation has hitherto baffled the efforts of the economist.

No one who has noticed, we may remark in passing, the enormous quantities of empty tins bestrewing the country, will fail to admit the desirability of, and the enormous profit attending, a successful method of turning such to useful account. We believe tin toys have been profitably manufactured from empty sardine boxes; but the supply of raw material is far in excess of the demand for the finished product.

Turning to other methods of disposing of town refuse, that of tipping to form 'made-ground' for building purposes is highly objectionable on sanitary grounds, and even in the case of land at all likely to be used for residential purposes is to be strongly deprecated.

A third method—namely, deposit at sea, as practised in New York and Liverpool—is fully described by Mr Percy Boulnois, M.Inst.C.E., in an able paper recently read in Liverpool. In the case of Liverpool, two special steamers, carrying respectively three hundred and thirty and four hundred tons of refuse, are constantly employed in taking the material twenty-four miles out to sea and there depositing it. Mr Boulnois states that during 1891 no fewer than 145,032 tons of refuse were thus disposed of, at a cost of approximately 1s. 6½d. per ton. As pointed out in the paper above mentioned, this system is applicable only for cities near the coast; and the liability of the lighter refuse to float and be washed again on shore, forms a serious drawback. Moreover, trawling-nets are liable to injury from tinned-meat cases, &c.

The difficulties of other large cities in connection with the disposal of their refuse, and the constant questions arising in reference to the nuisance and undesirability of the material in question, are well known of late years. Recently, the material has been disposed of by burning, and the name of 'Refuse Destructors' has been given to the furnaces in which the operation has been performed. This system is growing in

favour, and the problem seems only what is the least cost at which it can be performed. Various types of Destructor are now in operation; and though it scarcely falls within the scope of this article to detail the different designs in use, we may point out that the principal points aimed at in each, as enumerated by Mr Boulnois, are: (1) Ease of access by carts; (2) Ease of charging furnaces; (3) Perfect combustion without nuisance; (4) Easy withdrawal of 'clinker'; (5) Reduction of the refuse to as small an amount of clinker and ash as possible; and (6) Expeditious combustion.

The cost of destruction of refuse by burning necessarily varies much in different districts, as quality of refuse, rate of wages, &c., fluctuate; but in the paper already quoted the rate per ton is given as ranging between sixpence and two shillings and threepence.

The site of a Refuse Destructor is necessarily a question involving much anxiety; for even with total cremation of all fumes in the Destructor, the refuse has still to be conveyed to it, and care has to be taken to cause as little nuisance as possible in conveying the material to the flames. The heat generated in a Destructor can be utilised for a variety of purposes, such as raising steam for electric light, pumping, &c.

In conclusion, the cremation of refuse is rapidly establishing itself, and bids fair to extend considerably. The problem is largely one of cost, as the system complies in all respects with sanitary science, and cannot fail to commend itself to every person interested in a question which, both directly and materially, concerns the whole community.

WESTWARD.

Westward the sunset is dying,
For twilight has gathered and grown;
Westward the swallow is flying,
The way that the Summer has flown—
Flying, flame-crown'd and crested
With light from the day that is spent,
After the Summer that rested
Awhile in our meadows—and went.

Westward the breezes are blowing
And breathing of nothing but rest;
Westward the river is flowing—
Thy home is there in the west,
And Summer around thee is springing,
But Autumn is lingering with me,
And westward my fancies are winging
Their flight unto thee—unto thee!

Ah, dreary and darkly and slow drifts
The time to the end of the year!
Blow, winds of the Winter, with snow-drifts,
And frost upon moorland and mere,
With the day when at last I shall follow
The flight of my thoughts and have rest,
Shall follow and find, like the swallow,
My Queen of the year in the west.

A. ST J. ADCOCK.

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ON GRIEF.

THERE may be more truth in the Stoic philosophy that denied grief to be grievous or pain an evil, than we moderns, with our army of anodynes, are willing to admit. In a day when morphia and chloroform, poppy and mandragora, and all the drowsy syrups of the East, are constantly being had recourse to for ills our forefathers endured with Indian fortitude, men are becoming nice and delicate, unwilling even to admit the fellowship of Grief. All periods of mourning are shortened: life, we say, is too brief to be passed in vain retrospects; put a gloze on sorrow; assume a cheerfulness if you have it not; do not shut yourself up with your unhappiness; if you have a grief, hide it; mingle with the crowd, and by-and-by you will cease to feel it. This mode of dealing with sorrow at least possesses one undeniable advantage—it exonerates our friends from showing sympathy, real or affected. And the man who can show a front of cheery stoicism under unhappiness, one who does not visit upon another human being the neglect or calumny which the day may have brought him, deserves praise. If, moreover, he is conscious of having acted unwisely, or his spirit is galled and vexed by the importunate remembrance of past follies; if he can still maintain his usual air of calm and good-humour, he is still further to be honoured for his wisdom. And if he be wise, he knows that few things take the flavour out of life more completely than going perpetually over the same ground in one's thoughts, dwelling on the 'devilry of circumstances,' whereby a small inlet of mischance has broadened into a flood of evil. A man who broods thus over a vexation—eating his own heart, as it were—is unaware, it may be, that the scourge under which he winces is wielded by himself—by his own pride. He is resolved at any cost to redeem the past—to cancel by success his first error or folly; and thus he keeps the wound raw, whereas, if he could once for all acknowledge his past want of wisdom, the

strength he has at his command would be his to labour with, unhampered by vain regrets.

But griefs whose dirge it is well to have sung and be done with, are not all of this nature. They are as various as the beings who suffer them; and that which crushes one, drives another to madness or suicide, or both, yet leaves a third stronger and sounder for the ordeal through which he has passed. Through it he attains to a health and vigour of soul which no mere enjoyment, however pure and right in itself, could give him. It has added elasticity as well as strength to his perceptions—like an ash-tree that, grown in the shade, possesses twice the suppleness, as well as double the resisting power, of one that has sprung up in sunshine. We venture to assert that no human being in this world can be all that he was born capable of becoming unless his soul has been purged by intensest sorrow. Our griefs, too, are the pass-keys by means of which we gain admission into the darkened chambers of another's spirit. By them are we made free of the guild; they enable us to minister to the sad and the lonely by virtue of that fellowship and sympathy which is the child of knowledge and experience. This is one of the advantages bestowed by grief—perhaps the greatest that it has to give. Another valuable fruit of sorrow is that it enables us to estimate at their true value a hundred little daily and hourly vexations, which shrink and dwindle in the presence of majestic grief, ashamed of their own pettiness.

Often grief puts a period to anxiety—a sad ending, perhaps, but still an ending. We have watched, it may be for weeks, beside a sick-bed, now hoping, now fearing; the tension grows with every hour's anxiety, until it is almost too great for human endurance, and at last the bolt is shot, and we are left to face life without the one who was the very life of our lives. But—it is all over; and our consolation must be that the anguish and the dull succeeding blank is ours, not theirs. And if we have parted in unabated love, who shall say that the parting

was ill timed? Misunderstandings, alienation, can never come now; the beloved image is ours, clear and bright for ever.

We have said griefs are as various as those who endure them; and we may add, borne in as many various ways as there are individual sufferers. There is the loud, vehement, passionate grief that wears itself out by its own violence; and there is the deep quiet sorrow that wears itself into the character, purifying every emotion, sanctifying every impulse.

Some, sorrow stuns—turning heart and face to stone. After a great grief, these will pass through life afterwards as though incapable of either joy or sorrow more. These are chiefly those—like the king 'who never smiled again'—upon whom sorrow has fallen suddenly and unexpectedly, like a bolt from a clear and apparently propitious sky. Others, again, grief renders bitter; and forthwith they make a mock of all things, including themselves; striving to find in scorn and satire a bitter solace for their disenchantment. Of these are the proud in spirit, who covet respect, and despise sympathy, and fairly hate pity. Others, on the contrary, crave so keenly to be commiserated, that every one about them, yea, even those who only casually look upon their lined and puckered faces as they meet them in the streets, cannot choose but recognise, and in a manner feel for, the piteous griefs that have left such seams and scars behind them.

Again, there are dispositions that grief turns acid and acrid, making their owners worry and fret about every trifle that goes wrong, urging them to anticipate the dark side of every event not yet come to pass, to express but a grudging satisfaction when their prophecies are unfulfilled, and who perfectly revel, when the event justifies their forebodings, in saying triumphantly: 'I told you so.' Some—and these not a few—find relief from grief in anger, in irritability and exactions, who resent other folks' happiness as an insult almost to their gloomy selves. And having indulged a habit of discontent, fostered the growth of persistent disparagement until praise or commendation is with them almost an impossibility, they wake up at last to find themselves isolated, avoided, left solitary, amid the dreary ruins of a life that their own hand has so greatly helped to wreck.

A foolish family pride lies at the root of many a grief. A child has erred perhaps, erred madly, wickedly; we long to forgive—to take back the weak, the unstable, the repentant sinner; we *know* that in such forgiveness lies our own only chance of peace of mind, of happiness, as well as his only, or, at any rate, his best chance of reformation, of rehabilitation. But—'He has disgraced the family;' and our pride and vanity revolt equally with our virtue at the idea of reinstating the erring one. And thus the evil that might have been single and transitory becomes permanent—permanent as our grief—a grief tinged with remorse not undeservedly, in that we have, under whatever name we may disguise it, preferred to pamper our pride—to courageously holding out openly a helping hand to the foolish, dejected, hopeless backslider.

We may reckon on our fingers the friends who would stand by us in grief, in poverty, in sick-

ness; we are fortunate indeed if we can securely reckon on one who will stand by us in the greatest grief of all, in shame, in disgrace. And yet it is all but impossible for us to be acquainted with the causes of the career which have led to the catastrophe on which we so glibly pronounce judgment.

The very possible ill management of parents, the probable temptations, are all, or almost all, hidden from us. Yet we immaculate vases look down from under our glass shades with a scarcely justifiable self-satisfaction on the poor little pitcher that has been carried once too often to the well. Dante puts into the mouth of Francesca the oft-quoted saying that there is no grief so deep as that of remembering happier days in present distress. But that is so only when, as in Francesca's case, it is remorse that is speaking. She sorrowed, and sorrowed justly, for the happy, honourable days before that one on which 'they read no more.' But let the happiness that once was ours be untinged by remorse, by self-reproach, and be our present horizon ever so gloomy, memory will send a twilight glow from the past into our minds; and we say, and say truly, that 'it is better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all.'

In like manner, those who have lost a fortune may console themselves that at least they have had a fortune to lose. Many there are who have never even seen 'better days.' And supposing what the world calls good fortune to have continued uninterrupted—supposing we have never lapsed from the small circle of self-satisfied prosperity, it is possible that this, too, might constitute a misfortune in itself, by fostering our egotism, dulling our imaginations, narrowing our sympathies.

It is inexperience, or feebleness of insight, that makes us look at life as a child at a statue: so round, so smooth, soft surely, and responsive. But when we touch it, we *feel* how cold and hard and insensate is the marble of which it is composed; yet, having learned certain truths and limitations respecting it, and having got, as it were, to the right stand-point, the marble regains somewhat of the fascination of its old smooth beauty.

We learn to manage our griefs, so to speak; we recall the great and wise sayings uttered of old by the great and wise to comfort and aid their brethren in adversity. If we cannot forget our sorrows, we learn to occupy our minds with other things. True, they are our very own—our dear-bought possession. Any accident may deprive us of our joys, but our sorrows are at least our own. Yet is it not wise to dwell wholly on our grief freehold: we must pass the boundaries, venture upon higher ground, become acquainted with the mode in which our neighbours cultivate their domains, acknowledge them to be perhaps even wider than our own—put to better uses, made more profitable by better husbandry. It is a poor pride that makes us shrink from learning a lesson from others' management of their 'heritage of woe.'

What, beyond sympathy, may we reckon as a fruit of the inheritance in which we all share? For one thing, a knowledge of ourselves. Until the storm came and tested us, we neither knew

how frail nor how strong we were. For another—if it has been allowed its dues, it has begot a fortitude and a preparedness in us; a resolve and a readiness if need be to suffer; and lastly, a great peace, in that we have done with sickly uncertainties, vain hopes, selfish longings; and leaning on the strengthening arm of our grief, we can smile alike at the blandishments or frowns of a blind or fickle Fortune.

BLOOD ROYAL.*

CHAPTER X.—MR PLANTAGENET LIVES AGAIN.

OUTSIDE college that same afternoon, Trevor Gillingham in a loud check suit lounged lazily by the big front gate—on the prowl, as he phrased it himself, for an agreeable companion. For the Born Poet was by nature a gregarious animal, and hated to do anything alone, if a comrade could be found for him. But being a person of expansive mind, ever ready to pick up hints from all and sundry, he preferred to hook himself on by pure chance to the first stray comer, a process which contributed an agreeable dramatic variety to the course of his acquaintanceships. He loved deliberately to survey the kaleidoscope of life and to try it anew in ever-varying combinations.

Now the first man who emerged from the big gate that afternoon happened, as luck would have it, to be Richard Plantagenet in his striped college blazer, on his way to the barges. Gillingham took his arm at once as if they were boon companions. 'Are you engaged this afternoon?' he inquired with quite friendly interest. 'Because, if not, I should so much like the advantage of your advice and assistance. My governor's coming up next week for a few days to Oxford, and he wants some rooms—nice rooms to entertain in. He won't go to the *Randolph*—*banal*, very, don't you know—because he'll want to see friends a good deal: he's convivial, the governor; and he'd like a place where they'd be able to cook a decent dinner. Now, Edward Street would do, I should think. First-rate rooms in Edward Street. Can you come round and help me?'

He said it with an amount of *empressement* that was really flattering. Now Dick had nothing particular to do that afternoon, though he had been bound for the river: but he always liked a stroll with that brilliant Gillingham, whom he had never ceased to admire as a creature from another social sphere, a cross between Lord Byron and the Admirable Crichton. So he put off his row, and walked round to Edward Street, the most fashionable quarter for high-class lodgings to be found in Oxford. Sir Bernard, it seemed, had just returned to England for a few short weeks from his Roumanian mission, and was anxious to get decent rooms, his son said, 'the sort of rooms, don't you know, where one can dine one's women folk, for he knows all the dons' families.' They looked at half-a-dozen sets, all in the best houses, and Gillingham finally selected a suite at ten guineas. Dick opened his eyes with astonishment at that lordly figure: he never really knew till

then one could pay so much for lodgings. But he concealed his surprise from the Born Poet, his own pride having early taught him that great lesson in life of *nil admirari*, which is far more necessary to social salvation in snob-ridden England than ever it could have been in the Rome of the Cæsars.

On their way back to college, after a stroll round the meadows, they met a very small telegraph boy at the doors of Durham. 'Message for you, sir,' the porter said, touching his hat to Dick; and in great doubt and trepidation, for to him a telegram was a most rare event, Dick took it and opened it.

His face flushed crimson as he read the contents; but he saw in a second the only way out of it was to put the best face on things. 'Why, my father's coming up too,' he said, turning round to Gillingham. 'He'll arrive to-morrow. I—I must go this moment and hunt up some rooms for him. My sister doesn't say by what train he's coming; but he evidently means to stay, from what she tells me.'

'One good turn deserves another,' Gillingham drawled out carelessly. 'I don't mind going round with you and having another hunt. I should think that second set we saw round the corner would just about suit him.'

The second set had been rated at seven guineas a week. Dick was weak enough to colour again. 'Oh no,' he answered hurriedly. 'I—I'd prefer to go alone. Of course I shall want some much cheaper place than that. I think I can get the kind of thing I require in Grove Street.'

'As you will,' Gillingham answered lightly, nodding a brisk farewell, and turning back into quad. 'Far be it from me to inflict my company unwillingly on any gentleman anywhere. I'm all for Auberon Herbert and pure individualism.—I say, you, Faussett: here's a game;' and he walked mysteriously round the corner by the Warden's Lodgings. He dropped his voice to a whisper: 'The Head of the Plantagenets is coming up to-morrow to visit the Prince of the Blood: fact: I give you my word for it. So we'll have an opportunity at last of finding out who the dickens the fellow is, and where on earth he inherited the proud name of Plantagenet from.'

'There were some Plantagenets at Leeds—no; I think it was Sheffield,' Faussett put in, trying to remember. 'Somebody was saying to me the other day this man might be related to them. The family's extinct, and left a lot of money.'

'Then they can't have anything to do with our Prince of the Blood,' Gillingham answered carelessly; 'for he isn't a bit extinct, but alive and kicking: and he hasn't got a crooked sixpence in the world to bless himself with. He lives on cold tea and Huntley and Palmer's biscuits. But he's not a bad sort, either, when you come to know him; but you've got to know him first, as the poet observes: and he's really a fearful swell at the history of the Plantagenets.'

Dick passed a troubled night. Terrible possibilities loomed vague before him. Next day, he was down at the first two trains by which he thought it at all possible his father might arrive; and his vigilance was rewarded by finding Mr Plantagenet delivered by the second. The Head of the House was considerably surprised and not

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a little disappointed when he saw his son and heir awaiting him on the platform. 'What, you here, Dick!' he cried. 'Why, I wanted to surprise you. I intended to take my modest room for the night at the same hotel at which you stopped—the *Saracen's Head*, if I recollect the name aright—and then to drop in upon you quite unexpectedly about lunch-time.'

'Maud telegraphed to me that you were coming, father,' Dick answered, taking his hand, it must be acknowledged, a trifle less warmly than filial feeling might have dictated. Then his face grew fiery red. 'But I've engaged rooms for you,' he went on, 'not at an inn, on purpose. I hope, father, for your own sake, as well as for mine, while you're here in Oxford, you won't ever so much as enter one.'

It was a hard thing to have to say; but for very shame's sake, Dick felt he must muster up courage to say it. As for Mr Plantagenet himself, poor old sot that he was, a touch of manly pride brought the colour just for once to his own swollen cheek. 'I hope, Richard,' he said, drawing himself up very erect, for he had a fine carriage still, in spite of all his degradations—'I hope I have sufficient sense of what becomes a gentleman, in a society of gentlemen, to think of doing anything that would disgrace myself, or disgrace my son, or disgrace my name, or my literary reputation—which must be well known to many students of English literature in this university—by any unbecoming act of any description. And I take it hardly, Richard, that my eldest son, for whom I have made such sacrifices'—Mr Plantagenet had used that phrase so often already in the parlour of the *White Horse* that he had almost come by this time to believe himself there was really some truth in it—'should greet me with such marked distrust on the very outset of a visit to which I had looked forward with so much pride and pleasure.'

It was quite a dignified speech, for Mr Plantagenet. Dick's heart was touched by it. 'I beg your pardon, father,' he replied in a very low tone. 'I'm sorry if I've hurt you. But I meant no rudeness. I've engaged pleasant lodgings for you in a very nice street, and I'm sure I'll do everything in my power to make your visit a happy one.' As he spoke, he almost believed his father would rise for once to the height of the circumstances, and behave himself circumspectly with decorum and dignity during his few days at Oxford.

To do Mr Plantagenet justice, indeed, he tried very hard to keep straight for once, and during all his stay, he never even entered the doors of an hotel or public-house. Nay, more; in Dick's own rooms, as Dick noticed with pleasure, he was circumspect in his drinking; it flattered his vanity and his social pretensions to be introduced to his son's friends and to walk at his ease through the grounds of the college. Once more for a day or two Edmund Plantagenet felt himself a gentleman among gentlemen. Dick kept as close to him as possible, except at lecture hours; and then, as far as he could, he handed him over to the friendly care of Gillespie, who mounted guard in turn, and seemed to enter silently into the spirit of the situation. As much as possible, on the other hand, Dick avoided for those days Gillingham and Faussett's set, whose

only one wish, he felt sure, would be to draw his father into wild talk about the Plantagenet pedigree—a subject which Dick himself, in spite of his profound faith, had the good sense to keep always most sedulously in the background.

For the first three days, Dick was enabled to write nightly and report to Maud that so far all went well and there were no signs of a catastrophe. But on the fourth day, as ill-luck would have it, Gillingham came round to Faussett's rooms full of a chance discovery he had that moment lighted upon. 'Why, who'd ever believe it?' he cried, all agog. 'This man Plantagenet, who's come up to see his son, the Prince of the Blood, is a decayed writer, a man of letters of the Alaric Watts and Leigh Hunt period, not unheard of in his day as an inflated essayist. I know a lot of his stuff by heart—Hazlitt-and-water sort of style; De Quincey gone mad, with a touch of Bulwer: learned it when I was a boy, and we lived at Constantinople. He's the man who used to gush under the name of Barry Neville!'

'How did you find it out?' Faussett inquired, all eagerness.

'Why, I happened to turn out a Dictionary of Pseudonyms at the Union just now, in search of somebody else; and there the name Plantagenet caught my eye by chance: so of course I read, and, looking closer, I found this fact about the old man and his origin. It's extremely interesting. So, to make quite sure, I boarded Plantagenet five minutes ago with the point-blank question. "Hullo, Prince," said I, "I see your father's Barry Neville the writer." He coloured up to his eyes, as he does—it's a charming girlish trick of his; but he admitted the impeachment. There: he's crossing the quad now. I wonder what the dickens he's done with his governor!'

'I'll run up to his rooms and see,' Faussett answered, laughing. 'He keeps the old fellow pretty close—in cotton wool, so to speak. Won't trust him out alone, and sets Gillespie to watch him. But an Exeter man tells me he's seen the same figure down at a place called Chiddingwick, where he lives, in Surrey: and according to him, he's a rare old buffer. I'll go and make his acquaintance, now His R'yal Highness has gone off unattended to lecture: we'll have some sport out of him.' And he disappeared, brimming over, up the steps of the New Buildings.

All that afternoon, in fact, Richard noticed for himself that some change had come over his father's spirit. Mr Plantagenet was more silent, and yet even more grandiose and regal than ever. He hadn't been drinking, thank Heaven; not quite so bad as that, for Dick knew only too well the signs of drink in his father's face and his father's actions; but he had altered in demeanour, somehow, and was puffed up with personal dignity even more markedly than usual. He sat in and talked a great deal about the grand days of his youth; and he dwelt so much upon the past glories of Lady Postlethwaite's *salon* and the people he used to meet there that Dick began to wonder what on earth it portended.

'You'll come round to my rooms, father, after Hall?' he asked at last, as Mr Plantagenet rose

to leave just before evening chapel. 'Gillespie'll be here, and one or two other fellows.'

Mr Plantagenet smiled dubiously. 'No, no, my boy,' he answered, in his lightest and airiest manner. 'You must excuse me. This evening, you must really excuse me. To tell you the truth, Richard—with profound importance—I have an engagement elsewhere.'

'An engagement, father! You have an engagement! And in Oxford, too,' Dick faltered out. 'Why, how on earth can you have managed to pick up an engagement?'

Mr Plantagenet drew himself up as he was wont to do for the beginning of a quadrille, and assuming an air of offended dignity, replied with much hauteur: 'I am not in the habit, Richard, of accounting for my engagements, good, bad, or indifferent, to my own children. I am of age, I fancy. Finding myself here at Oxford in a congenial society—in the society to which I may venture to say I was brought up, and of which but for unfortunate circumstances, I ought always to have made a brilliant member—finding myself here in my natural surroundings, I repeat, I have of course *picked up*, as you coarsely put it, a few private acquaintances on my own account. I'm not so entirely dependent, as you suppose, upon you, Richard, for my introduction to Oxford society. My own personal qualities and characteristics, I hope, go a little way at least towards securing me respect and consideration in whatever social surroundings I may happen to be mixing.' And Mr Plantagenet shook out a clean white cambric pocket-handkerchief ostentatiously, to wipe his eyes, in which a slight dew was supposed to have insensibly collected at the thought of Richard's unfilial depreciation of his qualities and opportunities.

'I'm sorry I've offended you, father,' Dick answered hastily. 'I'm sure I didn't mean to. But I do hope—I do hope, if you'll allow me to say so, you're not going round to spend the evening—at any other undergraduate's rooms—not at Gillingham's or Faussett's.'

Mr Plantagenet shuffled uneasily: in point of fact, he looked very much as he had been wont to look in days gone by when the landlady at the *White Horse* inquired of him now and again how soon he intended to settle his little account for brandy and sodas. 'I choose my own acquaintances, Richard,' he answered with as much dignity as he could easily command. 'I don't permit myself to be dictated to in matters like this by my own children. Your neighbour Mr Faussett appears to me a very intelligent and gentlemanly young man: a young man such as I was accustomed to associate with, myself, in my own early days, before I married your poor dear mother: not like *your* set, Richard, who are far from being what I myself consider thoroughly gentlemanly. Mere professional young men, your set, my dear boy: very worthy, no doubt, and hard-working, and respectable, like this excellent Gillespie: but not with that *cachet*, that indefinable something, that invisible hallmark of true blood and breeding, that I observe with pleasure in your neighbour Faussett. It's not your fault, my poor boy: I recognise freely that it's not your fault. You take after your mother. She's a dear good soul, your mother'—pocket-handkerchief lightly applied again—

'but she's *not* a Plantagenet, Richard: she's *not* a Plantagenet.' And with this parting shot neatly delivered point-blank at Dick's crimson face, the offended father sailed majestically out of the room and strode down the staircase.

Dick's cheek was hot and red with mingled pride and annoyance; but he answered nothing. Far be it from him to correct or rebuke by word or deed the living head of the house of Plantagenet.

'I hope to God,' he thought to himself, piteously, 'Faussett hasn't asked him on purpose to try and make an exhibition of him. But what on earth else can he have wanted to ask him for, I wonder?'

At that very same moment Faussett was stopping Trevor Gillingham in the Chapel Quad with a characteristic invitation for a wine-party that evening. 'Drop in and have a glass of claret with me after Hall, Gillingham,' he said, laughing. 'I've got a guest coming to-night. I've asked Plantagenet's father round to my rooms at eight. He'll be in splendid form. He's awfully amusing when he talks at his ease, I'm told. Do come and give us one of your rousing recitations. I want to make things as lively as I can, you know.'

Gillingham smiled the tolerant smile of the Born Poet. 'All right, my dear boy,' he answered. 'I'll come. It'll be stock-in-trade to me, no doubt, for an unborn drama. Though Plantagenet's not half a bad sort of fellow, after all, when you come to know him, in spite of his mugging. Still, I'll come, and look on: an experience, of course, is always an experience. The poet's life must necessarily be made up of infinite experiences. Do you think Shakespeare always kept to the beaten path of humanity? A poet can't afford it. He must see some good—of a sort—in everything; for he must see in it at least material for a tragedy or a comedy.' With which comfortable assurance to salve his poetical conscience, the Born Bard strolled off, in cap and gown, with an easy lounging gait, to evening chapel.

THE MOTHER OF NAPOLEON.

LETITIA RAMOLINI, the Mother of Napoleon Bonaparte, was born at Ajaccio on the 24th of August 1750. She was celebrated throughout the island of Corsica for her beauty, and was married to Charles Bonaparte before she had completed her sixteenth year.

The picturesque island of Corsica was formerly a province of Italy, and was Italian in its language, sympathies, and customs. In the year 1767 it was invaded by a French army, and, after several conflicts, its inhabitants were forced to yield to superior numbers, and Corsica was annexed to the empire of the Bourbons. At the time of the French invasion, Charles Bonaparte, a handsome lawyer, of vigorous intellect and of Italian extraction, abandoned the profession of the law for the sword, and united with his countrymen, under General Paoli, in their endeavours to resist the invaders. He and Letitia had then one child, Joseph; and the young wife

accompanied her husband on horseback in his dangerous journeys, and rode by his side and shared all the perils by which they were surrounded. High-spirited and brave, with a strong will, the beautiful young woman appears to have set an example of almost Spartan endurance.

Eight weeks after the island had been transferred to the dominion of France, Napoleon was born at Ajaccio, on the 15th August 1769. Singularly enough, considering the future that lay before him, his birth took place under a canopy of tapestry representing the heroes of the *Iliad*.

Letitia's husband died not many years after the birth of Napoleon. He is said to have appreciated his son's powers, which even then were remarkable. Madame Bonaparte was left a widow at the age of thirty-five, with eight children, five sons and three daughters. In her husband's lifetime, before their troubles came, she had been a wealthy woman, but now her means were limited. She retired with her children to her country home, a residence approached by an avenue overarched by lofty trees and bordered by flowering shrubs. A smooth snug lawn was a pleasant playground for the 'embryo kings and queens' who called Letitia mother. Napoleon afterwards repeatedly declared that the family were entirely indebted to her for that physical, intellectual, and moral training which prepared them to rise to the summits of power to which they afterwards attained. He often said: 'My opinion is, that the future of a child for good or evil depends entirely upon its mother.'

Speaking of the death of an uncle upon whom the children were partly dependent, and of his mother's life in her early widowhood, Napoleon said: 'He [the uncle] then made us draw near, and gave us his blessing and advice. "You are the eldest of the family," he said to Joseph, "but Napoleon is the head of it. Take care to remember what I say to you." He then expired, amidst the sobs and tears which this melancholy sight drew from us. Left without guide, without support, my mother was obliged to take the direction of affairs upon herself. But the task was not above her strength. She managed everything, provided for everything with a providence which could neither be expected from her sex nor from her age. Ah! what a woman! Where shall we look for her equal? She watched over us with a solicitude unexampled. Every low sentiment, every ungenerous affection, was discouraged and discarded. She suffered nothing but that which was grand and elevated to take root in our youthful understandings. She abhorred falsehood, and would not tolerate the slightest act of disobedience. None of our faults were overlooked. Losses, privations, fatigue, had no effect upon her. She endured all, braved all. She had the energy of a man, combined with the gentleness and delicacy of a woman.'

Abbott tells the following anecdote, which shows how firm was the rule of the good, high-minded mother. 'A bachelor uncle owned the rural

retreat where the family resided. He was very wealthy, but very parsimonious. The young Bonapartes, though living in the abundant enjoyments of all the necessities of life, could obtain but little money for the purchase of those thousand little conveniences and luxuries which every boy covets. Whenever they ventured to ask their uncle for coppers, he invariably pleaded poverty, assuring them that though he had lands and vineyards, goats and poultry, he had no money. At last the boys discovered a bag of doubloons secreted upon a shelf. They formed a conspiracy, and by the aid of Pauline, who was too young to understand the share which she had in the mischief, they contrived, on a certain occasion when the uncle was pleading poverty, to draw down the bag, and the glittering gold rolled over the floor. The boys burst into shouts of laughter, while the good old man was almost choked with indignation. Just at that moment Madame Bonaparte came in. Her presence immediately silenced the merriment. She severely reprimanded her sons for their improper behaviour, and ordered them to collect again the scattered doubloons.'

Napoleon was not an amiable child; he was silent and retiring in disposition; melancholy, too, and impatient of restraint. Many years afterwards, an isolated granite rock of wild and rugged form, within which was something resembling a cage, in the grounds of his early home, was pointed out as having been his favourite resort as a child, and it still bore the name of 'Napoleon's Grotto.' There, whilst his brothers and sisters were at play, he would recline for hours, book in hand, looking out upon the broad expanse of the Mediterranean, and on the blue sky overhead. At other times, his favourite plaything was a small brass cannon, weighing about thirty pounds. He delighted to hear its loud report, and to imagine he saw whole squadrons mown down by its discharges.

Abbott says the little boy 'loved to hear from his mother's lips the story of her hardships and sufferings, as, with her husband and the vanquished Corsicans, she fled from village to village, and from fastness to fastness, before their conquering enemies. The mother was probably but little aware of the warlike spirit she was thus nurturing in the bosom of her son; but with her own high mental endowments, she could not be insensible to the extraordinary capacities which had been conferred upon the silent, thoughtful, pensive listener.'

When Napoleon was about ten years of age, Count Marbeuf obtained admission for him to the Military School at Brienne, near Paris. Forty years afterwards, Napoleon observed that he should never forget the pang he felt when parting with his mother. Stoic as he was already, his stoicism forsook him, and he wept like any other child. He remained at this school five years, during which his holidays were spent at Corsica; then he was promoted to the Military School at Paris. Afterwards he entered the army, and there his upward progress was rapid.

During the disturbances which took place in the island of Corsica in the year 1793, Napoleon happened to be on a visit to his mother; and when Paoli—dissatisfied with the excesses of the

French Convention, under which he then ruled the island—determined to surrender Corsica to the English, the Bonaparte family became head of the French party. Napoleon had tried all his powers of persuasion to induce the old friend who had been his hero in more youthful days to adopt a different line of conduct, but in vain. Paoli, the veteran General, was eighty years of age; and being firmly convinced that he was right in his determination, it was not likely that he would yield to Napoleon, who was then only twenty-four. The friends parted sorrowfully, and civil war began. Paoli's side soon became the stronger, as increasing numbers of English flocked to his standard. Napoleon saw that it was useless to attempt further resistance, and that he and his family could no longer reside safely in Corsica. Sorrowfully he disbanded his forces and prepared to leave the island.

Paoli called upon Madame Bonaparte, and endeavoured to persuade her to induce her family to join him in the treasonable surrender of the island to the English, urging that resistance was hopeless, and, by perverse opposition, she was bringing irreparable ruin and misery on herself and family; upon which Napoleon's mother rejoined: 'I know of but two laws which it is necessary for me to obey—the laws of honour and of duty.' A decree was immediately passed that the family must be banished from Corsica.

One morning Napoleon hurried to inform his mother that several thousand peasants were coming to attack the house. Hastily seizing such articles of property as they could take with them, the family fled precipitately, and for several days wandered, homeless and destitute, about the seashore, until Napoleon could make arrangements for their embarkation. Their house was sacked by the mob and their furniture destroyed.

It was a touching scene when at midnight an open boat, manned by four strong rowers, approached the shore near Madame Bonaparte's plundered dwelling, and, whilst an attendant held a lantern, the poor exiled family sorrowfully and in silence entered the boat. A few trunks and bandboxes contained all their available property. The oarsmen pulled out into the dark and lonely sea. 'Earthly boat,' says Abbott, 'never before held such a band of emigrants. Little did those poor and friendless fugitives then imagine that all the thrones of Europe were to tremble before them, and that their celebrity was to fill the world.' And in the flight, as henceforward in their lives, Napoleon was the commanding spirit.

Madame Bonaparte first settled at Nice, and afterwards at Marseilles, where she and her family resided in much pecuniary embarrassment until relieved by Napoleon's rising fortunes.

When the new government of France, called the Directory, was established, Napoleon, unanimously applauded for having saved the Republic by his energy, was appointed Commander-in-chief of the Army of the Interior. He was then only twenty-five; and he had, by the force of his genius and the extraordinary exertions he had made, attained to a very elevated position in the eyes of the French nation.

His first step spoke well for his filial devotion. The historian above quoted says: 'Immediately

upon the attainment of this high dignity and authority, with the ample pecuniary resources accompanying it, Napoleon hastened to Marseilles to place his mother in a position of perfect comfort. And he continued to watch over her with most filial assiduity, proving himself an affectionate and dutiful son. From this hour the whole family, mother, brothers, and sisters, were taken under his protection, and all their interests blended with his own.'

At the age of twenty-six, Napoleon was placed by those in command at the head of the Italian army. There, in the midst of many temptations, he appears to have pursued, as he himself said, 'a line of conduct in the highest degree irreproachable and exemplary. In spotless morality I was a Cato, and must have appeared so to all. I was a philosopher and a sage. My supremacy could only be retained by proving myself a better man than any other man in the army. Had I yielded to human weaknesses, I should have lost my power.' Abbott says that Napoleon at that time was temperate in the extreme, seldom allowing himself to take even a glass of wine, and never countenancing by his presence any scene of bacchanalian revelry. 'For gaming in all its branches he manifested then and through the whole of his life the strongest disapproval. From what source did the young soldier imbibe these elevated principles? Napoleon informs us that to his mother he was indebted for every pure and noble sentiment which inspired his bosom.'

Public attention does not seem to have been directed towards Napoleon's mother until her son was proclaimed Emperor in 1804. She then received the title of Madame Mère, and an income of a million francs was settled upon her. And that she might have a position of political importance, she was made Protectrice-Générale of all the charitable institutions of France. Such an office admirably suited her. She frequently solicited favours of her son for others, and was happy whenever her exertions met with success. On one occasion, upon learning of the arrest of the Duke d'Enghien, she even threw herself upon her knees before Napoleon, imploring mercy for the unfortunate Prince. In her tender anxiety, she thus laid aside that habitual dignity which the following incident illustrates. Soon after Napoleon's assumption of the imperial purple he chanced to meet his mother in the gardens of St-Cloud. He was surrounded by courtiers, and half playfully held out his hand for her to kiss. 'Not so, my son,' she gravely replied, at the same time presenting her hand in return; 'it is your duty to kiss the hand of her who gave you life.'

After this, it seems a pity that truthfulness must make us say that even this great woman had one littleness, if we may call it so, of character. She evinced sometimes a resemblance to the brother, whose parsimony her sons had resented in their childhood, by showing a love of economising, even upon trifling occasions. This proved a source of frequent amusement amongst the gay circles of Paris. The Emperor himself was sometimes a little scandalised at her actions, although this did not hinder him from most highly respecting her character.

Mrs Ellis says: 'Many curious instances are recorded of Madame Letitia's love of hoarding;

for which, however, she had, or thought she had, her own sufficient reasons. Indeed, it is impossible to calculate the effect to which her own mind may have been early impressed by circumstances with the convictions of the uncertainty of that success which her sons had so unexpectedly attained. To the mother who had watched over their deserted childhood—who had learned in her widowed state what it was to have scarcely any human friend on whom she could depend for advancing her sons in the career of worldly distinction; and who, with her young family around her, had experienced all the anxieties of being driven from her native country and cast upon a world of strangers—to her there must have appeared but an uncertain foundation for confidence in the sudden and unprecedented exaltation of her sons. And then, “if reverses should come,” who can wonder, with this experience so deeply impressed upon her memory, that her imagination should have been haunted with apprehensions, which in their mode of exhibition appeared, to those who were but superficial observers, something like the manifestations of an amusing kind of mental aberration. Under these impressions she is said to have replied to those who remonstrated with her for her parsimony: “Who knows but I may one day have to provide bread for all these kings!”

Mrs Ellis goes on to say: ‘But this peculiarity of Madame Letitia’s can the more easily be forgiven when it is remembered how faithful and unceasing were the efforts she employed for serving the interests of her sons; and especially how liberal were her offers of assistance when the tide of fortune had set against them. When all her sons except one were seated on thrones, she was unceasing in her applications to the most powerful of them on behalf of Lucien. On being one day told by Napoleon that she loved Lucien more than she did the rest of her family—‘The child,’ she replied, ‘of whom I am the most fond is always the one that happens to be the most unfortunate.’

Madame Mère is said by one who saw her late in life to have been then a pale, earnest-looking woman, who, after speaking of anything which interested her much, sat with compressed lips and wide open eyes, an image of firmness of purpose combined with depth of feeling. At other times, ‘her soul beamed in her looks, and it was a soul full of the loftiest sentiments.’ The same writer (the Duchesse d’Abrantès) thus describes her at another period: ‘The revolution of the 8th was completed, and Paris was no longer agitated. We went to see Madame Letitia Bonaparte, who then lived with Joseph. She appeared calm, though far from being at ease, for her extreme paleness, and the convulsive movements she evinced whenever an unexpected noise met her ear, gave her features a ghastly look. In these moments she appeared to me truly like the mother of the Gracchi. And her situation gave force to the idea; she had perhaps more at stake than that famous Roman matron.’

It was only natural that the tenderness of such a mother should have been nobly shown to her son when reverses came upon him and his wonderful fortunes changed. She, who always thought most tenderly and with the greatest love of that one of her children who was in adversity,

followed the banished Emperor to Elba, and, with a few attendants, took up her residence there. Mrs Ellis says: ‘From the earliest period of his reverses, the mother’s heart with all its warmest affections became especially centred in the son. She had often reproved him for his pride and ambition in the days of his prosperity, and at that time she was perhaps the only friend in existence from whose lips he had heard the truth; but from the time of his overthrow at Waterloo to the day of his death, her true woman’s heart never swerved from this one object of all her deepest and most absorbing interests. Again and again she offered him all that she possessed in the world, to assist in the re-establishment of his affairs. “For me,” said Napoleon, in his last exile, when memories of the past so often filled his mind, “my mother would without a murmur have doomed herself to live on brown bread. Loftiness of sentiment still reigned paramount in her breast; pride and noble ambition were not yet subdued by avarice.”’

This brave, devoted woman also thus appealed to the allied sovereigns at Aix-la-Chapelle on his behalf: ‘Sires, I am a mother, and my son’s life is dearer to me than my own. In the name of Him whose essence is goodness, and of whom your Imperial and Royal Majesties are the image, I entreat you to put a period to his misery, and to restore him to liberty. For this I implore God, and I implore you, who are his vice-gerents on earth. Reasons of state have their limits; and posterity, which gives immortality, adores above all things the generosity of conquerors.’

Again, in 1819, Napoleon’s mother cheerfully defrayed the expenses of sending to St Helena qualified persons, selected by her brother, Cardinal Fesch, with the approval of the Pope, to minister to the body and soul of her unhappy son. She herself outlived her illustrious son, dying when nearly eighty years of age, and retaining to the last much of her beauty of person and extraordinary vigour of mind.

BABY JOHN.*

CHAPTER V.—GOOD-BYE.

‘Tis sweet to know there is an eye will mark
Our coming, and look brighter when we come.

BYRON.

‘HE’S coming here to-morrow!’ It was the end of May, and Baby John Craddock was close on three months old, and Alice and Lucy were seriously considering the necessity of short-coating him. ‘A great, big, fat boy, growing out of all his clothes shameful!’

Life had run on so brightly and smoothly, that it had seemed as if it might run on the same for ever, and Alice had ceased to talk of going back to the mill, or Lucy to be on the lookout to stop her from doing so. But here, all of a sudden, a cloud appeared which threatened to darken the brightness of their day—a rock which might turn the peaceful sunny stream into new ways, stony and troubled.

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'He's coming here to-morrow!'

'To fetch you home?'

'No, he don't say so.' Lucy went reading on; writing was not very easy for her to decipher, and her husband's hand was especially difficult to her.

Alice was giving Baby John his bottle, so did not pay much attention, till she heard Lucy give a cry of surprise and rather awe-stricken delight.

'What is it?'

'Oh, Alice, what do you think? As far as I can make out, he's got to go to America for six months on business, and he wants to know if I'd like to stop on here with you while he's gone? Here, just you take the letter and see what you make of it, and give me baby.'

Yes; there was no mistake about it. Alice spelt it out to the same effect. Mr Craddock was obliged to go to America on important business, which might take him as long as six months. During his absence he was going to leave the mill under the care of a cousin of his, and he asked if Lucy would prefer to return to Felsby or remain at Beston, or— There was evidently another alternative in his mind, but the second 'or' had been scratched out, as if it were not worth while to suggest it.

Alice sat for a minute or two with her eyes fixed on that scratched-out 'or,' and when she looked up, there was an absent look on Lucy's face, as if she, too, were pondering something; and she caught the baby up in her arms and held it tightly against her breast, thereby interfering with that individual's enjoyment of the pipe of peace—in his case represented by his bottle—and producing a squall of remonstrance.

'What was he going to say there?' Alice asked, pointing to the scratched-out word.

'I don't know. What could one do except go back to Felsby or stop here? And of course, of course, of course we'll stay here, all through the summer! Six whole lovely months—June, July, August, September, October, November.' Lucy reckoned them off on the fat little fingers of Baby John, which were more generally used to illustrate 'This little pig went to market.'

'It's a long time,' Alice said, 'and'—

'Lovely and long!' Lucy interrupted. 'Why, Alice, I don't believe you're half as pleased as I am. You're tired of me and baby, and the sea, and the flowers, and want to go back to nasty, smoky, old Felsby!'

Alice felt that it was not really worth while to contradict such a ridiculous accusation as this, but she was strangely silent and thoughtful all that day; and Lucy, too, though she kept up rattling talk, and planned what they would do, would drop now and then into a wistful, uneasy silence, and her laughter and gaiety had a strained effect, as if they were not altogether natural.

Mr Craddock had not said what time he would arrive, so the girls began expecting him at the very earliest hour in the morning, not reckoning

that this would have necessitated his leaving Felsby about midnight. They could neither of them eat any breakfast, and they started at the slightest sound, thinking it was his arrival.

Except in the matter of extra care in the appearance of Baby John, Lucy refused to make any preparations for her husband's visit, and did not even tell Mrs Tripp he was coming.

'He'll bide the night, won't he?' Alice asked. 'There's a room in next door that I knows I can have for the night, so don't think about me. I knows how to make myself scarce, and I'll go right off when I see him coming, so as you can be all to yourselves.'

But Lucy would not hear of such a thing. 'If he bides the night, he can just go to the *Seaview*, and he'll dine there, so don't bother your head about getting anything extra in. He'd think this a horrid, pokey, little place, and baby'd worry him, and he'd a lot rather be by himself, and Mrs Tripp's cooking's well enough for us, but it wouldn't suit him.'

'Do he think a deal of what he eats and drinks?'

'Oh no, he ain't that sort at all, he's easily pleased; but there! he's used to having things nice, and I don't care that he should be put about more than I can help along of me.'

He did not actually arrive till the afternoon, and as soon as he came, Alice slipped away, and went for a long walk along the cliffs, hardly noticing all the beautiful colours on the sea, or the vivid green of the new springing grass on the downs, so full was her heart of Lucy and Baby John, and Baby John's father.

She did not come back till nearly seven, and then was planning a visit to a rheumatic old fisherman, whose acquaintance they had made on the beach, so as not to intrude on the privacy of the husband and wife. But before she reached Beston, she met Lucy with the baby in her arms coming out to meet her.

'Why, wherever have you been? I knew you was coming this way, and I've been waiting about for more than an hour, thinking you were bound to be back soon. And you've tired yourself to death. No, you shan't carry baby; you look as if you could hardly carry yourself, and you ain't had no tea. I gave baby his before I started out, and had a cup myself; but I told Mrs Tripp to have the kettle on, as you'd be sure to be in soon, and we'd all have tea together.'

'He didn't stop long, then?'

'No, I could have told you he wouldn't before he came. He's gone to the *Seaview* to have his dinner, and he won't trouble to come in again this evening, for I told him we was early going to bed; but perhaps he may look in to-morrow before he starts.'

'He's going to-morrow?'

'Yes, he's off to America next week; so, of course, he's terrible busy settling everything before he goes.'

'Did he think baby grewed?'

'He didn't take much notice of him. He just poked his cheek with his middle finger—don't you know how men do? and he said he was very small, as if he weren't a big, fine boy for his age.'

'What did he say about the name? Were he pleased?'

'Oh, there! I don't know. I told him as I'd called him after my father, and he didn't make no remark.'

'Did he say anything?'—

'No, not a word. I knew he'd not think of such a thing.'

Neither of the girls had ever said a word to one another of what had been in their minds since Mr Craddock's letter came the day before, which was that the other alternative was for Lucy to go with him to America; and yet Lucy understood Alice's question before it was finished, and Alice understood the answer, vague as it was.

They had to pass the *Seaview* to reach their lodgings. The season at Beston, as I have said, had not begun, and the *Seaview*, at the best of times never a very imposing place, had the desolate air of a hotel out of season. Some repairs were being done, and ladders were reared against the front, and the door was in the first stage of painting, when big blotches of vermilion adorn it. In the bow-window of the coffee-room a solitary figure was sitting at dinner with a newspaper propped up on the cruet-stand in front of him, waited on by a dirty-looking maid, as the waiter was only engaged for the season, and the hotel was generally out of gear. The girls hastened their steps as they went by, but he seemed absorbed in his newspaper, and did not notice them.

'Don't he look lonesome?' Alice said, with compunction.

'Oh, he don't mind, bless you! It's what he's been used to, and he's one of them as likes his own company best.'

At Mrs Tripp's tea was ready on the table, very humble, but clean and cheerful looking, with a little bit of fire lighted, the evenings being chilly, though the days were so warm and bright, and a kettle steaming away on the hob, and the girls' frugal meal spread out on a white cloth, and the baby's bassinette in a warm corner by the fire.

'Don't it look snug?' Lucy said as they came in; and both of them thought involuntarily of the lonely figure in the *Seaview* coffee-room.

That room made a pretty picture half an hour later to any one standing in the road, for the girls had forgotten to draw down the blind, there were so few passers-by, and the little garden, full of thrift and wall-flower in between, prevented any sense of publicity. The tea-table had been pushed back, and Lucy sat in a low chair in front of the fire, with her sleeves rolled back and a large flannel apron on, on which was Baby John, just out of his bath, kicking and crowing in the delightful freedom from the trammels of clothing. Any woman might have looked beautiful in such circumstances; even Alice's sharp, little, plain face was glorified almost into loveliness as she knelt in front, doing homage to the young divinity; but Lucy's young face, with the warm colour in the cheeks, and the hair in soft, curling untidiness, and the big eyes full of mother's love, seemed to some one looking in from the road outside, the sweetest sight possible to imagine.

For there was a looker-on. Mr Craddock had found the mouldy quiet of the *Seaview* inexpressibly dreary, and had turned out to smoke, and involuntarily had turned his steps in the direction of Mrs Tripp's. He had no idea of going in; he

had understood Lucy's hint about their going to bed early; and yet there was something that made him almost inclined to go—the baby that he had taken so little notice of, and the baby's name, which Lucy had taken such pains to tell him had been given from her father. He felt as if Baby John gave him a claim to a corner in that bright little room, and almost ensured him a welcome.

Perhaps the fixedness of his gaze made itself felt, as I believe a very earnest look will sometimes, for Lucy suddenly became aware that the blind was not drawn down, and she asked Alice to do it.

'I thought there was some one looking in.' And then the blind was drawn down, and Mr Craddock turned away to his hotel.

The girls were at breakfast next morning when the little shabby hotel omnibus pulled up in front of the house (not that it took much pulling to stop the horse, which had been drawing seaweed all the week), and Mr Craddock came into the room before Alice could escape, so she was unwillingly obliged to be present at the parting of husband and wife.

'I've only a minute to spare,' he said, 'before the train, but I thought I'd look in to say good-bye.'

There was almost an apologetic tone in his voice, and Alice—who, it need hardly be said, was heart and soul on Lucy's side, and would have maintained through thick and thin that if there was anything unsatisfactory in the relations between them, it was altogether his fault—now felt a little vexed at Lucy's want of readiness to reply.

'I hope you'll be all right while I'm away,' he went on, his voice getting more business-like. 'I've told George Mills to keep you supplied with money, and if you want more you must let him know, and he'll send you a cheque. He'll be writing to me every week on business, so he'll let me know how you get on, and if you've any message to send he'll forward it. Well, I mustn't stop, or I shall miss the train. Good-bye! I suppose the baby's asleep, isn't it?'

Alice would have roused Baby John from the sweetest slumbers, even at the risk of injuring his precious health; but perhaps that unfortunate 'it' offended his mother's ear, for she only drew back the quilt and showed Baby John's fat cheek deep in the pillow.

'Yes, he generally has a nap after he's dressed of a morning,' she said.

Then there was an awkward pause, and then Mr Craddock turned and held out his hand to Alice. 'I'm glad you'll be able to stop with Lucy and the boy while I'm away,' he said.

And Alice put her little, rough, hard-worked hand into his very heartily. 'I'll see after them both my very best, never you fear!' And she found she had tears in her eyes, and a hard matter to steady her voice.

And then he kissed Lucy and was gone; and there was the bang of the omnibus door, and the jingle of the harness and crack of the whip, and Alice drew back the curtain to look after it as it moved off.

'Will you have some more tea?' Lucy said, with an immense struggle after composure and indifference, with a trembling hand pouring the

tea into the sugar-basin; but the next minute Alice was cramming Lucy's hat on her head anyhow, wrong side in front, and pulling and pushing her towards the door.

'Run, run!' she was sobbing out, 'as quick as ever you can go; the short way behind the *Anchor*, you know! You'll be in time to catch him if you look sharp!'

'Well,' Alice asked, half an hour later, when Lucy came slowly back in very different style from the wild, breathless rush she had made when she left the house, 'were you in time?'

Lucy nodded. 'The train was just in, and he looked quite startled to see me, and I were that out of breath I could hardly speak; but I said as I'd come to see him off and say good-bye. He didn't say much, but I think he were pleased, and I'm glad I went; but it was all your doing, Alice; I'd never have gone if it hadn't been for you.'

CHAPTER VI.—A BRIGHT FUTURE.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and, oh,
The difference to me!—WORDSWORTH.

John Craddock thought a great deal of that parting with his wife. He was not at all inclined to be sentimental; he was a very matter-of-fact and business-like man, and it would have astonished some of his business friends, who accounted him more hard and sensible than he really was, if they had known how often, even in the middle of business talk, the thought of his young wife as he had seen her last at Beston Station, with flushed cheeks and bright eyes and ruffled hair, panting out her farewell words, came before his mind's eye, pleasanter even to remember than the scene of the evening before, which he had contemplated through the window.

He had grown to think, during those months since his marriage, that it had been an entire and unmitigated mistake; and that the only thing now was to make the best of a hopelessly bad job, and rub along with as little friction as possible. But, somehow, those few hours at Beston, and the sight of Baby John and Lucy coming to the station, the first act of spontaneous affection he ever remembered her to have shown (he did not know that even this had been proposed by Alice), seemed to suggest a possibility of something better and brighter and sweeter, a possibility of a wife who might learn to love him, to brighten when he came, to be sorry when he left her, instead of that dreary mutual endurance which had seemed the only prospect to the end of the chapter—a possibility of a home where he would be welcome, and whose brightness he would not cloud, nor have to stand outside in the darkness alone. That little mill-girl, Alice Reynolds, was a good sort, and he had made a mistake in separating Lucy from her. 'When I go back to England,' he used to tell himself, 'it shall be different;' and by-and-by he used to say, 'When I go home,' and the home he thought of was not Apsley Villa, with all its comfort and respectability, but that little room at Beston with Lucy sitting in the firelight, with Baby John upon her lap.

More than once during those sultry summer months in New York, he had made up his mind

to write to her, to say he was sorry for what was past, and anxious, when he came home, to try to make her happier and win her love; but he was only used to writing business letters, and was as shy as any school-girl or bashful youth of writing love letters even to his wife. And besides he knew what pain and grief it would be to her to answer it, and how the difficulties of spelling and writing would cramp all the natural expression out of it. No, he would wait till he went home, and then, with Baby John between them, it would not be so hard to explain.

Those months seemed interminable. The business that would at one time have been of enthralling interest seemed wearisome and irritating, though it proved, from a money point of view, more remunerative than he anticipated. Every week brought him satisfactory letters from Felsby, where all was going well and smoothly in his absence. Occasionally his manager mentioned having heard from Mrs Craddock, acknowledging or asking for remittances, and that he was glad to hear she and the baby were in good health; but as he never imagined that this could be the only communication between husband and wife, parted for six months, he only put it in as a matter of form, and very often omitted any mention of her, though Mr Craddock tore open his letters and scanned them eagerly for just this poor, little, meagre information.

But those months which Lucy had counted so gaily on baby's fat, little fingers—June, July, August, September, October, November—had more than half gone; August's long, dusty days had drawn to an end, and Mr Craddock was beginning to let himself count the days to his return, which, if everything went favourably, might be almost a month before he had calculated. He would not, however, even hint at such a possibility in writing home to his mother or his manager, lest Lucy should hear of it, and be disappointed if there were any unforeseen delay. Would she be disappointed? Oh dear! how much he had built on those very slight foundations—that impulsive run to the station to bid him good-bye, that baby named after himself.

But it took even him by surprise when one day, at the beginning of September, he found himself at the end of his business, and free to go back to England by the next steamer if so minded. There was a steamer advertised to start the next day, and he went straight to engage his passage, and spent the rest of the day in buying presents to take home. What would she like best? Anything for the boy, he felt safe about that; and next, something for Alice. He felt shy of taking Lucy trinkets, remembering many such he had given her to make the peace after some painful scene of irritable impatience on his part, and how she had received them with hardly veiled indifference, and never cared to wear them.

But it was to be different now, and so he encouraged himself to buy a pair of earrings which took his fancy in a shop. While he was choosing them, he came across a man whose acquaintance he had made in business, who looked surprised and rather amused at seeing this grave, grizzled, middle-aged Englishman spending so much time and not a little money over these earrings; and Mr Craddock found himself confiding to this

stranger, in a manner totally unlike his usual reserved habit, that he was going home to his wife, and wanted to take her a present.

He got them out that evening at his hotel to look at them, wondering if she would like them, and if she would let them take the place of those common little earrings that she prized so much, and which at one time he had suspected of being a gift of some former admirer, till it came out accidentally that they had been given her by Alice. He was just putting them back into the jeweller's box with a ridiculously sentimental memory of Lucy's little ear and the soft curls of hair round it, when a knock came at the door and the boy brought in a telegram.

He opened it without much interest, with merely a passing fear that it might delay his departure, and a resolution that he would not allow it to do so. It was from George Mills: 'Deeply regret to inform you Mrs Craddock died this morning at Beston. Wire instructions as to funeral.'

He sat looking at the telegram full ten minutes before he realised what it meant. He even opened the jeweller's little box again, and took out one of the earrings and held it up to the light, and went on in a dull sort of way with the thought of how it would look in Lucy's ear. It was impossible! He remembered how she looked as the train left the platform, with her bright, young face, and her hair ruffled by the speed with which she had come, and her eyes bright, and her lips parted with her breathless words, full of life to her finger-tips. And the night before, as she sat in the firelight with Baby John, a picture of sweetest motherhood, so young and strong and bright, why, by the side of Alice, she looked the very picture of health! And that was the end of it all! Never to tell her he was sorry, to try to make amends, to win her to look at him without the fear in her young eyes, to speak to him without the constraint in her voice. If she had died in the beginning of the year, when Baby John was born, it would not have been so hard. He had been anxious and deeply distressed then; he had felt bitter regrets at the failure of their short married life, and had accused himself of the fault being his, and of being greatly to blame; but he had not thought then of the possibility of anything better and happier—it was only the end of a grievous mistake, not the shattering of bright hope for the future, as it was now.

All through the night he paced up and down his room, dreading plucking up the little flowers of hope that had been growing so sweetly since he left England. He was not naturally a hopeful man; he had not the sanguine nature some possess, which fills the future with bright-coloured possibilities, which, though they are constantly dashed to the ground, are as often renewed. These sanguine people get a great deal of happiness out of life, and if they are continually disappointed, the disappointment is not deeply rooted. But with natures like John Craddock's it is almost a mortal wound when a hope has been rooted up; the poor heavy soil of such hearts bears no more gay blossoms or tender leaves ever again.

The boat was to start at six o'clock next morning, and when the early call came to his door,

John Craddock was ready, and his portmanteau packed. Before he left the hotel he wrote a telegram to George Mills: 'Funeral at Beston. Make all arrangements.'

CURIOSITIES OF SUPERSTITION.

In the bardic legends and old folklore of Ireland we now and then meet with a paragraph or a phase of national character which arrests our thoughts. Much there may be to feed and stimulate the enthusiasm of the ardent searcher after the mystic and the weird; but the ordinary mortal of hard work-day life may be thankful if chance throw a few items in his way without having first to glean them out of the obscure notes and the long, dull, heavy pages of prosy compilations.

Like some other nations, the Irish invested even the lowest forms of animal life with the power of exercising no small influence on the actions and destinies of men. The *Dara Deil* (*Forficula oleus*, or 'black devil'), an insect of the earwig class, used to be an object of almost universal abhorrence; yet its services were sometimes availed of in labour which demanded extraordinary physical exertion. In creeping along, whenever it hears any noise it always halts, cocks up its tail, and jerks out its sting, which is similar to that of a bee. No reptile has been so much abhorred and dreaded by the peasantry as the 'black devil,' as it used to be commonly believed that this insect betrayed to his Jewish enemies the way in which the Saviour went when leaving the city of Jerusalem. It was no small gain to destroy this insect; for seven sins, it was said, were taken off the soul of the slayer. The people believed the sting of the *Dara Deil* to be very poisonous, if not mortal, and that it possessed a demoniac spirit. Under this impression, whenever it is seen in a house by the peasantry, they always destroy it by placing a coal of fire over it; and when burnt, the ashes are carefully swept out. It is not trodden on by foot, as a less formidable insect would be; nor is it killed by a stick, for it is believed that the poisonous or demoniac essence would be conveyed to the body of the slayer through leather or wood. It has often been related that labourers have been enabled to perform extraordinary feats through the agency of the black devil, which they insert in some part of the implements of their labour; but the few who were so daring as to have recourse to such means were regarded as dabblers in the black art, and were looked upon as reckless, as 'utterly left to themselves,' and almost beyond the pale of salvation. This insect is still considered exceedingly dangerous; it is thought to be a kind of scorpion; but very few indeed are now disposed to lift it to the dignity of preternatural influence.

The cuckoo is associated with ideas of a milder character. When first heard, in whatever quarter you are looking, in that direction you are to live

the rest of the year ; but the distance is indefinite ; it may be a mile, or it may be a hundred miles, and there is always a large margin allowed on either side the line, which gives easy fulfilment to the prediction. This happy arrangement leaves plenty of space for coincidence, and gives the cuckoo a long lease of prestige and importance.

The cat, so intimately associated with the idolatry of Egypt, was not likely to be forgotten in the fetichism of Celtic mythology. The preternatural attributes said to be ascribed to it by the Druids have outlived the Druids, their rites and their systems, and have come down to us refined and mellowed by the lapse of centuries. Cæsar Otway, a diligent gleaner of the reliques of ancient Irish superstitions, has preserved in his *Erris and Tyravley* some notable instances of the weird character and magical influence of this mysterious animal. He says : 'Cats are supposed to be but too often connected with witchcraft, and to lend their outward forms to familiar spirits. The timorous respect persons have for them is increased by the fact of their frequent meetings, to which they come from a distance of seven or eight miles ; and from fifty to sixty are often in the assembly. The parliament is generally on these occasions under a haystack, and, as in another great house of congress, their deliberations are in the night. Their *discourse* is as loud as it is vehement. What they debate about is not exactly ascertained, but, no doubt, of matters of grave import to feline polity : war and commerce, ways and means, the falling of followers, the increase of rats, the shortening of tails, much arguing at anyrate about raising the wind ; for Erris cats are known to have the power of creating a storm or causing a calm ; and this supposition seems to have arisen from cats being observed scratching the leg of a stool or a table or any upright thing within their reach, previous to a gale of wind, looking most knowingly and consciously the whole time, and frequently accompanying their exercise with most melancholy mewings. The storm which succeeds is supposed to be the effect of this feline proceeding, which is looked on as an incantation, inasmuch that, the moment a cat is observed to commence this scratching, it is immediately struck at with a stick or tongs or any other weapon within reach ; it is, moreover, assaulted with a clap of curses peculiarly appropriate to cats under these circumstances. As soon as the storm begins to rise, all the available cats are seized and placed under metal pots, and there held in durance vile until they resort to the exercise of their power in causing a calm. Now, not only is this power universally allowed, but what is of incalculable importance, it is often taken advantage of by the cat's owner.'

Not very long ago, a vessel was detained in Blacksod Bay. During the time of delay, the skipper became intimate with and engaged the affections of Catty Kane. But when his vessel was ready for sea, the roving blade, with all a sailor's inconstancy, hoisted his sails and put out to sea, never intending to see the fair one more.

But Catty knew a trick worth two of that, and had recourse to her cat. And now the brig is put into all her trim to clear the bay, but in vain ; the wind blows a hurricane, and she must come back to her old anchorage. From this time forth, day after day, the captain used all possible skill to get out of the harbour ; but as often as he weighs anchor he is driven back again ; and Catty understands the management of her cat so well, that the brig must come in for shelter close to the poor girl's residence. This continued for many months. The cargo is spoiling ; what is he to do ? Why, as the captain finds it impossible to quit Catty, he must needs marry her ; and so, taking her and her cat on board and doing all decently, next day, with a fair wind and flowing sheet, he can and does bid adieu to Blacksod Bay. What a pity it is that spinsters in other portions of the Queen's dominions have not the art of Catty Kane in managing her grimalkin !

EXPIATION.

A STORY OF THE CHILIAN REVOLT.

CHAPTER II.

WEEKS, months, passed. The civil war continued with varying fortune. One day the Congress party gained some advantage, on another the President's troops were reported to have gained a brilliant victory. Not that there was any reliable news published : a strict censorship had been established, with the result that a drawn battle became a decisive victory, and a severe defeat a temporary check. Not everybody was misled by this device. The actual fortunes of the conflict were known to many, and an impression was gaining ground daily amongst those better informed that the repeated successes of the Congressionists pointed to a speedy termination of the war in their favour. The behaviour of Balmaceda himself lent much support to this belief. His authority was still paramount in the chief cities ; and, in showing increased severity towards his prisoners and terrorising every one of whom he had the least suspicion, he displayed the tyrant's premonition of impending disaster. It was almost possible to tell how the war progressed by observing his conduct towards his prisoners. Executions were becoming terribly common. The formality of trial was scarcely observed, in many cases entirely dispensed with. Ada and her mother had a terribly trying time. Suffering the cruellest tortures of suspense and anxiety on her husband's behalf, the young girl had to restrain and subdue every manifestation of it, to refrain from all inquiry, lest suspicion should light on them and worse happen. She had not seen her husband since that one meeting in the prison. Amongst the first of the President's orders after the outbreak of war was that prohibiting all intercourse between prisoners and their friends.

One day, a few months after George's incarceration, rumours of an affair between the two armies

reached the town. The Government industriously circulated the report that the rebels had made an unsuccessful attack; but, in spite of everything, it leaked out that, on the contrary, the President's troops had sustained a serious reverse. There was much secret rejoicing among the partisans of the Congress party, mingled with apprehensions as to what Balmaceda would do in the way of reprisal, apprehensions which gathered terror when it was seen next day that, for the first time, the defeat of the Government was *openly* asserted. It was said that Balmaceda was more enraged at this display of temerity and confidence than at the defeat itself.

The populace was tremendously excited. What business was done was transacted in feverish haste. Towards evening, rumours of severe measures of reprisal began to circulate, and the rejoicing of the Congressionists gave way to the most gloomy apprehensions as to the fate of their imprisoned comrades.

At an early hour on the following morning Don Pulido arrived at Mrs Gorman's house and asked for an immediate interview. Ada came down with her mother, and both were trembling with excitement, knowing that nothing but news of importance would have caused so early a visit. When Ada saw the lawyer's face and read the look of pity in it, her heart seemed to stop. She gasped and sobbed out: 'O God! what is it?' Then turning to the elder lady, just said: 'Oh dear mother!' and fell into her arms.

The terror and trouble of the last few months had left their marks on the young wife. A deep line between the eyes testified to the continual pressure of despairing thought, and the pallid cheeks and swollen eyes bore witness to many a sleepless, tearful night.

'I must speak to you alone,' said Don Pulido, addressing Mrs Gorman.

'No, no!' cried Ada. 'Let me know now, at once. Oh! he is dead! he is dead!'

'Not at all.'

The words were reassuring, but the tone and inflection were anything but cheering.

'He is not dead,' resumed the lawyer, 'and you may see him soon.'

'Free?'

'No!—Now, let me speak to your mother.'

'Why not tell me? What is it? Who has a better right than I to hear? Is it about George?'

'Yes; but I can only tell your mother. You will know all very soon. Please'—

Ada went away reluctantly.

'You have bad news, I see,' said the widow as the door closed.

'I have—terrible news. Before coming here, I have taken every pains to verify it, and'—

'Don't keep us in suspense. What is it?'

'George is condemned to death!'

'To death! For what?'

'Ask the brutal tyrant,' began the lawyer, but checked himself and paused.

Mrs Gorman was dumb.

'Balmaceda chooses to assert that his late defeat is due to the plots and machinations between the enemy and some of the suspected prisoners. Seven of them are on this ground to be shot to-day. I have seen the list.'

'How could they do any harm in prison?'

'There is no reason in it. It is a transparent

device. A stroke of revenge and an attempt to strike terror.'

'Oh my poor child! Is there no hope?'

'I fear not, unless our—the Congress troops reach here and capture the prison before nine o'clock this morning, and that'—

'Is impossible. My poor child!'

'If you think it advisable, I think I could gain permission for a last interview; but the time is short, very short.'

'I will tell Ada, and be guided by her bearing. God help me to support her. My dear, dear child! Poor George!—Will you wait a few minutes, my friend?'

'Of course! But lose no time, if you decide to see him again.'

The widow left the room. She was absent about ten minutes, and returned, accompanied by her daughter.

The lawyer looked closely to see what effect the fatal intelligence had had on the girl, but she was already dressed for going out, and the upper part of her face was hidden by a veil, and only the drooping, quivering lips were to be seen, visibly telling the agony of the sorely stricken heart.

'Shall we go?' whispered the old lady.

'Yes,' assented the lawyer. He bent an inquiring look on the mother, indicating Ada with a motion of his head which meant, 'Does she know all?'

Mrs Gorman nodded assent.

Outside the door, a conveyance was waiting, into which the three mounted, and were driven off. Early as it was, the town was astir. Little knots of men were conversing eagerly at street corners and crossings; women and children looked out from every door and window. Whilst driving through one of the main streets, a man on the side-walk signalled to the driver to stop, and, coming up to the carriage, entered into an earnest whispered conversation with Don Pulido, at the end of which he made off hurriedly, after saluting the ladies sympathetically.

The lawyer said nothing, but his face brightened and he looked somewhat less despondent. After leaving the town they saw several carriages driving quickly in the same direction, and a thin stream of people on foot making towards the prison. Don Pulido looked out eagerly and anxiously from side to side as they drove on. Ada was sitting quietly, looking out with that fixed unseeing gaze that tells of thoughts too intense for speech. Her face wore a terrible expression of repressed grief. Don Pulido looked at her, and her agony seemed to move him strongly. He leaned forward and whispered: 'There is to be an attempt at rescue. There is every hope—successfully!—Hush! not a word.'

Mrs Gorman was palpably cheered; but Ada had not heard, or, hearing, had not understood. She looked straight ahead, now with an eager, penetrating glance, as though she would overcome distance and all obstacles and see her lover-husband.

At last they came in sight of the prison, a low building surrounded by a high wall, the roof alone being visible from the outside. A number of people were present in scattered groups, kept, however, at a respectful distance from the prison walls by a cordon of soldiers. The carriage drove up until its progress was arrested by an officer.

'You cannot advance,' said he.

'I must see the Chief,' said the lawyer; 'these ladies are relatives of one of the condemned, and'—

'Hush!' said the officer, solemnly.

There came a peculiar clicking sound from within the walls. Then a sharp voice rang out! One word! A roll of musketry! A little cloud of smoke!

The officer turned. 'You were too late. It is over.' He pointed to Ada, who had fainted.

'What is the meaning of it?' excitedly queried the lawyer. 'It was fixed for nine o'clock.'

The man smiled. 'There were rumours of a rescue. To defeat it, the execution was put forward an hour.'

From the hour when this atrocious deed was perpetrated, the tide appeared to set stronger than ever against Balmaceda. Condemned by public opinion, deserted by many of his best supporters, harassed by an open enemy who outmanoeuvred and outfought his troops, he hastened to his end. Shortly after the execution, Mrs Gorman and Ada removed to Valparaiso, intending to sail thence to England. Associations were too painful to permit of their remaining in the country. It was, however, not found an easy matter to settle their business affairs in the unsettled state of the country, and they were compelled to linger on during all the later stages of the rebellion. The repeated successes of the insurgents had incited the President to such a degree of tyranny and severity that, outside his armed followers, he had few or no adherents. The great bulk of the populace were wishing and praying for his downfall.

In the beginning of August it was reported that a number of the Santiago prisoners had made their escape and fled, hotly chased to the mountains. Whether they evaded their pursuers or were overtaken and massacred was not known. They were not brought back.

At last the crisis was reached. The Congress troops effected a landing on the coast, and marched on Valparaiso. The President's army went out to meet them, and a week of desultory skirmishing took place, culminating in a great battle. In the result, Balmaceda's army was practically destroyed, and he himself became a fugitive. The victorious troops entered Valparaiso amid the acclamations and rejoicings of the inhabitants. A number of vessels which had been hovering about the port, awaiting the result of the fighting, now came boldly in and discharged a crowd of exiled and proscribed citizens. On the day following the entry of the victors, Ada and her mother ventured out into the streets. The town was in a state of disorder and tumult, as was to be expected, but the work of restoring order had begun. The two ladies stopped to read a proclamation on a wall, and while doing so, a well-known voice behind them exclaimed in a joyful tone: 'Ada! You here!'

Turning round quickly, they saw—George de Nardez. The two thus accosted, apparently by one from the grave, turned pale, trembled, and looked questioningly from one to the other.

'What does this mean?' said George. 'Do you not know me?'

Ada was the first to recover. She reached out her hand with a piteous gesture, half incredulous half rapturous, and said: 'George, my dear George! are you alive?'

The young man convinced her of his vitality by an ardent embrace. Then they turned homewards, George refusing to give or hear any explanations until they were safe indoors. Here they related their story—of the lawyer's visit, and his communication of the death sentence, of their drive to the prison only to reach it in time to hear the rattle of the musketry, carrying, as they thought, death to him and desolation to themselves.

'Don Pulido was mistaken, I suppose, George?' said Ada in conclusion; 'you were not among the condemned.'

'Most assuredly I was,' replied George.—'Let me tell you all. I had several interviews with my father whilst we were confined. He showed the deepest sorrow and remorse for his action towards me, and I believe, was unceasing in his efforts to obtain my release; but he had lost all his influence. One morning we were all called into the corridor. Father was amongst us, and managed to whisper to me that my name would be called, amongst a number of others, for transference to another prison, that he would answer to it, and take my place, as he had great hope by so doing of obtaining an audience with the President. Of course I assented, knowing he had sources of information not common to all the prisoners. Well, the names were called out, mine amongst them. Father stepped forward and took my place. As he passed me he slipped a letter into my hand. The remainder of us were reconducted to our cells. Soon after I heard the sound of firing, but I had no idea what it meant.' George paused—he was deeply affected.

The two listeners were in tears: they had guessed the rest.

'Oh dear! and I have been abusing him so bitterly,' said Ada.

'I looked at the letter,' continued George, 'and found it marked, "To be opened when you are freed. If that should not take place before six months elapse, or in the event of anything happening to you, to be sent to your wife." I put it carefully away. Weeks and weeks passed, and I had almost given up all hope of seeing your dear face again, my darling. By-and-by the surveillance of our jailers relaxed. I believe they were being drawn upon to join the army. We managed to establish communication with each other, and then with some friends outside. A plan of escape was formed, which succeeded. Eight of us got away, and reached the mountains. We had a hard bitter time of it—cold and hunger, weariness and despair, were always with us; but at last we reached the coast, and found a steamer, which brought us here just in time to hear of the tyrant's defeat.'

'And the letter, George?'

'Here it is!'

MY DEAR SON—You are condemned to be shot this morning. I, by whose folly this has been brought about, will take your place and your bullet. You may still have to suffer, but at least you have another chance. I have done

everything on earth to save you. I will die for you now, in the hope of sparing you to your wife, and earning her forgiveness and yours.

ENRIQUE DE NARDEZ.

THE CHIONODOXA LUCILLÆ, OR GLORY OF THE SNOW.

HAVING had the honour of introducing the Shirley Poppy and the poetical Edelweiss to the readers of *Chambers's Journal*, and both plants having become so popular and widely cultivated, it is hoped our enterprising readers will give their next attention to one of the loveliest of floral beauties, by way of experiment in floriculture, and select the *Chionodoxa* for that purpose. Its Greek name simply means 'the glory of the snow,' and is very aptly applied to a plant that grows aloof from human habitation, thousands of feet high, amongst the wildernesses of snow that envelop the mountainous ranges of Siberia and other high alpine altitudes. There it displays itself in its native home—its sweetness lost upon the desert air—unless a few ardent botanists cull its blooms for their own special purposes. As a botanical rarity, it has very much the appearance of a *Scilla* or blue squill, and at first sight greatly resembles the more familiar *Scilla Siberica*. Closer examination, however, proves it to be scarcely a squill at all, but a new candidate for fame, with the distinguishing generic title of *Chionodoxa*. The old proverb, 'Far-fetched, dear bought,' does not apply to this new favourite, which has been in cultivation in England several years now, although it has not made the headway we hope it will do when its beautiful flowers become known and its several advantages are made prominent. The Glory of the Snow grows taller than the Siberian squill. It is larger, of a sky-blue, cobalt, or porcelain colour, and is one of our most showy and splendid early-blooming bulbous plants, the petals arranging themselves almost like a blue star, with a white centre, formed by the claws of said petals at their insertion into the calyx. Readers will be glad to know that this exquisite flower is to be grown from the bulbs supplied by nurserymen in the autumn, and they may be treated like any others and with equal success. Take them any time now, and up to November, plant them wherever you choose, and they are sure to prosper. Give them any waste place on rock-work or in the garden, and they will cover it with beauty. Plant them in pots for the conservatory, and they will do equally well, and surprise those who have not already seen them with their simple, modest charms. They may be left undisturbed for years, requiring no thought and no fresh manipulation of soil; and every year, in the winter or early spring, they will unfold themselves and attract attention—'the cynosure of neighbouring eyes.'

This pretty plant completes our tricolour—red, white, and blue, a trio of lovely colours—the bridal Edelweiss, the brilliant rosy Shirley Poppy, and the cerulean Snow-glory. There is this to be said of the last, that it compares favourably with other vegetable blues, and may be used in many ways that will suggest themselves for ornamental work. The flowers may be put under

pressure between sheets of botanical paper, with the best results, not changing colour as much as other blue flowers are known to do. Deft fingers will improvise the most fascinating Christmas novelties from the dried specimens with the aid of a few blank cards; and they may be made to form delightful souvenirs for birthdays, Easter and New-year welcomes, and for sending round the world, wherever love and affection call for remembrance. Designs for brackets and fret-work, for windows, for panel-work and picture-frames, for bazaars ornamentation generally, and much other graceful and artistic elaboration, will be the fruitful result of a heap of these Snow-glory leaves and blossoms; and they will afford innocent and pleasant diversion for the young folk during the irksome winter evenings.

JOHN EMMET, F.L.S.

THE SWALLOW'S DEPARTURE.

'Yes, friend Blackbird, you say truly, all the summer flowers are dying,
And the harvest sheaves are garnered, and the air grows damp and cold,
And your kin have ceased their love-songs, and the mournful wind is sighing
In the woods through boughs of russet and of scarlet, bronze, and gold.

'But 'tis not because the cushats cry in chorus melancholy
That I'll seek the south and summer, not because the skies are gray,
Not because the wintry berries gleam upon the shining holly,
But because I'll bring good tidings to a soldier far away.

'Oft you've lurked amid the fruit-trees in the dear old-fashioned garden:
So you know the dwelling, Blackbird, that we built,
I and my mate,
Near the gnarled, ancient pear-tree, standing like a sturdy warden
O'er the bush of sweet musk roses by the narrow, rustic gate.

'There one eve I heard a soldier tell a maid he loved her dearly;
And she only laughed and answered all his words in mocking tone;
But since he has sailed to India, I've heard her oft and clearly
Say, while tear-drops dimmed her bright eyes, that her heart was all his own.

'So, 'tis not in dread of winter that my leave to-day I'm taking
Of you, Blackbird, till the spring-time brings new robes for wood and dell;
But because in tropic splendours that poor fellow's heart is aching,
And I must fly south to tell him that the maiden loves him well.'

M. ROCK.

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THE STORY OF AN OLD SONG:

HEY, TUTTI, TAITIE.

IN an interleaved copy of Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum* there is a note on the fragments of an old song, in the handwriting of Burns, in which the following passage occurs: 'Many of our Scots airs have outlived their original, and perhaps many subsequent sets of verses.' It would be difficult to discover any better illustration of this remark than the air to which the poet wrote the memorable words of 'Scots, wha hae.'

In that bipartite work of art we call a song, the music seems to represent the soul, and the words the body; and when the soul wears the body out, as the sword does the scabbard, and the muddy vesture of decay begins to fall away from the spirit by which it lived, the soul itself, by some hidden power of musical metempsychosis, finds a fresh embodiment, reclothes herself, so to speak, in vernal singing robes, which will serve her for another term of her existence. The air to which 'Scots, wha hae' was written has worn out many sets of such singing garments, for it is one of the very oldest of Scottish songs. It has been known by many names, and in one disguise or another can be traced back at least four hundred years.

The words of its earliest known appearance as a song, 'Hey! Now the Day Dawis,' are not probably the first verses to which the tune was attached. Although the date of the birth of Alexander Montgomerie, the author of the words, is not known, he must have been writing previous to 1568, the date of the Bannatyne Manuscript, as some of his poetry occurs in that collection. But the song by that name was known long before his time. It is mentioned by Gavin Douglas (1512), Bishop of Dunkeld, in the prologue to the thirteenth book of his translation of Virgil, as a favourite song among the vulgar; while his still elder contemporary, Dunbar, alludes to it in one of his poems, in which he laughs at certain minstrels of Edinburgh for having only two tunes—

Your commone menstralis has no tune
But 'Now the Day Dawis,' and 'Into June.'

Montgomerie's verses, judging from their style, were probably not written before the reign of James VI., at whose court the poet was a retainer and pensioner, and were no doubt a revised version very considerably altered, while retaining the name of the much earlier song alluded to by Douglas and Dunbar, and by whose testimony we are enabled to establish the date of the air at not later than the beginning of the reign of James IV., however earlier it may have been composed. From the fact of its first appearance occurring in a Lute-book, the probability is that in the first place it was composed for that instrument either by a Scotchman who had received his musical education abroad, as was the fashion of the time, or by one of the Italian or French musicians at the court of the music-loving monarch, and among whom the king himself was an accomplished lute-player. Farther back, however, than the Douglas and Dunbar references carry us, all is conjecture; and the tradition alluded to by Burns that it was the air to which Bruce's army marched to the victory of Bannockburn is tradition and nothing more.

How the air acquired its later name of 'Hey, tutti, taitie,' or what that title means, has never been satisfactorily explained. Jamieson gives it as an interjection, meaning 'Pshaw!' but without stating his authority. He quotes a verse of a song in which the words occur, but where the substitution of the word 'Pshaw!' would make the verse absolutely ridiculous. He also conjectures it may mean 'the tuttling of a horn,' which does not help us much. Dr Douglas of Gala-shiels, he informs us, thought the phrase derived from a drinking song with a French refrain, 'Hei, toutes têtes, Ho, toutes têtes;' but, unfortunately, it is quite impossible to fit the Doctor's verse to the tune. It is more probably derived from the Italian musical phraseology, 'tutta' and 'tutto,' or their plurals, 'tutte' and 'tutti'—technical terms, indicating how the tune should be played, frequently seen on music, as well as

with their additions of 'tutta forza' (loud as possible), 'tutti unisoni,' &c. Such phrases—usually written at the top of the page—might easily be mistaken for the title to a piece of music, written for a lute, or an orchestra of such instruments as were used at that time, without any song-name attached to it. The addition of a final 'e' to the word 'tutti' gives it a Scotch character, while we have only to prefix the interjection 'Hey!' to make the metamorphosis from Italian to Scotch complete. Our simple exclamatory 'Hey!' has a very wide scope in Scottish poetry. In many of our songs it is used to heighten the general effect, as naturally as the crack of the finger and thumb in the Reel of Tulloch. Like all true idioms, it takes the colour of its context, hence the variety of its uses. To those unfortunate persons who have been born furth of the realm of Scotland, the effect of

Hey, the bonnie, how, the bonnie,
Hey, the bonnie briest-knots,

is simply incommunicable. In another direction it exhibits its sly, quizzical, side-glancing quality—

Hey, how, Johnnie my lad,
Ye're no sae kind's ye should hae been,

addressed to 'a cauldrie wooer;' which, again, is very different from the rousing effect in the satirical song of

Hey! Johnnie Cope, are ye wauken yet?

And once more, see how it lends itself to the dare-devil abandonment of the old song in Herd's Collection :

Sing Hey! play up the rinawa' bride,
For she has taen the gee.

Certainly, wherever the 'tutti, taitie' came from, the 'Hey' was not far to seek.

Montgomerie's song was long supposed to be lost, until Sibbald, as he tells us himself in his *Chronicles of Scottish Poetry*, was lucky enough to find it in a manuscript collection of poems in the College Library of Edinburgh. The music which Sibbald gives to the old song, although a little less ornate, is fundamentally the same air as that now in use.

A hundred years after Montgomerie's time, the tune reappears in a new dress, this time in a Jacobite costume, in the toast-song of 'Here's to the King, Sir,' published in Thomson's *Scottish Airs*, and containing an allusion to the project of Charles XII. of Sweden coming to the help of the House of Stuart, which enables us to fix its date about 1718. So all the sets of words, from first to last, can be sung to the same tune, by whatever name we choose to call it. Montgomerie's 'Hey! Now the Day Dawis,' of the end of the sixteenth century; the Jacobite drinking song of the beginning of last century; as well as the 'Scots, wha hae' of Burns, and Lady Nairne's 'Land o' the Leal'—both now about a hundred years old—are all fitted to the same frame, both musically and metrically. The poems in each case are written in the same stanza, that known as the Kyrielle, consisting of four lines,

the first, second, and third rhyming, while the fourth is used as a refrain. Perhaps the best-known and the most beautiful example of the Kyrielle in the language is Dean Milman's hymn, beginning, 'When our heads are bowed with woe.'

There has been some difference of opinion as to the exact date and circumstances under which Burns produced 'Scots, wha hae,' arising out of a discrepancy between a statement made by Burns in a letter to his friend Thomson, and a statement of quite a different kind made by his more intimate friend, John Syme. Mr Syme declares that the poem was composed when they were riding together through a thunder-storm between Kenmare and Gatehouse, in July 1793, and that on the following day Burns gave him a copy of the poem. But the poet, writing to Thomson a full month after, says that he wrote it 'yesternight.' The fact that the two friends did make the journey, as well as the time and place of it, is not disputed; and in believing that Burns was inaccurate, we are only believing in inaccuracies he was continually committing, many of them far more ridiculous than this. In one case he sent his friend Thomson a song which he declared he had just finished—'glowing from the mint' were the words he used—while he had sent the same poem two years before in a letter to Clarinda. There was no intention to misrepresent matters; but Burns was careless and forgetful about such things, and his pockets as well as his brains were kept crammed with song material by his indefatigable provider, Mr Thomson, so that he must have had many poems about him in every stage of development. Lockhart says we have the germ of Burns's ode in the rapture he expressed while standing on the field of Bannockburn, an eloquent note upon which appears in his *Journal* of August 1787, six years before the poem made its appearance. The poet, we must remember, had a reputation for improvising, which he was vain enough to encourage, although he lets us know what care he bestowed on his higher efforts; how, when all his preliminary cogitation and workings of his bosom were over, he retired with his subject 'to the solitary fireside of his study.' Who now would compare any of his admitted impromptus with his finished work? Had the poet lived to superintend a final edition of his works, he would not have suffered them to appear in the same volume with the 'Cotter's Saturday Night,' 'Halloween,' or 'Tam o' Shanter.' Poems like 'Scots, wha hae' are not written off the reel; and when Burns sent it to his friend Thomson, he probably did not intend to convey anything more than that he had given the final revision, the last touch to a poem he had been working on for some time, and of which—as we have seen—a prose version had been standing ready for use in his *Journal* for six years. The poet gains nothing from those worshippers of his who, with more zeal than discretion, credit him, in addition to his wonderful gifts, with the power of working miracles.

The tradition that 'Tam o' Shanter' was the unpremeditated outcome of a river-side ramble in the autumn of 1790 is another example of those ridiculous exaggerations, which can be abundantly refuted from the poet's own letters. The story is mainly supported by 'the not

immaculate M'Diarmid,' as Lockhart calls him, who, on purpose to make the performance more wonderful still, says that the poet wrote the verses 'on the top of a sod-dike.' There is a certain latitude allowed in telling a tale, but a certain limitation too. Sir Walter Scott said he never heard a story upon which he could not put what he called 'a cockit hat,' and the ornamentation is quite allowable, especially in the hands of a master. But we must surely draw the line at the ingenuity which, not content with supplying the 'cockit hat,' provides also the story upon which to put it. In a letter to Alexander Cunningham, dated 22d January 1791 (and this furnishes an exact parallel to the 'Scots, wha hae' letter to Thomson), Burns says: 'I have just finished a poem, which you will receive enclosed.' The poem was 'Tam o' Shanter,' and the letter scatters to the winds M'Diarmid and the sod-dike tradition. Burns knew well the pains the poem had cost him. In a letter to Mrs Dunlop he says 'that "Tam o' Shanter" shows a *finishing polish* that I despair of ever excelling.' When Ben Jonson said that a good poet is made as well as born, he might have said the same thing of a good poem—that, at all events, was Burns's opinion. Writing to Lady Don, we find him saying: 'Though the rough material of fine writing is undoubtedly the gift of genius, the workmanship is as certainly the united effort of labour, attention, and pains.' In fact, there is no short cut, no royal road between the inception and the completion of any subject upon which art is exercised. That Pallas sprung from the brain of Jupiter ready armed and complete at every point was all very well amongst the gods; but the myth has no counterpart in humanity. Burns's traditionary feat on the banks of the Nith was impossible not only for him but for any poet that ever lived. Neither Dante by the Arno nor Shakespeare by the Avon could have gone out for a river-stroll and brought back in his pocket such a piece of finished art as 'Tam o' Shanter'—one of the masterpieces of the world—not less remarkable for its marvellous construction than for its unrivalled imagery. It has the humour of Falstaff and the weird horror of the *Inferno*.

And so 'Scots, wha hae,' like 'Tam o' Shanter,' and indeed all Burns's best work, can easily be distinguished by the careful perfection of their finish from those other efforts of his which he did not think were worth the same labour. Only in his case, as in others, where the highest art comes into play, the products which appear to be the most natural and easy and artless are just those upon which the greatest art has been bestowed. No doubt, then, the story of John Syme is a true one, and that when he rode through the thunder-storm with his singing and gesticulating companion, he heard the first rough murmur of that great hymn which has since become the 'Marseillaise' of Scotland. The story at all events has been accepted by one of his best biographers, Lockhart, and by his still more distinguished critic, Carlyle, and there it may be safely allowed to rest.

In the history of a tune we occasionally encounter some curious and unsuspected transformations. The air usually sung to the Hundredth Psalm, and which has been by some erroneously

ascribed to Luther, was a love ditty long before his day. Henry II.'s queen used to sing to him her favourite psalm, 'Rebuke me not in thine indignation,' to a fashionable jig. Our air of 'Tutti, taitie' shows the same curious variety of uses. From a quaint old pastoral it passes into a boisterous drinking song. Then, from a fierce and defiant battle-cry, it seeks rest, as if with wearied wing, in the tender pathos of 'The Land o' the Leal.' Verily, on the world's stage, a tune, like a man, in its time plays many parts.

J. B. S.

BLOOD ROYAL.*

CHAPTER XL.—A TRAGEDY OR A COMEDY?

WHAT happened that night in Faussett's rooms Dick never knew. He would have given worlds, indeed, to have been able to remain in college for the evening; but, as ill-luck would have it he had an appointment at eight, which he was obliged to keep, with a tutor in Oriel. 'Twas with a very heavy heart, indeed, that he went to fulfil it. He hoped to be back by nine at latest; but the tutor, having nothing else to do, kept him engaged over his piece of Latin prose till not far from eleven. Oh, how impossible Dick found it to concentrate his mind under those painful circumstances on the oblique oration and the exact use of *ut* with the indicative, while he wondered all the time in his own soul what manner of things might be happening meanwhile at Faussett's rooms in Durham! The tutor had never known his pupil so stupid before; and the more Dick blundered the longer he kept him. Once or twice, to be sure, Dick tried hard to get away by a desperate hint; but the harder he tried, the more determinedly did the tutor resolve to detain him. It was unendurable that a young man should be so anxious to get away—no doubt with the object of going to some silly wine-party—that he couldn't concentrate his mind for a single moment on what his teachers told him!

At last the piece of Latin prose was finished, and Dick felt free to return to Durham. He rushed back, all on fire, and made his way at once towards Faussett's windows. He would listen beneath them and watch if he could hear his father's voice among the hubbub. There was laughing, and talking, and rattling of glasses. As he paused, sick at heart, his own college tutor passed by, and recognised him with a nod. 'Oh, by the way, Plantagenet,' he said carelessly, 'could you come up with me now to my rooms for a minute? I want to have a talk with you about that essay of yours yesterday.'

Dick's heart gave a bound of unspeakable terror; for just at that moment he heard his father's voice, singing, in Faussett's rooms. 'I beg your pardon, sir,' he said timidly, and with a terrible effort, for he felt he must do it;

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'wouldn't any other time suit you? I—I was very anxious to go up to Faussett's rooms this evening.'

As he spoke, a peal of laughter resounded from the windows above. 'Jolly good song!—Now, Gillingham! A recitation!' Dick listened with horror. But the tutor looked up and smiled a coldly disapproving smile. 'I don't think you'll miss much,' he said, in a chilly voice, 'by not going up there this evening. Faussett's a noisy fellow. He has too many supper parties. Better come to my rooms now, and leave him to his orgies.'

What could poor Dick do? Very shame prevented him from telling his tutor why he wanted to go up to Faussett's wine-party that night; so, with a sheepish air externally and a burning heart within, he followed his superior up to those panelled rooms which would have excited Clarence's warmest admiration. For many minutes he sat there, by the open window, hearing vague sounds now and again that floated across intermittently from the opposite quad, and totally unable to bring his mind to bear on what his tutor was saying. At last, quite suddenly, the voices ceased: there came a lull in the noise. Dick, straining every nerve to hear, caught strange sounds that appealed to him far more than his tutor's voice. It was his father speaking! Unable to contain himself, he turned his head towards the window and listened attentively. To his surprise and alarm, he could hear Mr Plantagenet raising his voice, not in merriment now, but in indignant anger. What Faussett and his friends might have said or done to rouse the poor pitiful old man, Dick never knew. But fallen as he was, Edmund Plantagenet had in him still in some ways the feelings of a gentleman; and it was clear that something had happened to hurt and wound them. Dick looked out once more. Across the quad, as in a shadow, he could see his father rise in the room with an angry gesture. He rose so straight and erect that for a second Dick felt relieved: all was well in that way: at least he was sober! A few minutes before, to be sure, he had been staggering and unsteady; but whatever had happened to rouse him now had had the effect of immediately sobering him. He was white with anger. Straight as an arrow, he shook his long gray hair fiercely off his forehead, and glared with angry eyes at Trevor Gillingham. Dick felt so much by the mere outline of his figure in dark against the blinding lamplight. What he said, Dick couldn't hear; but the voice in which he said it was one of mingled contempt and bitter indignation. Dick was surprised to see so much fire in his father's eye; to hear so much manly indignation in his father's voice. Mr Plantagenet raised his hand for a moment full in front of the window; then he turned away angrily towards the door behind him. Gillingham, with a frightened air, tried to interpose himself in the way and stop him from departing. But Mr Plantagenet would not be stopped. He walked over to the door, upright, without flinching or staggering, and turned the handle without a second's hesitation. He looked as if he had never had a single glass of sherry. Dick could stand it no longer. 'I beg your pardon, sir,' he cried, turning to the

tutor in his dismay. 'I can't stop another minute! I must go! It's imperative! You mustn't try to keep me—I have a sufficient reason. I can't and won't stop one minute longer.'

The tutor had been sitting with his back to the window, and was far too much accustomed to noise in Faussett's rooms to attach any importance to that habitual interruption; but Dick spoke so seriously now that he couldn't pretend not to notice the genuineness of his feeling. He concluded Plantagenet must be ill all the time—which accounted for his dullness—and wondered he hadn't had the sense to say so earlier. 'Oh, certainly,' he answered, rising. 'You can go, if you like. I'm sorry I kept you. Come up again to-morrow and we'll talk this over.'

But as he said it, from Faussett's rooms there came a deadly hush, as all the noisy lads became aware of the gravity of the situation. Gillingham, thoroughly frightened at the turn things were taking, stood forward to stop the old man from leaving. 'I beg your pardon, Mr Plantagenet,' he said with a very red face. 'I'm sorry I've hurt your feelings. I'm sure I didn't mean it. I wanted rather to offer you a delicate compliment by that slight recitation from Barry Neville's works. I—I meant no imputation of any sort upon your present position.'

But Edmund Plantagenet was too wroth for words. Something had happened that stung the old man back into self-respect at once—a stray flash of self-respect that revealed to him, as it were, all his habitual degradation. He motioned aside the Born Poet with a stately wave of the hand. Then, with a profound bow, that had nothing of the dancing-master in it, but a great deal of the angry courtesy of fifty years since, he shut the door sternly in the young man's face, and turned to descend the winding stone staircase.

For a moment there was silent dismay in the room as Mr Plantagenet's footsteps died away through the quadrangle. Then Faussett spoke. 'I'm afraid we've done it now,' he said with a scared white face, turning round to the awed and speechless company. 'He seems very much roused. I hope he won't go and do himself any mischief.'

'I fancy not,' Trevor Gillingham answered, trying to seem unconcerned, for he had been in some ways the chief offender. 'By George, I wouldn't have believed the old man had so much dignity left in him. It was almost worth while doing it to see how he bridled up and became a man in a moment. There was a touch of King Lear in the grand way he blustered. I liked to see him do it; though it's only a dying flicker of what was once a gentleman. He could write well once, and I know by heart several other pieces of his.'

'I don't quite like it,' Faussett interposed. 'You carried the joke a little bit too far, you know, Gillingham; made him feel too acutely the great gulf fixed between his past and his present. I'm almost afraid he may do himself some injury.'

Gillingham shared that fear in his heart—which was an excellent reason for pretending to laugh at it. 'Oh, no danger,' he answered smiling. 'He's a bit excited now; but he's sobered for

the moment; that'll soon pass off again. By the time he's down the stairs, he'll forget all about it, and come up smiling to-morrow morning. He's too far gone for real remorse. This is a temporary outbreak of spleen and self-reproach; it never lives long in a temperament like his. He'll be laughing and talking in an hour, I'll bet you, at some bar in Oxford.'

Even as he spoke, the door opened, with a very slight knock, and all unannounced, Richard Plantagenet entered, pale and trembling.

'My father!' he cried, looking round the room anxiously with a restless glance. 'What have you done with my father? I heard his voice just now as I passed outside, and I've come up to look for him.' Then he turned to Gillingham with an accusing face. 'Where is he?' he asked once more, gazing round him in dismay, for a deadly silence reigned, and never in his life before had he heard such a ring in Edmund Plantagenet's voice as he had heard that evening. 'What have you been doing in these rooms to-night with him?'

Gillingham hesitated. Dick's pallor and earnestness produced a deep and instantaneous effect upon him. He was afraid to speak. But Faussett, as the founder of the feast, stood forward manfully. 'Mr Plantagenet has been spending the evening in my rooms as my guest,' he answered as politely and unconcernedly as possible. 'But he's just left now; I wonder you didn't meet him; I fancy he's gone home direct to his own lodgings.'

Dick drew back in horror, and glanced from one to another of the abashed conspirators in silent misery. They quailed before his eye, but none of them said anything. Dick didn't delay a moment. He knew from the sound of his father's voice something very unwonted and terrible had happened. Though he hadn't caught a single word of what was said in the room, he had seen the faces and heard the tones, and never before in his life had he known those lips speak out with such pathetic and offended dignity. He trembled for the result of so strange an adventure.

There was no time to be lost, however. The situation was critical. With a burning heart he rushed back to the porter's lodge. The big gate was shut and locked. He beat his fist against it helplessly. 'For Heaven's sake,' he cried with wild fervour, 'let me out, I implore you! Let me out, let me out, or I can't answer for the consequences!'

'Very sorry, sir,' the porter answered with official calmness, rattling the keys in his hand, 'but I can't possibly do it. The clock's gone eleven. Can't allow any gentleman out now without leave from the Dean, sir.'

'Then Heaven save him!' Dick cried, wringing his hands in terror; 'for if he goes out alone like that in such a state of mind, Heaven only knows what on earth may become of him!'

The porter was a man of the world, accustomed to the ways of the Oxford undergraduate, and he entered at once into the nature of the situation. 'Beg pardon, sir,' he answered cheerfully, touching his hat as he spoke. 'If you mean the elderly gentleman with the gray hair, from Mr Faussett's rooms, as has just gone out, he won't come to no harm. He seemed to me to walk

quite cool and collected-like. If you'll excuse my saying it, sir, he was perfectly sober.'

But Dick turned and rushed wildly in an agony of suspense to his own rooms in the Back Quad. There he spent a sleepless night in unspeakable misery. He would have given anything on earth if only he had dared to ask for leave to go out of college. But how ask for it even, without seeming to reflect on his own father's character?

(To be continued.)

TULLE AND ITS GOVERNMENT FACTORIES OF ARMS.

ACCORDING to an Italian folk-tale, a fairy god-mother asked a woman to whose child she had stood sponsor whether she should endow the boy with wealth or honours or promise him a beautiful wife. 'Give him Impudence,' answered the mother, 'and everything else will come into his hands—wealth, honours, and a beautiful woman.' The Sieur Martial Féris de Lacombe, Procureur du Roy, and President of Tulle in the seventeenth century, was certainly richly endowed with that most precious gift of impudence. He drove the inhabitants almost into riot by his exactions, but cowed them by his unblushing effrontery. He made his own fortune; but it must be allowed that he conferred on his native city a benefit that is bearing fruit to the present day.

Tulle in the middle ages had been noted for its arquebuse-makers; the place was well calculated by nature for the manufacturing of arms. It had iron mines in the mountains of Lower Limousin, vast forests of oak to supply charcoal, splendid nut-trees of which to fashion stocks, quarries of whetstone, and masses of clay for castings. The Sieur Féris had his armourer's shop and factory in 1698; then he married an heiress, the daughter of a paper-maker at Souillac, close to Tulle, and for a while he made paper as well as arms. But the Sieur had a soul that was not content with such a limited sphere of business, and as Procureur du Roy he thought he saw his way to doing something on a very large scale indeed. By some means—it is not certain how—he obtained Government orders for firearms for the fleet, and very speedily he obtained the monopoly of supplying the fleet with arms. The methods of manufacture hitherto adopted by the armourers of Tulle were not perfect, and the Sieur induced skilled workmen to come to him from Liège, so as to introduce all the improvements known to the Liégeois armourers. The Sieur now undertook voyages to all the Government colonies and stations. He was several times in the Mediterranean; he crossed the Atlantic to Canada, and contrived to supply the forts under the French everywhere with his weapons manufactured at Tulle.

The paper-mill at Souillac was now transformed. The water-wheel was retained; and the ponds of the little river Céronne were employed in the polishing of gun-barrels instead of the

conversion of rags into pulp. The business of the *Sieur Fénis de Lacombe* was now in full swing. He assumed for his factory the title of the 'Royal Manufactory of Arms,' without any patent to authorise him so to do, and he made his will felt in Tulle in a manner most insufferable to the inhabitants. Pretending that he was armed with royal authority to press men and beasts, and quarter workmen where he would, he seized on the horses and mules of the carriers and laded them with firearms, which he despatched to the arsenals. If he paid an indemnity, it was such a sum as he himself chose to fix. His men waylaid travellers, cut the girths and cords that bound their packages on the beasts of burden, left the travellers distracted with their goods on the high-road, and drove away their beasts to be laden with his stores. If they protested—'De part le Roy' was his answer. He cut down trees for gun-stocks and oak for charcoal where he would, in the parks of the gentry and the forests of the communes, and no redress was to be had. He acted 'de part le Roy.' He quartered his foreign workmen in the houses of the citizens without leave, and fixed the price at which they were to be entertained. No one had the courage to ask to see his patent authorising him to use such high-handed powers, and no one doubted that the title of 'Manufacture Royale d'Armes' given to his shops was justified.

Unable always to supply orders as rapidly as was required, he entered—so it is asserted—into secret negotiation with the Superintendent of the genuine Royal factory at Saint-Etienne, got a number of weapons there made at Government cost transferred to himself, put his own mark on them, and sold them to the Government as his own manufacture.

It is not at all surprising that by this means the *Sieur de Lacombe* realised a large fortune, and was able to buy up large encumbered estates in the neighbourhood of Tulle; and that his son, *Jean Martial de Fénis*, was able to contract a marriage with a lady of the old and proud noblesse of Normandy, *Charlotte de Charmois*, and to tack on to his name the title of *de Victour* from a seigneurial estate his father had bought.

Martial de Fénis de Lacombe died in 1729, and his factories passed to his widow and his brother *Gabriel*, provost of the Cathedral, till his son came of age to carry them on himself. *Jean* took to the making of cannon in 1770, and secured for his factory the royal patent; and a royal inspector, the Baron d'Escordal, was appointed to control the output. But the *Fénis* family were by no means the sole makers of arms in Tulle; a large clan of the name of *Pauphille* made guns for the chase at Tulle of two sizes—single-barrelled, which went in commerce by the name of 'grand Tulle' and 'petit Tulle.' These were largely exported to Canada, where many an old French Canadian family

still possesses them as relics of their forefathers.

To return to the factory that was now royal. With the Revolution it passed through a period of great fluctuation of prosperity. A law of 1792 placed all factories of arms under a Commission: in 1804 they were put into the hands of the Minister of War. In 1793 the *Comité de Salut Public* was empowered to cut trees in the woods of the emigrant landowners, to turn what buildings were desirable into arsenals, and to convert every father of a family into an armourer. The number of workmen rose in the factory at Tulle from two hundred and thirty-seven to six hundred and sixty-nine, and of these fourteen were women. In 1791-92 the factory at Souillac turned out 14,127 guns, on an average five hundred per month. At present, the factories have been reconstructed and greatly extended. There are two, one at Souillac, and another at Laguenne, two suburbs of Tulle; and there are workshops in the town for the making of stocks, &c. The number of workmen now engaged varies from 1500 to 3000. At Souillac the rifling and polishing of the guns take place. The buildings occupy the entire bed of the valley between mountains clothed in forest of pine, oak coppice, and chestnuts. The modest factory of the *Sieur* remains, or a portion of it, incorporated in the modern buildings.

Tulle itself is a singular old town; it lies in a tortuous glen, clustered about some rocks and hills, that start out of the valley bottom beside the river *Corrèze*. The highest of these hills, one fortified by nature, was the stronghold of the ancient Gaulish inhabitants. It is now the cemetery; but to the east may still be traced some of the ancient ramparts that have not been enclosed for the graveyard.

The Cathedral is of fine-grained granite, of the twelfth century, begun in bold style, carried up to a gallery below the clerestory, and then finished off in a feeble and inexpressive fashion. The church has a tower and spire at the west end, all of granite, and not remarkably good. The transepts and choir were pulled down at the Revolution, as they projected towards the river, and made the way contracted and inconvenient. A second church is that of St John the Baptist, of the thirteenth century, very badly treated externally. A curious twelfth-century octagonal church lies to the north of the town, and seems to have been originally a baptistery. Later, it became the church of the Carmelites. The days of costume for men and women are over; the old Limousin head-dress is no longer seen; but there is something picturesque in the long dark flowing cloaks of the women, with their hoods, very much resembling those worn by the Flemish women of Bruges and Antwerp.

What would have become of Tulle but for the *Sieur de Lacombe*? Without the national manufactories of arms, it would have nothing on which to live. Dead and sleepy and behind the rest of the world it is now. It would surely have dwindled to nothingness but for his high-handed conduct, his impudence, his energy, and assurance. And so it has come about that out of considerable wrong done in one quarter of a century, great good has sprung during two; and that Tulle will remain the great national factory of arms for

France for some time to come is certain, for no place is more central, less accessible to an invader, and more naturally protected against invasion by its granite mountain walls.

BABY JOHN.*

CHAPTER VII.—RETURN.

Come,
I'll fill your grave up; stir;
Nay, come away;
Bequeath to death your numbness,
For from death
Dear life redeems you.

SHAKESPEARE.

A FORTNIGHT later John Craddock got out of the train at Beston. He had come direct there on landing at Liverpool, without going to Felsby or communicating with any one there. If Lucy had been living, he would have done this, and there was a kind of dreary satisfaction in going direct to Lucy dead. He had the little box with the earrings in his breast pocket. He wondered so often if she would have liked them, or if they would have shared the fate of the other trinkets he had given her. He would have liked to slip them into her dead hand, for no one else should wear them, but he would be too late even for this, for the funeral would have been a week ago and more in the little churchyard at Beston. He remembered passing it that night when he looked through the window at Lucy and Baby John, the little rough church with a stumpy tower, and under its shadow a few clustered graves, some with rude headstones, but most with merely green mounds. He would rather think of her lying there than in the crowded cemetery outside Felsby, and he tried to picture the funeral where George Mills and Alice Reynolds would have been the only mourners, for his mother was too rheumatic to manage the journey; and he remembered sadly that she had never taken to Lucy, and that he had not gone the right way to work to make her do so. Perhaps Alice might have carried Baby John to his mother's funeral; he fancied she would have done so, she was so fond of Lucy, a very true friend, faithful to her through that separation he had insisted on, when she might well have thought that it was Lucy's own doing. He determined that Alice should never want a friend or a home; and if she would, as he had little doubt, consent to take care of Baby John, she should have it all as she liked best, for Lucy's sake.

It was a beautiful, bright September day as he travelled across England towards Beston; as bright as that day four months ago when he left the little place with that new, warm feeling for his wife and child that had grown and brought forth such bright flowers of hope and anticipation. The trees, which were then putting on their tender young foliage, were now showing signs of autumn's touch, golden and crimson and russet; and the cornfields, which had been displaying that rare vivid green in May, were bare stubble or ploughed land; and under the hedgerows and trees lay heaps of dead leaves.

John Craddock, as he gazed dully on the landscape from the railway carriage, felt as if those

dead leaves, those bare furrows, were like his life with its withered hopes, and the approaching winter of lonely old age.

It was evening when he reached Beston; but though it was lighted with not very brilliant oil-lamps instead of the lovely May sunshine, the little station brought back vividly his parting with his wife. Oh, if only he had known that it was the last time he should see her! Why did he not let the train go, and stop with her, turn back to the little lodgings, and take Baby John in his arms, and begin the new life from that day? What did the most important business in the world signify, compared with a life's happiness? Perhaps if he had been there he might have prevented the illness that had stricken her down in her health and strength. He felt as if, had he been there, nothing could have harmed her, that his love could have protected her from the arrow that flieth by night, or the sickness that destroyeth in the noonday.

'Where to, sir?' the porter asked, as he took John Craddock's portmanteau, the only luggage taken out of the train, Mr Craddock being the only passenger. 'The bus don't meet the trains, now the season's done and all the holiday folks left. But if you're going to the *Seaview* I'll just carry it round.'

Mr Craddock had not thought where he would go, having an indistinct feeling that he was going to that fire-lighted room where Lucy sat, and which meant home to him; but he let the porter take the portmanteau to the *Seaview*, and followed slowly the man's brisk footsteps. There was no gas in Beston; but it was not dark, for a great white moon was riding through the clouds, and drawing a broad silver line on the quiet sea, which sighed softly and sadly on the beach, drawing back with a hush lest it should wake the sleepers.

The church stands a little higher than the rest of the place, so that, from the churchyard, you see, over the terrace of houses in front, a wide stretch of sea. Mr Craddock took this way, though it was by no means the shortest to the *Seaview*, and the porter carrying the portmanteau glanced round over his shoulder, thinking he had mistaken his way, being a stranger to the place.

How quiet it was! The whole place might have been dead as well as Lucy for all the sound there was; only the 'Hush, hush' of the sea, which seemed to intensify the stillness. He found his way to the new-made grave; it was not turfed yet, but he could see in the clear moonlight that there were flowers on it, and he imagined how Alice brought Baby John there every day.

It seemed almost more impossible to believe that Lucy was dead, now that he was standing by her grave, than it had been when the telegram first came, or during the voyage home. The loss seemed more terrible, more unbearable, more unbelievable; his whole soul rose up in passionate, despairing protest as he stretched out his empty, yearning arms over his young wife's grave, crying to the God above that great, quiet vault of indigo sky, beyond that great dark stretch of sea with the long silver line of moonlight on it, 'Oh, give her back to me!' A passionate, self-willed, undisciplined prayer, without the resignation and submission to the Divine will that all

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prayers should have; and yet, it may be, such prayers find their way to the throne of grace, and their unworthiness is forgiven for the sake of their heart-broken reality. But the great white moon above looked quietly down on his grief, and the waves on the beach only answered with their gentle 'Hush, hush.'

When John Craddock left the churchyard, he turned his steps almost involuntarily to Mrs Tripp's cottage. He did not mean to go in and see Alice and the baby to-night; to-morrow would be soon enough to hear all particulars and make any arrangements for the future; but he thought he would just walk past the house and recall once more the scene he had looked at four months ago. The moon was hidden behind a bank of clouds, and as he turned the corner he saw that now, as on that evening, light was streaming from the little window on to the small garden, where marigolds and asters had taken the place of wall-flower.

It gave him a pang, half pleasure, half pain, that this should be so, and as he came up to the house and laid his hand on the palings, he shut his eyes and conjured up every detail of that scene—the firelight shining on the white cloth, and the tea-things on the table pushed back out of the way; the pictures on the wall, the big shells on the mantel-piece, the baby's cradle by the fireside, and Lucy sitting in the low chair with the baby on her lap and Alice kneeling in front. How vividly he remembered it all! It cost him an effort to open his eyes to look on the changed reality.

And then his heart seemed to stop beating, and he clutched at the railings for support. Could vivid memory produce such strange hallucinations? Were his eyes playing him false? Was his head going wrong? For it seemed to him that he saw Lucy there sitting before the fire with Baby John on her lap—Lucy, who had been dead a fortnight, whose grave he had seen not ten minutes ago in the moonlight!

He tried to collect his thoughts, to pull himself together, to shake off this curious impression; he stamped his foot on the ground, he clenched his hands, he rubbed his eyes. And then he looked again through the little window, and again he seemed to see his wife with the child in her arms.

The child was sleeping, and she was leaning forward and looking into the fire with sad, wistful eyes, and thoughtfully turning the thick wedding-ring on her finger. As he watched her in stunned, incredulous silence, she got up and laid the sleeping child in the cradle; and the movement seemed to break the spell that kept him, and the next minute he was in the room, with Lucy in his arms, and warm, living arms round his neck.

'Dear heart! how he cried,' Lucy used to tell Baby John—for, now Alice was gone, there was no one to whom she could talk of her husband, though nowadays she could always talk to him. 'I'd never have dreamed that he'd have cared so much, and I'd never seen a man cry before, and it did make me feel funny, and yet I was that glad, Baby John, that I couldn't help crying too; so there were a pair of sillies of us. It was a good thing, Baby John, that you was asleep, or you'd never have honoured your father or mother

again in your life, and I'd thought I'd cried all my tears away for Alice. And he'd brought a workbox for her, such a beauty! she would have been that pleased! I can't help hoping as she knows about it with the sandal-wood as smells lovely, and the red silk inside. And she'd think such a lot of its coming from him. And them earrings too! they'd have been just the very ones she'd have chosen, if she and me had been standing outside Percy's window and choosing out which we'd have when our ships came in. Leastways, she'd have chosen them for me, for she always chose the prettiest as she'd like me to have, and then the next prettiest for herself; it was always that way, bless her! And so, Baby John, that's why I've got 'em on now, though I know as they don't go with crape, to please her—and to please him.'

It was Alice who was taken. She had been failing all through that bright summer, though Lucy, with all the blindness of love, could not see it. But at last the weakness and shortness of breath grew so painfully apparent, that a doctor was called in.

'Don't tell her,' Alice panted, reading her sentence on his kind, grave face. 'Don't tell her; maybe I'll live till her husband comes home. It won't be long now.'

Perhaps this was the least kind thing that Alice ever did in her life, for in her wish to spare Lucy the anxiety and dread, she prepared a crushing blow for her, that, when it fell, seemed to overwhelm her with its suddenness.

'I'm sure she's better,' she used to say.—'Don't you feel a bit stronger, Alice? You're not near so tired to-night.—She really seemed to relish that bit of chicken for her dinner.'

'It's only faintness!' she kept declaring to the very end, when the life was ebbing so gently away. 'She's asleep,' she whispered, with great, wide eyes of mixed entreaty and defiance at Mrs Tripp, as they laid the wasted form back on the pillows, with that look of ineffable peace on the face which there is no mistaking.

When she realised what had happened, she was prostrated; so entirely so, that kind, old Mrs Tripp took matters into her own hands and telegraphed to Felsby: 'The poor young lady died this morning. Come at once.' And George Mills, who knew nothing of Alice or of her illness, and only knew that Lucy was staying at Beston for her health, concluded that it was she who had died, and, before starting for Beston, sent the telegram to Mr Craddock. Of course, directly he reached Beston, he discovered the terrible mistake he had made, and did not lose a minute in despatching another telegram, which reached the hotel before Mr Craddock was out of sight of land, and this was followed by a letter containing all particulars; for, as I have said, his return to England was not expected for another two months.

But John Craddock thought that that fortnight's suffering was more than repaid by the clasp of his wife's living, yes, and loving arms round his neck. For Alice he always cherished a grateful and tender memory. 'She gave you back to me, my darling,' he used to say, 'three times. First when she came that evening when you lay dying. Yes, the doctor had just been breaking to me that I must be prepared for the

worst, but you came back for her. And then, do you know, I think she and Baby John together made you like me, gave me back a little of my wife's love, which seemed gone, even if I had ever had it. And third—I know it's my fancy, but I cannot get it out of my head, that you really died that day, only Alice took your place, and gave you back to me.

'She'd have done it and welcome, Alice would,' Lucy always answered.

THE END.

ST MICHAEL'S DAY AND BIRD.

THE festival of St Michael and all the Holy Angels is one of those days which both the Eastern and the Western branches of the Christian Church agree to observe as one of high holiday. Why the Archangel Michael should be selected thus to head the celestial hierarchy is obscure, for his theological attributes are not clearly defined; but it appears that the term 'saint' was first applied to him in the reign of Constantine the Great, who built a magnificent church at a short distance from Constantinople, and dedicated it to St Michael.

In the Roman calendar the rigid observance of the festival was first decreed, in the year 606, by Pope Boniface III., although the day appears to have been kept quite a century and a half earlier. In his exposition of the Book of Common Prayer, Wheatley says, referring to the subject: 'The feast of St Michael and all Angels is observed that men may know what benefits are derived from the ministry of angels.'

Michaelmas Day is known to most of us as one of the quarter days upon which rent is due, if not actually paid; and it has also been set apart from very early times, both in England and in other countries, as the day for the annual election of many civil and municipal officers; and the reason commonly given is that 'every man has his guardian angel, who attends him from the cradle to the grave, from the moment of his coming to the moment of his going out of life.'

The ecclesiastical origin of the day troubles the average Briton but little. If he observe the festival at all, it is rather as a matter of practice than of principle; and the custom which he regularly follows, with all a Briton's pertinacity, is that of eating his Michaelmas goose. Sundry and divers reasons have been assigned for the custom. The true one is probably the somewhat unromantic fact that the goose is in her prime at this season. She has gleaned amongst the harvest stubble for several weeks, and is fat and tender. There is a well-known tradition that Queen Elizabeth received the glad news of the defeat and destruction of the Invincible Armada while dining upon goose on the 29th of September 1588, and that, to commemorate the victory, Her Majesty was pleased to direct that, ever afterwards, a roasted goose should be served at her

table upon the anniversary of the day. The tale may be true; but history is made up of doubts, and, as the Armada was defeated in the last days of July and the beginning of August, it does seem strange—while making every allowance for defective postal communication, and for the difference between the old style and the new—that Good Queen Bess should have remained in ignorance of her great deliverance for so long a period. Unfortunately, too, for the legend, our feudal records contain references to the custom at a period long anterior to that of the Tudor sovereigns. Blount, in his *Ancient Tenures of Lands, and Customs of Manors*, gives one such instance. 'Among other services,' he says, 'John de la Hay was bound to render to William Barnaby, Lord of Lastres, in the county of Hereford, for a parcel of the demesne land, one goose fit for the lord's dinner on the feast of St Michael the Archangel, and this was as early as the tenth year of King Edward IV.'

Certain animals have characters ascribed to them, whether for good or for evil, which they very little deserve, and foremost among these unfortunate creatures stands the goose. Gross stupidity and overweening vanity are the qualities with which this much-decried biped is commonly credited. It is not a little remarkable, however, that the reputation of being the fool of the animal family has only been attached to the goose in comparatively modern times. Among the ancients, the goose was celebrated and even worshipped for her beauties and many prominent virtues. We have all read how the vigilant watch of the cackling sentinels once saved old Rome, and of the divine honours paid to the birds by the grateful citizens. Pliny praises the goose for her modesty, which, he states, is her most conspicuous characteristic; and, he remarks, 'one might almost be tempted to think that these creatures have an appreciation of wisdom, for it is said that one of them was the constant companion of the peripatetic philosopher Lycades, and would never leave him, either in public or when at the bath, by night or by day.' When this sagacious bird paid the debt of nature, her sorrowing master conferred upon her the highest honours in his power; her funeral was splendid and costly. Scaliger declares that the goose is the very emblem of careflessness. She physics herself as soon as she feels unwell, and never passes under an arch without bowing her head, thus preventing the possibility of an accident. Another writer, who evidently had no love for geese, thus expresses himself: 'She hath a great opinion of her own stature, especially if she be in the company of the rest of her neighbours and fellow-gossipes, the ducks and hennies, at a harvest feast; for then if she enter into the Hall there, as high and wide as the Doore is, she will stoop, for fear of breaking her head.' He continues: 'At a Wake, when they assemble themselves together at a town-greene, then they sing their Ballets, and lay out such throats as the country fiddlers cannot be heard.'

As an instance of the sagacity of the goose, one legend relates, that when a flock crosses Mount Taurus, where eagles abound, each individual

carries a stone in its beak, and so prevents its tongue from making its presence known to the enemy by any involuntary hissing, or thoughtless cackle to a fellow-traveller.

In former times, no higher compliment could be paid to a man than to compare him with this model bird. We read that St Quintin was so remarkable for his chastity, vigilance, and sobriety, that the Bishop of Vienne stated in his eulogy that the departed holy man was very similar to a goose.

It was long a belief that the physical, mental, and moral qualities of mankind were intimately connected with his food, and savage nations often eat the flesh and drink the blood of their slain enemies and of the fiercer beasts of prey, in order to obtain their strength and courage. The flesh of doves, hares, and deer was thought to cause gentleness, timidity, and equanimity of mind; while the Egyptians ate goose-flesh to stimulate the activity of their brains. An English poet writes, in reference to the goose :

Her brains, with salt and pepper if you blend
And eat, they will the understanding mend,
Her lungs and liver, into powder dried,
And, fasting, in an ass's milk applied,
Is an experienced cordial for the spleen.

A mediæval physician prescribed, as a remedy for convulsions, a compound of goose-grease, spice, and roasted cat, the latter animal being associated with the former probably on account of its proverbial air of composure and its placid demeanour.

In some parts of England, geese are still kept with the cattle, the association being considered most beneficial to the mothers of the herd. In other parts they are supposed to cure hydrophobia, and to protect packs of hounds against the spread of rabies. We thus see that the bird was formerly esteemed rather for its moral virtues and medicinal properties than for its real gastronomic excellences.

The goose is perhaps the only animal in whom disease is deliberately induced to increase its value as an edible commodity. The well-known *pâté de foie gras* of Strasburg is made from goose livers in a state of morbid development, caused by excessive over-feeding, and a forced and inactive exposure to artificial heat.

In France, the goose is eaten upon St Martin's Day, and a curious legend is related to account for the custom. Martin was a native of Hungary, and after a series of marvellous adventures, finally settled down as a hermit, and resided in a cave near Tours, of which place he became bishop. In addition to the raging of the heathen, he was greatly persecuted by a number of evil-minded geese, who annoyed him in every possible way; and at last an irreverent gander actually preached in opposition to the saint, who was vexed, as he said, to an extent to which a saint ought not to be vexed. Disgusted beyond all endurance, he retreated to his cave. To his consternation, he found that during his absence it had been occupied by a goose, who was now making energetic arrangements for rearing a young family. This was too much. The enraged celibate made a hearty dinner of the sacrilegious bird, and being accustomed to hermit's fare only, speedily died from indigestion.

On each succeeding anniversary of the day, the

Frenchman dines on roast goose. He thus marks his disapproval of the perfidious conduct of the animal, and keeps green the memory of the saint.

THE BLACK-LETTER BROADSHEET.

I HAVE always had a great horror of circumstantial evidence. Now and then it has fallen to my lot to serve on juries at assizes or petty sessions, and on these occasions I have sometimes had to deal with cases where the evidence against the accused persons was built up bit by bit until it seemed conclusive. My fellow-jurors usually made up their minds as readily in such cases as in those where testimony was direct; but they never succeeded in persuading me to agree to a verdict. I daresay I was often laughed at and ridiculed, but that mattered nothing. I had a very good reason for refusing to convict on circumstantial evidence only, and it was on that account that I steadily refused to assume the guilt of a man who seemed to be guilty, but who might nevertheless be innocent of the charge laid against him.

I have all my life been a student, devoted to books and to literary research, and when I was quite a young man my special form of pleasure was the unearthing of anything in the shape of black-letter folios, pamphlets, or tracts. In my own modest way I had quite a decent collection of this sort of literature by the time I came of age, and every separate volume or tract in it had been collected by myself. I had unearthed my treasures from all sorts of places: some from between the pages of dirty and dog-eared volumes picked up on old bookstalls; some from old houses in the country; others from sales at which neither bookseller nor antiquary was present to dispute the prize with me. I was very proud of my little collection, and would not have sold it for its weight in gold. My one aim in life at that time, in fact, was to add to it, and I was always on the outlook for any rare volume that promised to enrich my stores.

In the summer of the year 1861 I was staying at a little village in the West Riding of Yorkshire, whither I had gone for the sake of fresh air, solitude, and such other delights as the country can give. I had my black-letter collection with me in my lodgings, together with a small library of my favourite authors, and in this congenial company I was never at a loss for occupation and amusement. I suppose the villagers soon heard of my bookish pursuits, for they bestowed upon me the name of 't' owd-book man,' and looked at me with considerable wonder. They themselves had old books in their farm-houses and cottages, and let me overhaul them gladly; but though many of them were curious and rare, I found nothing in my own special line.

One evening, however, as I was sitting in my lodgings reading John Lilly's *Euphues* for the fiftieth time, my landlady ushered in a young man whom I knew as John Burton, a stout farm-labourer. He stood inside the door twirling his cap and staring at the books around him.

'Good-evening, John,' said I. 'What can I do for you?'

'You're varry fond o' owd books, aren't you, mestur?' said John in reply.

'Certainly I am,' I replied, wondering what he meant. 'Yes, very fond indeed.'

'I thowt,' said John, 'at you'd happen hev no objection to buy two or three owd books 'at I hev to sell. You see, mestur, I'm emigratin' to America, and it's no use me carrying owd books wi' me, so I want to sell 'em if they're worth owt. I hev heerd 'at owd books is sometimes worth money.'

'Quite so, John. Well, I'm afraid you won't have anything that will suit me; but I'll look at them and tell you what to do with them.'

'Thank 'ee, sir,' said John. 'They're varry owd, is some on 'em. They were my grand-feyther's at first. Then I'll fetch 'em for you to look at, sir?'

'Yes, fetch them, John, by all means. I'll do my best for you.'

He came back in twenty minutes, bringing an armful of books, which I spread out on the table and began to examine. There was nothing amongst them that seemed likely to be of use to me. An old work on farriery, another on agriculture, a quaintly illustrated *Pilgrim's Progress*, a collection of tracts bound together, an old Bible—these were the principal features of John's little library. There was nothing that I cared even to examine except the tracts, which I began to turn over on the chance of finding something curious amongst them.

'I'm afraid your books won't be of much use to me, John,' I began—and suddenly stopped short. In turning the book over I had caught a glimpse of black-letter! My heart gave an extra beat: I tried to assume a careless manner. Book collectors will know what I felt. I turned the leaves carelessly again, and saw that what had caught my eye was a black-letter broadsheet or tract which had evidently been slipped into the book ages before. I laid the volume down. 'However, I'll tell you what I'll do, John,' I continued, as calmly as possible. 'As long as you're going to America and don't want to carry your books with you I'll give you five pounds for the lot. Will that suit you?'

It suited John very well indeed; and he presently retired with five golden sovereigns knotted securely in the corner of his handkerchief.

'Look here, John,' said I, as I showed him out; 'don't tell any of your neighbours that I have been buying books from you. I really don't want to buy any more, and they might come to offer me some.'

'All right, sir,' said John. 'Good-night, sir, and thank 'ee.'

When he had fairly retired, I slipped the latch of my door and sat down to examine my purchase. It might be worth something, or it might be worth nothing. I turned over the leaves and taking the broadsheet out laid it on the table. I think that was the most supreme moment of my life. Before me lay what I knew to be a perfect specimen of Caxton's own work—a little tract of four pages, printed by the master's own hands. It was in beautiful preservation, without a crease or a wrinkle, and the dead black of the ink seemed as fresh as if it had just come from the press. What a wonderful piece of good fortune!

Now, I knew a good deal about that particular broadsheet. A copy of it had been sold at Quaritch's only a few months previously which was supposed to be absolutely unique. It had fetched a tremendous price—four hundred and twenty pounds, I think. The purchaser was a famous collector, Dr Clarke, whose special love was for unique copies, over which he had spent a fortune. He had been very jubilant over his acquisition of the famous broadsheet, and I hugged myself with delight at the thought of his discomfiture when I showed my copy to the learned world.

Book-collecting, I think, leads men to the cultivation of very subtle and ingenious diplomacy. It develops cautiousness and control, and makes a man as Machiavellian as an ancient Italian statesman. No sooner had I secured my priceless broadsheet than I began to lay schemes for getting a peep at Dr Clarke's copy. I had never seen it, for I had not known of the sale at which it was disposed of until too late. Dr Clarke lived at Lichfield, and I immediately determined to beard him in his den and beg for an inspection of his Caxton tract. I would examine it narrowly, and then, when he was glorying in his possession of it, I would confound him by producing my own. I rubbed my hands gleefully at the mere thought.

I wrote to Dr Clarke the next day, asking him to allow me to inspect his chief treasure. I reminded him that I had once met him at the house of a mutual friend in London, where we had exchanged views on the questions interesting to both of us. I explained that I had never seen the broadsheet now in his possession, and should be very glad of his permission to examine it. By return of post came a letter from Dr Clarke giving me leave to inspect the treasure, and fixing the following Monday for an interview at his house. It was then Thursday, and I spent the intervening days in a fever of impatience. There was a hope strong in my heart that Dr Clarke's copy might prove to be faulty in some respect, or not so clean as my own. In that case my copy would hold pride of place.

I travelled to Lichfield very early on the Monday morning, and presented myself at Dr Clarke's house to the very minute. Alas! the doctor had been obliged to leave home an hour previously, and would not return until late that night.

'But if you are Mr Simpson, sir,' said the servant, 'my master left a note for you.'

I opened the note eagerly. Dr Clarke regretted that he was called away to see his dying sister. Rather than disappoint me, however, he had given instructions to his daughter to show me the Caxton, and he trusted I should make myself at home in his library during my stay there.

This was quite satisfactory to me, and I was presently ushered into the presence of Miss Clarke, a pretty, clever-looking girl of nineteen or twenty, with whom I was soon chatting at my ease. I found her quite as enthusiastic on the subject of book-collecting as her father. She took me into the doctor's library, a fine noble apartment; and after I had glanced round the shelves, she installed me in her father's chair and unlocked a drawer in his desk.

'Here is the pearl of great price, Mr Simpson,'

she said laughingly. 'You see how jealously we guard it—how carefully it is wrapped and protected. There—now examine it at your leisure. You will excuse me, I am sure. When you have finished your inspection, please replace the packet in this drawer. We lunch at one.'

She went away; and I opened the packet with trembling fingers and carefully laid aside the wrappings until the Caxton was revealed.

I was very much surprised by it. It was an exact counterpart of mine, just as clean, just as unwrinkled. It looked as though it had been preserved for centuries in very careful fashion. There was no doubt that between my copy and it no material difference existed. I began to go over it carefully with a magnifying glass.

While I was engaged on the second page, Miss Clarke again entered the room. After some slight chat about the Caxton, she asked if I had seen her latest purchase. I had not; and she unlocked another drawer and produced it. It was North's Plutarch, a beautiful specimen, which we duly examined and praised. Then she went away again, and I was alone until my examination of the Caxton was finished. I had been carefully through it and could find nothing different in it from my own copy.

I wrapped the treasure up again, and replacing it in the drawer, locked the latter, and took the keys to Miss Clarke in the adjacent drawing-room. I wondered whether or not to tell her of the existence of my own copy. Finally, I decided not to do so. I could not resist the temptation of making the announcement to Dr Clarke in person. I remained to luncheon, and immediately afterwards took my leave and returned to Yorkshire.

About four o'clock in the afternoon of the next day I was sitting in my lodgings re-examining my copy of the Caxton tract when I heard a loud knock at the door. Before I could rise from my desk, the door opened, and two gentlemen, one of whom I recognised as Dr Clarke, strode into the room. I hastily laid some papers over the tract and rose to meet them.

'Mr Simpson,' said the doctor, who was obviously excited, 'what have you done with my tract, sir?'

I stared at him with wide open eyes and mouth. Done with his tract? Whatever did he mean? I glanced from him to the other man, who was cool and unconcerned, and was looking round the room with sharp, but apparently careless eyes.

'Done with your tract, Dr Clarke? I have done nothing with your tract. What should I have done with it?'

The doctor's excitement increased. His face grew red, then purple. 'Don't prevaricate, sir!' he thundered. 'You come to my house—almost a stranger, and examine my tract. When you are gone, I return, and find my tract gone too!'

'Gone! my dear sir!—I locked it up myself.'

'It is gone, sir, gone, I tell you. I went to the drawer this morning, and found it had disappeared.'

'Oh!' I said. 'This is sheer nonsense, Dr Clarke. I tell you I locked it up in the drawer, and returned the key to Miss Clarke.'

'Little fool that she is!' said the irate doctor. 'Why didn't she sit by you and keep her eyes

on it? I tell you, sir, it's gone—and I want to know what you've done with it—Now, then, straight out, where is my tract?'

I stared at him, helpless and amazed. While I struggled to find words in which to answer him, the quiet man stepped forward and lifted the sheet of blotting-paper which I had thrown over my own Caxton. There it lay! Dr Clarke nearly screamed: I felt as if I were going mad.

'This the article?' said the quiet-looking man.

'My tract!' said Dr Clarke, and seized it carefully. 'Oh, what depravity on your part, Mr Simpson! To steal my tract, and then tell lies over the matter.'

I lost my temper at that. 'Confound you, sir!' I cried. 'Mind what you are saying. That tract is mine, sir; mine, I tell you! Put it down this instant. I bought that tract a week ago, and came to see yours, so that I could compare the two. I tell you it's mine.'

The quiet-looking man smiled and shook his head. Dr Clarke grew apoplectic. Then he assumed a dignified air.

'Mr Simpson,' he said, 'if you had made confession and returned the tract willingly, I would have forgiven you. Your conduct, sir, is base in the extreme. Another copy of this priceless work! Sir, you know that my copy is absolutely unique. No, sir; I cannot look over this. You must be punished.—Officer, do your duty.'

It was all in vain that I protested, exclaimed, threatened, and beseeched. Dr Clarke was inexorable. I suppose I had made matters worse by doubting the uniqueness of his tract. He stood by, firm and resolute, while the detective formally arrested me, and warned me that whatever I might say would be used against me.

I was conveyed to the Town Hall at Radford, six miles away, and locked up for the night. What a terrible position to be placed in! How I wished again and again that I had shown my tract to some one before going to see Dr Clarke's. The evidence against me seemed terribly convincing. What could have become of the doctor's own copy? I knew I had locked it up again, and given the key back to the doctor's daughter. If it could not be found, whatever would happen to me? I should be sent to jail like a common thief, and I should lose my black-letter broadsheet into the bargain.

During the evening I sent for the leading solicitor in Radford and retained him for my defence. I made a clean breast to him of everything connected with the case. He listened attentively and closely, but his face grew graver every minute, and he shook his head when I had done.

'I am very sorry indeed, Mr Simpson,' said he, 'to have to tell you that matters look very dark from our side. You say that the man from whom you purchased the books is on his way to America, and that if he were here he could not prove your possession of the tract. You also say that there is a general opinion amongst experts that Dr Clarke's copy was unique. You had not mentioned your copy to any one, not even to Miss Clarke. You see how all this will tell against you.'

'For Heaven's sake!' said I, 'tell me what we must do.'

'I will go and see Dr Clarke at his hotel. You will be brought before the magistrates at

ten o'clock to-morrow. Between now and then I may be able to arrange something.'

But he returned in an hour to say that Dr Clarke was as firm as adamant. He scouted the idea of a second copy, and flew into a rage when my solicitor pressed the matter. He seemed to think that I had made a deliberate plot to rob him of his chief treasure, and nothing that my advocate could say would stir his resolve to press the charge against me.

I had no sleep that night, and I daresay I looked haggard enough when I was put into the dock next morning. Rumours of the case had got out, and the court was crowded. I tried to shrink from observation, knowing all the time that every eye was on me. My frightened air no doubt told against me: at anyrate it seemed to me that everybody in court looked at me as though I had committed every crime in the calendar.

I pleaded not guilty to the charge, and, on my solicitor's advice, elected to be tried summarily. I wanted to get the matter over, so that I might escape from the staring eyes around me. I stood in the dock and listened to the evidence. How very clear and direct it seemed! I could readily understand how guilty the magistrates must think me. And the worst of it was, I had absolutely no evidence to offer in defence.

Dr Clarke deposed that I wrote to him requesting permission to examine his Caxton tract, which was absolutely unique. I received that permission, and attended at his house on the day agreed upon. He was away that day; but when he returned home next morning his daughter told him of my visit. He went to the drawer where the tract was usually kept, and found it missing. He then came down to the village where I was living, and brought a detective with him. They found the tract—produced—on my desk. He absolutely and without doubt identified the tract so found as his own.

Miss Clarke, who gave me a very sorrowful look as she entered the witness-box, gave evidence as to my visit to her father's house, and my examination of the tract. She received the keys of the desk from me, and understood that I had restored the tract to its place. She did not consider it necessary to look at the tract after I had left, but was with her father when he discovered the loss next morning. The keys meanwhile had not been out of her possession.

The detective proved the finding of the tract on my table, and his evidence concluded the all too strong case against me. I felt a deadly sinking of heart as my solicitor, who had made out nothing in cross-examination, rose to address the court. He put my story before them as clearly and strongly as possible; but he had no witnesses to support his statements, and it was very easy to see that nobody believed him.

The magistrates were not long in coming to a decision, and their chairman addressing me, said that he was deeply grieved to find a person of my position and education occupying so shameful a place. Unfortunately, this was not the first time that collectors of curiosities had been so overcome by covetousness that they had stolen things which belonged to brother-collectors. They would make allowance for temptation, but they could not forget that I had added to my

guilt by gross deceit. All things considered, they must send me to prison for—

But before the chairman could finish, he was interrupted by the entrance of a messenger, who handed a telegram to Dr Clarke. The doctor tore it open and turned first white and then red. 'It's found!' he shouted, regardless of legal etiquette. 'It's found—and, by George, there are two copies after all!'

The explanation was very simple. I had put away Dr Clarke's tract in the drawer which contained his daughter's Plutarch, and it had never occurred to her to examine it. She had left the keys in it, and I had thought it the drawer from which the tract was originally taken. So I got my liberty and my black-letter broadsheet back again. I was inclined to be very angry with Dr Clarke, for I thought he had acted too hastily; but his daughter was so tenderly compassionate towards me, and so full of remorse for her carelessness, that I forgave him, and was shortly afterwards rewarded for my forbearance by the gift of herself in marriage.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

WHEN the giant planet Jupiter is examined with even a small telescope it is seen to possess four moons or satellites. These were discovered by Galileo in 1610 and for nearly three centuries the correctness of the observation has remained undisputed. Moreover, four appeared to be the proper number of moons for Jupiter to possess, for it seemed that there was a kind of law by which such satellites doubled in number as their primaries were more remote from the sun. Thus, the Earth has one moon, Mars two, Jupiter has been credited with four, and Saturn with eight; but a fifth moon belonging to Jupiter has now been discovered by Professor Barnard, of the Lick Observatory, California, where, as we all know, there has been erected the most powerful telescope yet made. The new satellite is no brighter than a thirteenth-magnitude star, which will perhaps account for its escaping the scrutiny of previous observers, and it has a period of revolution of a little more than seventeen and a half hours. We need hardly point out that this is one of the most important astronomical discoveries which have been recorded for some time.

It is said that the passage of boats containing naphtha on the Volga has had the effect of poisoning the waters of that river. The quantity of naphtha conveyed in this manner increased from thirty-two million kilograms in 1887 to nearly fifty millions two years later. A great deal of this volatile liquid is transported in badly built wooden barges, with the result that there is a loss by leakage of about three per cent. As a result of this the fish are decreasing rapidly, and in certain places where the boats stop they have become extinct. The naphtha has also had the effect of killing off the insect life upon which the fishes feed, for in flood time the water invades the adjacent meadows and destroys the larvæ. It is said that those fish which are not actually killed are quite uneatable through being impregnated with the flavour of naphtha.

A very interesting experiment has lately been

made in the importation from the antipodes of flowers imbedded in ice. It seems that of late years the culture of the chrysanthemum has aroused much interest in New Zealand, where the season for the blooming of these flowers occurs in April instead of in November as at this side of the world. A gardener living at Wellington lately took some of his finest flowers to a meat-freezing establishment, where they were placed in tin canisters, filled with water, and afterwards frozen. These tins were lately opened in London, when the flowers, in perfect condition and preserving both shape and colour, were found imbedded in a cylinder of pure crystal ice. This is, we believe, the first attempt which has ever been made to transport flowers in a frozen state.

There are in all countries many would-be inventors who are frequently deterred from bringing the results of their ingenuity before the public because of the cost of taking out a patent specification. Most inventors know that it is very little good to patent an invention in one country only, because infringement in a foreign land is almost sure to follow; but we venture to think that few persons are aware of the great expense involved in protecting an invention all the world over. This expense has lately been incurred by the patentees of a hypodermic syringe. There are sixty-four countries where an invention can be patented, and the aggregate fees payable for official protection amount to no less than three thousand six hundred pounds.

We have more than once called attention to the fact that lighthouse lanterns form a great attraction to birds of all kinds, who dash themselves against the glass, and are often found dead in great numbers round about the building. The establishment of the electric light at a certain place in Kansas, which is the resort every season for wild geese, has had the effect of attracting a number of those birds to the spot. They fly towards the lamps and are killed in great quantities, so that an early riser may be quite sure, by patrolling the streets before daybreak, that he will provide himself with a good dinner.

According to a correspondent in *Nature*, the Cornish Pilchard fisheries have been infested this year with large numbers of blue sharks. These creatures measure from four to nine feet in length, and render the fortunes of the fishermen very uncertain by driving the shoals of pilchards in different directions. The fishermen also complain that their property suffers great destruction from the unwelcome visitors, whose sharp teeth bite through the nets in their efforts to get at the fish contained therein. One fishing-boat lately caught seven of these sharks, and the master declared that he could have caught a dozen or more had he so wished.

A curious instance of the effect produced upon animal life by the deprivation of light has lately been discovered in the reopening of an old mine in California. In a passage connecting two shafts, the explorers found a number of flies, which were perfectly white except the eyes, which were red. They also found in the same passage a white rattlesnake. The place where these creatures were found was perfectly dark but dry, and well supplied with air. The snake was at once killed, but the flies were taken into open

daylight, and put in a glass case, where they resumed the ordinary colour of house flies in the course of a few days. It is supposed that the flies were the descendants of some which had been imprisoned in the mine thirty years ago, and that the snake had, when young, been washed into its subterranean abode by heavy rain.

A horticultural paper raises the question, whether the ant is a friend or foe to the fruit-grower? It is certain that in this country every effort has been made to destroy the little insect, but it is not so in Southern Germany and Northern Italy, where the ant—the black ant more especially—is held in high esteem, and precautions are taken to promote its increase. It is said that the place in the orchard where apple and pear trees are freest from blight and insect ravages is always in the neighbourhood of an ant-hill.

Among the big things which are to be shown at the big fair at Chicago will be the biggest gun on earth—the latest child of the ordnance factory at Essen. This Krupp gun is to be about eighty-seven feet long; the largest American guns at present made being about half that length. A railway track will have to be constructed to carry it to the exhibition grounds, and a special foundation laid there to bear its enormous weight. It is calculated that if it were fired when placed in that position, the immediate result would be the breaking of every pane of glass in Chicago, while the projectile thrown would travel a distance of from fifteen to eighteen miles.

One of the most recent applications of steel is in the construction of a chimney three hundred and fifty feet in height, in the City of Chicago. For seventy-five feet from the ground the chimney is lined with firebrick, and above this it is lined with hollowed tile. The thickness of the metal varies from five thirty-seconds of an inch at the top to three-eighths of an inch at the bottom, and at intervals of twenty-five feet the lining receives support from angle irons riveted to the steel shell. The outside diameter of this unique chimney is nine feet five inches. If it had been constructed of brick in the ordinary way, its required measurement would have been sixteen feet six inches.

A curious observation was lately made by an American naturalist, Mr J. M. Wright. He noticed one morning a cat sitting on a window sill near a pine tree, upon a branch of which a bird presently alighted. Upon this bird the cat seemed to concentrate its attention, gazing at it with peculiar intensity of expression, while at the same time the fur on its head stood erect; otherwise the cat was perfectly motionless. The bird seemed to be fascinated by the animal's gaze: it trembled, and after a feeble motion of the wings, fell down towards the cat, which immediately pounced upon it. Mr Wright is inclined to regard this as a case of hypnotism, a theory which would also explain the powers of fascination with which snakes have always been credited.

Mr Flinders Petrie, whose Egyptian researches have already led to such valuable results, has after a two-years' study of the subject at Gizeh, come to the conclusion that the Egyptian stone-workers of four thousand years back must have had an intimate acquaintance with what we generally consider to be modern tools and methods

of working. Among the many appliances used by them was the lathe, both solid and tubular drills, and straight and circular saws. The drills, like those of the present day were set with jewels, and were capable of cutting to the depth of a tenth of an inch in the hardest granite at each revolution. It is evident too, from an examination of the stone, that the tools were of such fine quality that they preserved their sharpness for a very long period.

In the President's address to the British Pharmaceutical Conference which met lately at Edinburgh, interesting reference was made to the great Scotch industry which has grown up of recent years in the production of shale oil. The shale—which was formerly regarded as useless, is now converted into paraffin, lubricating and burning oils, and ammonia. There are two and a half millions of capital invested in the trade, the extent of which can be realised from the fact that fifty-five million gallons of crude oil were last year distilled from 2,311,592 tons of shale. This vast industry, curiously enough, led to the establishment of another totally different branch of commerce; for in devising refrigerating machinery for condensing the volatile products of the shale, Mr Coleman was led to the discovery of the celebrated Bell-Coleman Refrigerator, with which ships are now fitted, and by which the immense trade in frozen meat from abroad has been rendered possible.

It will be remembered that some months ago there was much talk of certain rain-making experiments in Texas, heavy showers having been said to be produced by the explosion of shells projected to high altitudes. In order to settle the question whether there was any truth in the reported successful results of these experiments, the United States Government appointed a rain-making expedition, and devoted nine thousand dollars to its equipment. Mr George Curtis, meteorologist to this expedition, discusses in one of the New York magazines the conclusions at which he has arrived. He says that the experiments have utterly failed to demonstrate that explosions can develop a storm or can produce a measurable amount of rain; but he records one fact of scientific interest. In several instances, he reports, when a dense and threatening cloud was overhead, the explosion of the shell was followed, after an interval of twenty or thirty seconds, by a perceptible sprinkling of rain; but this of course was not what the experiments were designed to accomplish. Charlatans have not been slow to take advantage of the rain-making excitement, and artificial-rain companies have sprung up in many places, and have made money by pretending to sell rights for the use of much-vaunted appliances over which they have acquired control.

A balloon of novel design has recently been patented. Its shape is that of a hollow open ring, which is divided internally into a series of gas-tight compartments, so that if one compartment were ruptured or pierced by a bullet—in the case of the balloon being used for military purposes—the other compartments would remain intact and would keep the apparatus floating in the air. Another new feature in this balloon is a removable cover which envelops the ring, thereby causing it to assume the form of a parachute, and

thus to insure slow and steady descent. Should the balloon fall into the sea, it will act as a gigantic life-buoy, which in shape it so much resembles.

The rabbit pest is once more coming to the front as a question of the day in New South Wales. It is now proposed to build a brick wall around certain portions of the colony, so as to enclose the rabbits as in a huge ring-fence. It seems that these animals never burrow to a greater depth than thirty inches from the surface, and the proposed wall is to extend that depth into the ground. When once it is built, a general extermination of the rabbits within the enclosure will at once be carried forward.

Although we hear a great deal of the ravages caused by the rabbits both in New Zealand and Australia, we should not forget, as has been lately pointed out, that there is another side to the question. A very large number of persons owe their means of livelihood entirely to the presence of poor bunny. For instance, a killer gets two cents per head royalty from the Government for destroying the creature; he then sells the skin for about double that sum, and he can also sell the meat to the factory which tins it for export to Europe. The skins are mostly exported to London, and represent an important business. It is now acknowledged that Pasteur's attempt to exterminate the rabbits by inoculation with the virus of chicken cholera was interfered with by those interested. Finding that his efforts lacked support, the French savant stopped his agents from experimenting further.

A new method of giving ships' bottoms a coating of copper has, it is said, been lately tried at New York with success. The method employed is as follows: The vessel is put into dock, and the entire hull is surrounded at the water-line by a bag made of watertight canvas supported by a network of wire; in the bath so formed is placed a quantity of sulphate of copper solution; and metallic copper is deposited from this solution upon the ship's plates by means of the electric current generated by a dynamo-machine.

Opticians, surgical-instrument makers, needle manufacturers, and others who deal with goods of polished steel have often good cause to deplore the loss occasioned by rust. It is well known that the oxygen contained in perfectly dry air is harmless in this respect. If, therefore, we can deprive the air having access to steel of its moisture, the metal will remain bright. This can easily be done when the articles to be treated are kept, as they generally are, in a closed case, by associating with them a substance such as chloride of calcium, which is greedy of moisture. A simple way of doing this has recently been published. The lumps of chloride are put in a glass funnel standing in a small bottle, so that as the calcium attracts moisture from the air, the water generated drops into the bottle. The calcium will remain active for a long period.

A correspondent of the *Scientific American* describes a curious effect which was produced on ordinary leaden bullets by firing them through a paper target backed by one thickness of cotton sheeting, the bullets having been picked up in the snow behind the target. These bullets were found to bear upon their faces a distinct impression of the surface of the cotton cloth, in which could be traced every thread of the fabric. The

range was two hundred yards, and the bullets were fired from breech-loading rifles with heavy charges of powder. 'It is possible,' writes the observer of this phenomenon, 'that the tremendous velocity of the bullet made the impact equivalent to the blow upon a stationary and immovable object, or that a small piece of the cloth may have been punched out, and going forward with the bullet, was impressed between the projectile and the snow.'

There is now good reason to hope that owing to the rigorous measures taken we shall in this country escape the threatened epidemic of cholera, but it may be that we shall have a recurrence of the threatened invasion during the spring and early summer of next year. Those who have made a study of epidemic diseases are of opinion that the unwelcome visitor may possibly make a more serious onslaught at that time, and they speak from experience of what has occurred before. There is no doubt that the germs can remain in the soil in a dormant condition for a long period, and are ready to break out when circumstances favourable to their development are brought about. It will therefore be well for heads of families not to abate any of the precautions which they have been taking. Let them remember that the great enemy of cholera is found in cleanliness and moderation in all things.

A curiosity has been submitted to the editor of the *Lancet* in the shape of a living creature which was found inside a tinned pine-apple. This creature is supposed to be the larva of some beetle the species of which has not been accurately ascertained. The fruit is supposed to have been boiled at Singapore before it was tinned; but it is more probable that the cooking operation was not carried on at a temperature high enough to kill the larva; indeed, we may assume that the temperature of boiling water would inevitably spoil the fruit.

A Swedish engineer has invented a new form of lucifer match. This match is described as being like the rolled-up tape measure enclosed in a metal cover which is used by tailors, surveyors, and others. The roll in this case is made of paraffined paper, and at regular intervals upon it are small projections, upon which the igniting chemical composition is placed. One end of this paper projects from the metal case, and on pulling it out quickly, the material upon it rubs against a small steel plate, and a lighted match is the result. When the material is exhausted, a fresh roll of paper can be inserted in the same case. The manufacture of the new article is said to be very much more simple than that of the old wooden match which it is designed to supersede.

It is well known that mosquitoes and many other insects deposit their larvæ in water. In Siam a very simple remedy is adopted to stop their operations. It is common there to collect water in open vessels during the rainy season in sufficient quantity to last until the next year, and the water is commonly kept in unglazed earthen jars of large capacity. To prevent the mosquitoes depositing eggs in the water, a couple of large wrought-iron nails are heated red-hot and dropped into each jar. This simple remedy, which is said to be quite effective, is described in one of the American technical papers by a resident at Bangkok, Siam.

During September some very interesting archaeological finds were made known. Rochester—where there are very early remains found from time to time—has yielded up three Anglo-Saxon graves in a good state of preservation. Besides the skeletons, there were found in the first grave a spear-head of iron and a knife; in the second, a knife; and in the third were stowed away a buckle, some glass beads, a small urn, and a knife. Mr Payne, F.S.A., thinks that, from the care with which the interments have taken place, these graves must have formed part of the necropolis of Anglo-Saxon Rochester.

Professor Gamurrini, writing from Novellara, near Pesaro, believes that he has discovered an ancient Etruscan burying-place of about the year 700 B.C. Eighty skeletons, all representing persons of unusual size, have been exhumed. Their height varies from five feet eleven inches to six feet six inches; the teeth are even now in a good state of preservation, and are white and strong. The bodies had evidently been buried in a crumpled attitude, and lying on their sides. With them were interred the usual accompaniments of lances and bronze ornaments, and in some of the graves were found ornaments of amber.

Near Simferopol, Professor Wesselowski has come upon an ancient Scythian tomb. The tenant was evidently a soldier; by his side were a sword and a coat of arms; at his feet lay an iron knife and two lances. On the head was a cap on which was a gold ornament. In the tomb there were also found some amphoræ and the bones of an ox. Near the head of the skeleton—which lay facing the east—was a leathern quiver, on which was a gold plate richly worked, representing an eagle with outspread wings carrying an animal in its talons. The arrow-heads were of copper.

FAIR AS A ROSE.

Why art thou like this pale pink rose,
That in the verdant hedgerow grows?
Its petals to my lips I press
As I thy pink cheeks would caress;
The yellow heart its leaves enfold
Recalls thy heart of purest gold;
The dewdrop that upon it lies
The sparkle of thy tender eyes;
The briar-sweet from which it springs,
The perfume that around thee clings,
And as its sweets allure the bee,
Thy winsomeness doth capture me.

G. D. L.

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THE ORIGIN OF THE OPERA.

By J. F. ROWBOTHAM, Author of *The History of Music*.

THE first Opera ever heard in Europe was the opera of *Daphne*. It was performed in the year 1594, and was considered such an oddity by those who heard it, that there were not wanting people to exclaim loudly against the introduction of such a foreign and 'utterly unnatural drama,' as they were pleased to call it. The absurdity that the performers should sing their lines instead of speaking them, should fence and fight to the accompaniment of music, and even at the point of death should have a chorus standing round them, bewailing in alto, tenor, and soprano their woe, seemed a little too much for the gravity of many people; and the first opera was the butt of jeers, criticism, and ridicule. It was, in fact, a bold experiment on the part of a few cultivated men to revive in modern Europe the drama of the Greeks. The Count di Vernio was one of the most cultured men of his time, in an age of great refinement, when, it may be added, even ladies could read and write Latin, and many of them understood Greek. He himself, an excellent scholar, and a man of princely hospitality, threw open his house to all the learned men and great artists of Florence. The Count's Palace was a very gallery of antique art. Sculptures belonging to the best days of Greek art lined the walls; rare and costly paintings were to be seen in profusion; and side by side with the marbles of Praxiteles and Polycletus were to be found ancient manuscripts of untold value, obtained from the refugees of Constantinople, when that capital was sacked by the Turks, treating of the theoretical principles of Greek sculpture, painting, and music. There were weekly gatherings at the Palace of all that was learned and talented in Florence. It was the Count's custom to receive his guests in his hall; and then to take them round his galleries, hearing their criticisms of any new work he might have added recently to his treasures; or, in the case of those who now for the first time looked upon the wonders of the Palazzo Vernio, listening with

delight to the expressions of wonder and admiration which burst involuntarily from their lips. After the tour of the gallery was over, it was the usual practice for some one of the company to recite a poetical composition, while the others gathering round listened with attention, but at the same time with that attitude of mental reservation which a strongly developed faculty of criticism is likely to cause. After the poem was over, there was invariably a critical discussion of its merits.

Little by little it had become plain to these cultured *habitués* of the Palace that the best experiments and emulation of the poetic art of antiquity left something to be desired. There was still a deficiency felt, but not definitely understood, even when the odes of Pindar had been reproduced in Italian syllable for syllable; even when the poems of Sappho had received a complete and plastic transcription in the Tuscan dialect.

At last it was suggested, and suggested rightly, that ancient poetry was always accompanied by music. When Sappho would deliver one of her poems, she was not accustomed to recite her lines as an actor or an elocutionist at present, or as one of the poets who in Count Vernio's house repeated his latest effusion. She took a lyre in her hand, and striking the chords, sang her poetical lines in a sweet and impassioned voice, the effect of which, added to the charm of the poetry, produced that wonderful impression on her hearers which all antiquity testifies to. In the same way Pindar entrusted the delivery of his odes to a chorus of vocalists, who danced while they sang. Here, then, was the secret of the Greek poetical art at once laid bare, and it remained to be seen how far the poets and dilettanti at Count Vernio's gatherings could take advantage of it.

In the first place, the poets acknowledged a great and insuperable difficulty at the outset: none of them could sing. How, then, would it be to depute choruses of vocalists to sing the songs in the manner of Pindar and his chorus? And from this suggestion the way was not very

long to that other proposal, which seemed but the natural sequel to the former—why not attempt the revival of that organised form of chorus and solo which was known as Greek tragedy, and which would be sure to attract public interest by the charming union of not only poetry and music but also of scenic display? Accordingly, one of their number was deputed to prepare a dramatic poem written on a given classical subject in the style of Sophocles, and a musician was commissioned to set it to music.

The tragedy of the Greeks, which was now to undergo the experiment of a revival in Europe, had been the growth of centuries in the classical clime wherein it was a native. The theatre was so arranged that the actors should stand on a high stage, furnished with scenery and all other requisites, while a distinct body of performers, called the chorus, had their place in what we should call the pit, but which the Greeks called the orchestra—a large flat circular enclosure, larger than the arena of any modern circus, and reaching from the verge of the stage to the rim of the lowest tier of benches which surrounded the enclosure. Here the chorus, who supplied both music and action to the development of the drama, had their traditional place.

The flimsy contrivances of gauze and canvas which do duty for scenes in a modern theatre were very far from satisfying the artistic nature of the Greeks. If the exterior of a house was to be represented, the façade would be built up with huge blocks of wood, painted to resemble stone. If an interior were portrayed, solid walls and massive furniture would be seen on the stage. For open-air scenes, the scenic artists endeavoured as far as possible to bring in the resources of nature to their aid; and as there was a park at the back of most theatres, the eyes of the spectators were regaled with real trees, real emerald turf, and sometimes real waterfalls plunging down a rock. The theatre itself had no roof; the performances took place in broad day, with the sun shining overhead, and the blue sky beaming down on the spectators.

The tragedy commenced by the curtain rolling down—it sank on rollers into the stage, while ours rises up to the flies—and revealing the scene in all its beauty to the spectators. Then the sound of instruments was heard, and the chorus, four or six abreast, marched in military order into the orchestra. They played flutes and lyres as they walked, the tune generally being a military march, to the sound of which they performed various martial evolutions in the orchestra, and then grouped themselves round the altar which rose in the midst of the large arena. When they took their place at the altar, the tune of the march ceased, and some sitting, some standing, in an attitude of classical repose, they commenced the overture to the tragedy.

The overture concluded, the actors would appear

on the stage, and while the chorus assumed a statuesque tranquillity round the altar, would declaim their lines in a sort of sonorous recitative, accompanied with occasional notes or chords on the lyre. This method of singing their parts, instead of speaking them, was in a manner forced upon the performers by the immense size of the theatre. The great theatre of Bacchus in which the tragedies took place accommodated with ease from thirty to forty thousand spectators. No elocution, however distinct, could reach the ears of the tenants of the farthest benches, or even be audible half-way through the immense throng. The actors, therefore, were compelled to chant their parts in order to make their voices carry the requisite distance. They were aided in this endeavour by a sort of miniature speaking-trumpet, which was fixed inside the waxen mask which they invariably wore, and which multiplied the natural tones of their voice to such a degree that they could send their monotonous recitative rolling through the theatre. After their dialogue and action had lasted a certain time, they left the stage; and the chorus, striking up their flutes and lyres, commenced a highly musical and melodious song, to the accompaniment of which they danced in mazy rings through the orchestra. The beauty of their dances was universally acknowledged, and arose presumably from the exceeding care in the preparation of them. Sculptors and painters came to assist the chorus-master at the rehearsals, and to suggest artistic and striking poses for the dancers. The weavings and interweavings of the lines of dancers were the subject of the most careful consideration on the part of their trainers; and the whole orchestra was traced with intricate patterns in chalk, over which the dancers plied their feet according to a preconcerted plan.

The choral dance over, once more the actors entered the stage, and in such alternate appearances of actors and chorus the structure of the play consisted.

Such was the highly artistic and finished form of musical composition which Count Vernio and his friends designed to revive in Italy, and it remains for us to see how they succeeded in their task.

A performance on so gigantic a scale as the Greek tragedy was plainly out of the question, since there was neither the place nor the public to make such an innovation possible. The only places ever open to dramatic performances, or 'shows,' as we should more properly call them, were the halls of the nobility. There were no theatres except of the roughest kind, where the mysteries and moralities were performed; and there was no public able to appreciate aught of a refined nature except the nobles, and they preferred to confine all such representations to their own house. At banquets and at fêtes it was often the custom for a rich nobleman to offer to his friends a pageant. The awning at one end of the banquetting-hall would suddenly be lifted up, and would reveal an emblematic figure of Victory. A flourish of trumpets would announce the entry of another character—this would perhaps be a woman clothed in pure white, with a crown on her head, to represent Virtue. After sundry gestures had been gone through by these

two chief actors, Virtue would embrace Victory. Next, a figure hideous to behold, representing Crime, would be introduced, surrounded by a crowd of imps, symbolical of the Vices. Crime would endeavour to participate in the fraternity established between Virtue and Victory; but after many attempts and many useless seductions, he would be forced to retire, baffled, from the scene, amid the uproarious applause of the spectators, and to the complete satisfaction of everybody present, who saw in such a finale a very natural termination of the drama, and were so accustomed to simple entertainments, that they never desired anything stronger to stimulate their theatrical palates.

Count Vernio and his friends had such a public to cater for, and for such entertainments they proposed to substitute their revived Greek tragedy. How were they to proceed? In the first place, they found it impossible to arrange the theatre as the Greeks arranged it—that is, with a large open space between the stage and the spectators, wherein the chorus might perform their evolutions. This had reluctantly to be given up. Likewise had the elaborate scenery on the stage itself to be abandoned—the built-up houses, the verdant grass, the real trees. Most of the pomp and massive pageantry of the Greek drama fell away before the possibilities at the command of this handful of men, so zealous to revive, if not its divine dignity, at least its purity and all its beauty. The masks of the actors were an adventitious adjunct which the Count and his friends never thought of employing. With all this elimination, what, then, was left for the revived Greek tragedy to come and go on? There were the actors; the chorus—now removed from the orchestra, and most reluctantly placed on the stage; the scenery—marvellously robbed of its splendour; and last, not least, the divine dramas left by the Greek poets, whereon to model the structure of the play.

Now, whenever the actors spoke, or rather chanted, in Greek tragedy, the poet made use of a certain metre called iambics, which is very well represented to us by our own iambic measure, such as Shakespeare writes in, with the exception that the Greek iambics were two syllables longer. Its metre was supposed, and correctly supposed, by the Greeks to approximate very nearly to the flow of ordinary prose. This was its especial utility. The actor could chant his speeches in a verse which did not violate any ideas of dramatic probability. The music which went in company with this homely form of verse was itself likewise very free and unmelodious, approaching the cadences of ordinary speech, rather than that exalted form of utterance which we call singing. The actor in reciting his iambics neither sang nor did he speak, but he chanted in a sort of half-musical, half-oratorical tone, being accompanied by occasional chords or notes of the lyre by the chorus, who, stationed beneath the stage, could supply the music to the actor's recitations from the same post of vantage which a modern band now occupy. Count Vernio and his friends were well aware of these various points; but as this peculiar species of musical declamation had never been heard in Italy, they were at a loss to know precisely what it was, or how they could reconcile the ears of their countrymen to accept it.

None of the band of dilettanti was successful in his experiments to reconstruct this defunct style of music, except Giulio Caccini, who, appearing at their assembly one day with a lyre or a violin—we forget which—declaimed with much art many passages of poetry, reproducing in an inimitable way the cadences of the old Greek style, and combining them with the spirit of modern music so successfully as quite to reconcile them to the modern ear. He accompanied himself with the violin or the lyre; but as the lyre of his day was by no means a faithful reproduction of the ancient Greek instrument, being a treble instead of a bass instrument, and as the violin was still less an adequate copy, it was resolved to accompany this style of declamation by the violoncello, called in those days the *viol da gamba*, which gave the bass notes so essential to bring the method of accompaniment in harmony with that of the Greeks. The style of musical declamation invented by Caccini was called *Recitative*, and it was resolved by the assembled company that throughout their tragedy the actors should speak in nothing but the recitative of Caccini. And so far—that is to say, in at least half the framework of their tragedy—they had brought their intended revival into complete harmony with its Greek model.

By placing the chorus on the stage they had put an end to the possibility of the choral dance. The stage was but a few long boards, of only three or four feet deep, and there was barely room for the actors to stand on it. The Greek dramatic traditions were likewise infringed upon, by the necessity of placing a body of instrumentalists in front of the stage, where we have them now, who could be present during the whole continuance of the tragedy, and could at once accompany the chorus in their song and the actors in their recitative. This was an essentially modern innovation, but, as we see, rendered entirely necessary by the peculiar arrangements of the stage on which Count Vernio and his friends had undertaken to produce their tragedy.

Next was the question, How to arrange the music of the chorus? And since the choral odes were at once the sweetest, the most rhythmic, and the most melodious pieces of music ever composed by Greek pen, the revivalists determined to give their composer *carte blanche* to write the chorus in the sweetest music he could compose in the modern style—employing modern harmony and modern melody.

Just as they were about to mould the result of their labours into a solid and artistic form, Count Vernio was summoned from Florence to Rome to take office in the Pope's household as Groom of the Chamber. The friendly reunions which had taken place in his house, and which had been of such untold importance on the development of modern music, were therefore brought to an untimely termination; and the dilettanti might have been deprived of their grand object at the very moment of its fulfilment, had it not been for the enthusiasm of Jacopo Corsi, a wealthy Florentine citizen, who invited them to meet henceforth in his sumptuous dwelling, to continue at their ease their investigations and experiments in musical art. Hither, then, they congregated, and here the finishing touches were put to the great design of launching a new musical art into the

world. The poet Rinuccini, who had been commissioned to write the words, had now brought his labour of love to a conclusion with the approval of the entire coterie; and Jacopo Peri, to whom specially the composition of the music had been entrusted, was likewise far advanced with his task. We do not know why Caccini, the inventor of recitative, was not commissioned to perform the musical part of the task; perhaps he was deficient in the melodic genius necessary to write the chorus; perhaps there was a rivalry between him and Peri, and the latter had succeeded in ousting the original inventor of the recitative style—at anyrate, we hear that Peri had taken up Caccini's invention and had soon come to write it almost as well as its master.

Jacopo Corsi's house possessed large and sumptuous halls, and in one of these a platform was fitted up to serve for the stage, sufficient room was allowed at the wings for the chorus to enter, and doors for the entry of the actors were made at the back. A band of musicians was stationed in the orchestra below the stage, their instruments consisting of a spinet, an organ, three flutes, one violin, four trombones, a horn, and four cornets. A grand *fête* was given by Corsi on the occasion of the performance; the *élite* of Florence flocked to his mansion to hear this extraordinary musical work, about which everybody gave different reports, but which each person seemed to believe would be unique, novel, and interesting. The hall was filled with spectators; the curtain rose; the singers came on the stage; the solitary violin twittered, the cornets too-tooted, the spinet tinkled, the organ boomed, and the first opera ever heard in Europe was brought to a successful performance.

The piece was indeed successful among the chosen and select audience who had assembled to hear it. All people of cultivated tastes also were prepared by their knowledge of Greek culture to receive and sympathise with the efforts of Count Vernio's friends. But the general public were as yet quite uneducated in the style, and purely Philistine. The 'monotonous drawl of the recitative,' as they called it, they could not tolerate. They were firmly convinced that the whole opera from first to last should have been a collection and succession of purely melodious pieces. Antagonism, pasquinade, detraction, did their utmost to discredit the peculiar style of revived Greek music; but 'the Greeks,' as they were now called, still held their own. In a year or two's time, another opera, of more elaborate proportions, entitled *Eurydice*, was ready, Peri and Caccini being its joint composers. Owing to the unfortunate rivalry between these two men, they soon disagreed about the merits of their joint composition, and each resolved to write a *Eurydice* of his own. It was about this time that a great political marriage set all Florence alive with festivity and gaiety. King Henry IV. of France married Mary de' Medici, and the invention of all the caterers of amusement in Florence was taxed to do honour to the occasion. Among other entertainments, the new operas of 'the Greeks' were thought of as likely to add a zest of novelty to the spectacles, and they were duly performed before this enlightened Prince and his young bride. This opened a way for them into France, as the king expressed himself highly delighted

with the novelty of the music. And the other cities of Italy, seeing the good results which attended the Florentine operas, were not long in starting similar performances on their own account. In this way the Opera began to spread; and in fifty years it was established as the most refined and favourite form of music in all the countries of Europe.

BLOOD ROYAL.*

BY GRANT ALLEN,

Author of *In All Shades, This Mortal Coil, &c.*

CHAPTER XII.—TRAGEDY WINS.

MR PLANTAGENET had missed his son by walking through the archway of the Fellows' Quad, instead of through the Brew House. He emerged from the college by the big front gate. The High Street was lighted and crowded; so he preferred to turn down the dark lanes and alleys at the back of Christ Church, till he came out upon St Aldate's and the road to the river. Somewhat sobered as he still was by the unwonted excitement of that curious episode, he found the sherry once more beginning to gain the upper hand; it was hard for him to walk erect and straight along the pavement of St Aldate's, where a few small shops still stood open—for it was Saturday night—and a few people still loitered about in little knots at the corners. With an effort, however, he managed to maintain the perpendicular till he reached Folly Bridge; then he turned in at the wicket that leads down from the main road to the little tow-path along the dark and silent bank of the swollen Isis.

But if Edmund Plantagenet's legs were a trifle unsteady, his heart was all afire with wrath and remorse at this dramatic interlude. For the first time in so many years he began to think bitterly to himself of his wasted opportunities and ruined talents. Such as they were, he had really and truly wasted them; and though perhaps after all they were never much to boast of, time had been when Edmund Plantagenet thought highly indeed of them. Nay, in his heart of hearts, the broken old dancing-master thought highly of them still, in spite of everything, during all those long years: there were nights when he lay awake, sobering, on his hard bed at home, and repeated lovingly to himself the 'Stanzas to Evelina' which he had contributed ages ago to the *Book of Beauty*, or the 'Lines on the Death of Wordsworth' which he printed at the time in the *Yorkshire Magazine*, with a profound conviction that they contained, after all, some of the really most beautiful and least appreciated poetry in the English language. As a rule, Mr Plantagenet was fairly contented with himself and his relics of character: it was society, harsh, unfeeling, stupid society, that he blamed most of all for his misfortunes and failures. Still, to every one of us, there come now and then moments of genuine self-revelation, when the clouds of egotism and perverse misrepresentation, through which we usually behold our own personality in a glorified halo, fade away before the piercing light of truer introspective analysis, forced suddenly upon us by some disillusioning incident or accident of the

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moment : and then, for one brief flash, we have the misery and agony of really seeing ourselves as others see us. Such days may Heaven keep kindly away from all of us : such a day Edmund Plantagenet had now drearily fallen upon. He wandered wildly down the dark bank toward Ifley lasher, his whole soul within him stirred and upheaved with volcanic energy by the shame and disgrace of that evening's degradation. The less often a man suffers from these bouts of self-humiliation, the more terrible is their outburst when they finally do arrive to him. Edmund Plantagenet, loathing and despising his present self, by contrast with that younger and idealised image which had perhaps never really existed at all, stumbled in darkness and despair along that narrow path, between the flooded river on one side and the fence that enclosed the damp water-meadows on the other, still more than half drunk, and utterly careless where he went or what on earth might happen to him.

The river in parts had overflowed its banks, and the towing-path for some yards together was often under water. But Mr Plantagenet, never pausing, walked, slipped, and staggered through the slush and mud, very treacherous under foot—knowing nothing, heeding nothing, save that the coolness about his ankles seemed to revive him a little and to sober his head as he went floundering through it. By-and-by he reached the Long Bridges, a range of frail planks with wooden side-rails that lead the tow-path across two or three broad stretches of back-water from the Isis. He straggled across somehow, looking down every now and then into the swirling water, where the stars were just reflected in quick flashing eddies, while all the rest about looked black as night, but oh, so cool and inviting to his fevered forehead. So he wandered on, fiercely remorseful within, burning hot without, till he came abreast of a row of old pollard willows, close beside the edge of the little offshoot at Ifley lasher. The bank was damp, but he sat down upon it all the same, and grew half drowsy as he sat with the mingled effects of wine and indignation.

As he sat there, half reclining on the bank, and looking out with bloodshot eyes on the water in front of him, he murmured to himself some inarticulate words of terrible self-condemnation. 'That was a magnificent passage the fellow recited,' he cried—'a magnificent passage ; and it was I who wrote it ; I, Edmund Plantagenet. Did he know it, I wonder, or did he only lie to me ? Was it to shame and disgrace me in my blighted old age ? Well, well, he has succeeded ; he has shamed me at last, whom he thought past shaming. I remember well when I wrote that passage, and many another as fine—ay, as fine and finer. But that's all gone now, and what am I to-day ? A miserable, drunken, old, country dancing-master. It was different then—very different—very different. I was young in those days, and full of hope, and an author, and a gentleman. Yes, in those days, a gentleman. I knew all the best men and women of my time, and they prophesied fair things of me—Mrs Norton, Lady Postlethwaite, even Leigh Hunt and Thackeray. Ah, yes, they would have smiled if I'd told them so in there ; but I remember now as if it were yesterday how Samuel Taylor Coleridge himself took me once by the hand and

laid his honoured palms like a father on my head and gave me his blessing. And finely it's been fulfilled,' he added with a bitter cry—'and finely it's been fulfilled, as they'll see to-morrow.'

He paused a moment ; then he went on aloud once more. 'I've learned something to-night, though,' he continued in a thick voice to himself. 'Those graceless boys, though they never meant it, have taught me something. I thought Edmund Plantagenet's spirit was wholly dead and gone and broken. I know now it isn't, and I thank them for teaching me. I shall go on again now. I know where I'm going to.'

He rose and stumbled on, across a bend of the meadows, till he reached the river. Just there, the bank was very slippery and treacherous. Even a sober man could hardly have kept his footing on it in so dark a night. 'One false step,' Edmund Plantagenet thought to himself with wild despair—and there would be an end of all this fooling. One false step—and splash ! A man may slip any day. No suicide in tumbling into a swollen river, of a moonless night, when the bank's all flooded !'

Still, on and on he walked, having staggered now far, far below Ifley, and away towards the neighbourhood of Sandford lasher. Slippery bank all the distance ; and head growing dizzier and dizzier each moment, with cold and wet, as well as wine and anger.

At last, of a sudden, a dull splash in the river ! Bargemen, come up late in the evening from Abingdon, and laid by now for the night under shelter of the willows on the opposite side, two hundred yards down, heard the noise distinctly. Smoking their pipes on deck, very late, it being a fine evening, one says to the other : 'Sounds precious like a man, Bill !'

Bill, philosophically taking a long pull, answers calm at the end : 'More liker a cow, Tom. None of *our* business, anyhow. Get five bob, mayhap, for bringin' in the body. Hook it up easy enough to-morrow mornin'.'

Next morning, sure enough, a body might be seen entangled among the reeds under the steep mud-bank on the Berkshire shore. Bill, taking it in tow and bringing it up to Oxford, got five shillings from the county for his lucky discovery. At the inquest, thought it wise, however, to omit mentioning the splash heard on deck overnight, or that queer little episode of philosophical conversation.

The coroner's jury, for that end empanelled, attentively considering the circumstances which surrounded the last end of Edmund Plantagenet, late of Chiddingwick, Surrey, had more especially to inquire into the question whether or not deceased, at the time he met with his sudden death, was perfectly sober. Deceased, it seemed, was father of Mr Richard Plantagenet of Durham College, who identified the body. On the night of the accident, the unfortunate gentleman had dined at his own lodgings in Grove Street, and afterwards went round to take a glass of wine at Mr T. M. Faussett's rooms in Durham. Mr Faussett testified that deceased when he left those rooms was perfectly sober. Mr Trevor Gillingham, with the other undergraduates, and the college porter, unanimously bore witness to the same effect. Persons in St Aldate's, who had seen deceased on his way to Folly Bridge, corroborated

this evidence as to sobriety of demeanour. Deceased, though apparently preoccupied, walked as straight as an arrow. On the whole, the coroner considered, all the circumstances seemed to show that Mr Edmund Plantagenet, who was not a man given to early hours, had strolled off for an evening walk by the river bank, to cool himself after dinner, and had slipped and fallen—being a heavy man—owing to the flooded and dangerous state of the tow-path. Jury returned a verdict in accordance with the evidence—Accidental death—with a rider suggesting that the Conservators should widen and extend the tow-path.

But Trevor Gillingham, meeting Faussett in quad after Hall that evening, observed to him confidentially in a very low voice: 'By Jove, old man, we've had a precious narrow squeak of it. I only hope the others will be discreetly silent. We might all have got sent down in a lump together for our parts in this curious little family drama. But all's well that ends well, as the Immortal One has it. Might make a capital scene, don't you know, some day—in one of my future tragedies.'

SOME NOTED AUSTRALIAN NUGGETS.

REFERRING to an interesting article entitled 'Gold in Nature,' appearing in this *Journal* April 19, 1890, and mentioning a nugget of one hundred and thirty-four pounds' weight found in 'South Australia' (Victoria?), perhaps a reference to some noted Australian nuggets and goldfields might be of interest. Chief amongst these nuggets comes the 'Welcome Stranger,' which contained over 2300 ounces of gold, worth about £9200, and was found on February 5, 1869, at Moliagul, near Dunolly, in Victoria. Next in rank comes the 'Welcome' Nugget, found at Bakery Hill, Ballarat, in the same colony, on June 11, 1878, at a depth of about one hundred and eighty feet. This nugget weighed nearly 2200 ounces in the gross, and its net value was £8780. It was sold for £10,000 to a party who wanted it for show purposes, and doubtless cleared thereby the difference in cost.

It would perhaps be a little too much to say that 'nuggets had family ties;' but though they usually 'lie low,' there are at times exceptions to the rule, and when found near the surface, as in the following instances, they are not infrequently in groups. The selections referred to (found in 1870, '71, and '72) are taken from the record of the 'Berlin' goldfield, in Victoria, and do not include the many minor nuggets found in that locality. 'Precious' Nugget, 1717 ounces, value £6868, Catto's Paddock, at a depth of twelve feet. 'Viscount Canterbury' Nugget, 1121 ounces, value £4420, John's Paddock, at a depth of fifteen feet. 'Viscountess Canterbury' Nugget, 896 ounces, value £3536. 'Kum Torr' Nugget, 795 ounces, value £2872, Catto's Paddock, at a depth of twelve feet. 'Needful' Nugget, 249 ounces, value £984, Catto's Paddock, at a depth of twelve feet. 'Crescent' Nugget, 179 ounces,

value £704, John's Paddock, at a depth of two feet. These members of the royal family of nuggets thus totalling nearly 5000 ounces of gold, worth £19,384.

As a rule, however, the richest goldfields are not those where the largest nuggets are found, as witness the well-known Gulgong Goldfield (New South Wales), referred to in Rolf Bolderwood's capital story of *The Miner's Right*. The largest piece of gold found on this field was only sixty-four ounces in weight, and was so thoroughly coated with ferric oxide, that the man who was forking the gravel, &c., out of the sluice-box in which it was found, was going to throw it out, but that its weight attracted him. This goldfield had for fourteen years maintained an average yield worth about £300,000 per annum, the total weight for that time being 1,072,752 ounces (nearly forty tons), valued at £4,162,550. As a great portion of the gold from this locality was found on private property and subject to a heavy royalty, large quantities were sent away through private hands, and thus were not included in the above return. In one part of this goldfield, known as the 'Canadian' lead, the gold—all alluvial deposits—was found in limestone caverns, often in company with the fossil remains of extinct mammoth kangaroos, &c. Some of these caves were over one hundred feet in length by a width of forty feet; but few of them were really bottomed, so as to test the depth, the inrush of water after reaching a certain level being too intense for the machinery on hand.

The auriferous district of which Gulgong is a part extends in a southerly direction for about one hundred miles, having a varying width of from thirty to ninety miles. It was in the Hargraves or Sofala branch of this great field that the famous nugget mentioned by Charles Reade in *Never too Late to Mend* was found; and subsequently other handsome nuggets were unearthed, including one at 'Maitland Bar,' weighing 344 ounces, and worth £1240. The former of these two nuggets was really found by a black-fellow, as described by Mr Reade, and contained about 1200 ounces of gold, worth £4500.

Between Hargraves and Bathurst lies the celebrated goldfield of Hill End, a reefing district adjoining the alluvial field of Tamaroora, which had previously been worked for many years. Hill End was chiefly noticeable for the richness of the narrow 'leaders'—quartz in slate and diorite—which were found in the sloping face of a very precipitous hill descending to the Turon River at its foot. Some of these claims were certainly wonderfully rich, especially considering their limited extent, few of them being over one hundred and twenty feet along the line of reef, if reef it could be called, it being so irregular in form. Notwithstanding their small size, these claims were eagerly bought up at one thousand pounds per foot along the supposed

or real line of reef; and yet, in spite of this and the enormous cost of sinking shafts—twelve pounds per foot—some of them paid extraordinary dividends. 'Krohmann's' claim, floated for £120,000, returned over £200,000 net to its shareholders; and 'Beyers and Holtermann's' claim did nearly as well as this. Carroll and Beard's, the next *en suite*, though yielding some rich crushings, came rather short of paying cent. per cent.

One enormous slab of slate, and quartz, and gold, all intermixed—from Beyers and Holtermann's claim—weighing about three hundred-weight in all—yielded fully 1200 ounces (one hundredweight) of gold, the whole of the crushing, which included this, being worth about £60,000, and averaging about five hundred ounces to the ton. A similar quantity of stone from Carroll and Beard's claim, crushed at the same time, returned about 12,000 ounces of gold, worth £48,000.

In the claims succeeding those just mentioned, the gold was not found at a depth but principally in 'pockets'—to use a Californian term—some of these pockets being very near the surface of the ground. The discovery of the treasures of the Hill were indeed brought about through the accidental finding of one of these pockets by a man who was returning from an unsuccessful search for some of his cows, who had wandered down the steep hillside towards the better pasturage contained in some of the gulleys at its foot. Of course, as soon as it was discovered that the lower claims did not contain gold at a depth, a terrible shrinkage in value soon ensued, and hundreds, even thousands, of unfortunate men and women who had invested their savings in these claims in the hope of their turning out as rich as Krohmann's had been, were irretrievably ruined.

The goldfields of Temora, Grenfell, Lambing Flat, Snowy River, Araluen, &c., yielded each in turn large quantities of gold; but none of them were noted for producing individual pieces of large size, though some respectable nuggets of from sixty to six hundred ounces in weight were found at 'Little River,' in the Braidwood district.

Queensland has some splendid goldfields, which for general productiveness have hardly been surpassed. These include Gympie, Croydon, Charters Towers, and the famed Mount Morgan mine, which latter property was once valued by the public at £15,000,000; its present market value is about £1,500,000. Prior to the introduction of the chlorination process, only about half the gold contained in the stone was saved, and the whole claim could have been purchased for a very much smaller sum.

The fields last mentioned, though maintaining handsome yields per ton upon the average, do not properly come within the range of an article dealing with rich specimens, which, as has been premised, are occasionally found on some of the poorest fields. As a rule, the yield from the

Queensland reefing fields above mentioned has been much more reliable than is the case in other colonies, though Victoria has some good reefs still in work.

RALPH THORNLEIGH'S PICTURE.

By E. D. CUMING.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

'SHE refused you!' exclaimed Miss Elizabeth Macallan, throwing up her hands in astonishment.

'She refused me,' assented Colonel Stardale with grave composure.

'Well, if the sky had fallen, it would not have surprised me more,' declared Miss Macallan. 'What does the girl mean?'

Colonel Stardale shook his head slightly, but made no verbal reply. If the truth must be told, the collapse of the firmament was to his mind an hour ago an event more possible than his rejection by Miss Beatrice Cairnswood.

Fortune had dealt so kindly with the Colonel that he might be pardoned for entertaining a high opinion of himself. The world in which he moved like a social constellation had taught him to believe that his will might ever be his way; that, above all, he might marry any woman he chose to honour with his preference; and Colonel Stardale had learned his lesson. But until to-day he had never himself initiated a movement in a matrimonial direction; and now, when for the first time he had offered his hand and heart, they had been declined. Gratefully, almost affectionately, but positively declined; and the Colonel was stunned.

'She must be mad,' said Miss Macallan with conviction—'mad!'

'She was very decided in her refusal,' sighed Colonel Stardale as he stirred his tea—'very decided. But I am unwilling to believe that I have received her final answer. Perhaps I—ah—took her by surprise.'

Miss Macallan could not trust herself to reply; she sat nervously fingering the sugar-tongs, now and again stealing a half-fearful glance at her companion, who remained silently gazing at his patent leather boots, while he wondered whether the events of the last half-hour had been a dream.

Colonel Stardale was a handsome, soldierly-looking man of two or three and forty; his youthful athletic figure was the admiration of Park and Clubland alike. His dress was as nearly perfect as human tailor could make it, and almost painfully neat; no one had ever seen the Colonel with an unbrushed hat or a speck of mud on his white gaiters; and he bore himself with a self-possessed grace which nothing had ever been known to ruffle. He had retired some years ago from the 50th Hussars to devote himself to the affairs of his estate in Wiltshire, and to shed the halo of his presence upon Society: and—he had eighteen thousand a year.

For some months past his attentions to Miss Macallan's niece, Beatrice Cairnswood, had furnished the afternoon tea-tables of his many friends with a favourite topic of conversation;

and latterly they had been sufficiently marked to justify ladies of an inquiring turn of mind in asking Miss Macallan whether there was really 'anything' between her niece and the Colonel.' To which questions that excellent woman would protest absolute ignorance; but in accents which were intended to, and did, lead people to believe they might expect to hear something ere long. And now, when every one was worked up to a feverish pitch of expectancy, the Colonel had proposed; and Beatrice had rejected him!

While her aunt makes spasmodic and unheeded efforts to console the disappointed suitor, we may leave the drawing-room and go in search of Miss Cairnswood.

We find her lying back in a deep armchair in the library where Colonel Stardale left her. She is a little girl, whose face is framed with tangles of unruly brown hair. Now the face is in repose, it is almost insignificant; you might pass it a dozen times in the street and scarcely notice it; but when the eyes light up with animation the change is wonderful, and you marvel no longer that men should rave about Beatrice Cairnswood's beauty. She is only twenty, and Colonel Stardale is the fourth admirer who has 'come to the point,' but no one, not even a woman, has ever called her a flirt. She is an orphan, absolutely dependent upon her uncle, Mr Angus Macallan, who, with his sister Elizabeth and herself, comprise the household at No. 65 Warriston Square, South Kensington. She has no money beyond the 'dress allowance' given her by her uncle, and no expectations; for there is a young Mr Macallan out in China who is to inherit whatever his father may have to leave.

She looks very grave and preoccupied as she sits looking dreamily into the fire. Colonel Stardale was quite mistaken when he told Miss Macallan that he might have taken her by surprise when he proposed this afternoon. Beatrice had been prepared for his declaration, and had done her utmost to stave it off, hoping he would understand her; and twice she had succeeded in postponing the evil day. But the Colonel could not or would not believe she was indifferent to him, and insisted in rushing upon his fate. The interview had lasted but three minutes, for her refusal had so astounded the gentleman that he could only preserve his customary calm by beating a hasty retreat.

Could she bring herself to look upon him as—ah—something more than a friend? he had asked her. Beatrice, somewhat vehemently, would be glad if he would always allow her to regard him as a friend, but— The Colonel begged pardon, but perhaps he had not made his—meaning clear; he sought for the honour of her hand, to—ah—make her his wife, in fact. Beatrice, fidgeting nervously and turning red and white by turns, was sorry—very sorry—because she had always liked him so much; but she couldn't marry him.—Couldn't marry him? Oh no!—She really did not know what to say or how to thank him; but he must not ask her again, for she couldn't possibly marry him.—Might the Colonel presume so far as to ask—ah—why not?—Beatrice knew how ungrateful she must seem, but, but— Well, the truth was, she didn't like him well enough. This was the admission which took her suitor's breath away; and Miss Cairnswood had

scarcely realised what had passed by the time Colonel Stardale had reached the drawing-room and announced his rejection to Miss Macallan.

Half an hour later, the shutting of the hall door told her that the Colonel had taken his departure; and the rustle of her aunt's dress on the stairs warned her to make ready for an interview which would not be much pleasanter than the last. Colonel Stardale's excellences and income had been dangled before her eyes with untiring perseverance ever since she made that gentleman's acquaintance, and she had a very fair idea of what was before her. A moment more, and the elder lady sailed into the library and took a chair opposite her niece.

'Well, Beatrice?' she began questioningly, as though she had responded to a summons at grave personal inconvenience. 'Well?'

As her aunt did not seem inclined to open the ball, and Miss Cairnswood knew by bitter experience that the longer she was allowed to nurse her ire the more violent would be its ultimate explosion, she judiciously gave her an opening.

'I suppose Colonel Stardale has told you?' she said.

'Colonel Stardale has told me of your extraordinary conduct. I am utterly at a loss to comprehend it myself, and thought you might feel that some explanation was due,' said Miss Macallan, folding her hands in her lap and sitting very stiffly upright.

'I don't like him well enough,' said Beatrice, to whose mind this reason was quite conclusive.

'Don't like him well enough!' echoed her aunt. 'Have you forgotten what his position is? Have you forgotten that he has eighteen thousand pounds a year?'

It had been passing strange if the amount of the Colonel's income had escaped Beatrice's memory: the figures had been dinned into her ears almost hourly for the last six months.

'But I can't marry a man I don't care for,' argued Beatrice, plaintively. 'Could you, auntie?'

'No one wants you to do so,' retorted Miss Macallan, rather illogically. 'But when you go and refuse a man, for a chance of marrying whom half the girls in England would give their ears—when you actually throw away— Upon my word,' she broke off angrily, 'I don't know what you expect.'

Beatrice sighed deeply, and resigned herself to listen, for she saw her aunt had much to say yet.

'I can't understand you,' went on Miss Macallan. 'When Mr Cooper proposed and you declined him, I said little, because I knew there was Captain Geoffreys. When you refused Captain Geoffreys, I felt confident you would not have done so had Sir Barnaby Phipps not been paying you so much attention. I own I was disappointed when you gave Sir Barnaby his congé, because then the Colonel had only seen you two or three times, and of course I never anticipated that he would take a fancy to you.—What does it all mean?' almost wailed the old lady. 'Is there any one else coming on?'

'There's no one else coming on, as you express it,' replied Beatrice shortly. It gave her no pleasure to hear her conquests thus told off on her aunt's fingers. She looked upon Mr Cooper and

the others as so many friends lost, and had no ambition to add more to the list.

'Why don't you like Colonel Stardale?' cried Miss Macallan, goaded to desperation by her niece's calmness. 'He's a very handsome man; he's certain to get the seat for Chalksbury at the next election; and, as I've often, often told you, he's got eighteen'—

'Oh, don't tell me that again, Aunt Elizabeth.'

'Such folly; such—such'— But at this point Miss Macallan's voice failed; she dissolved in tears and left the room.

'I am glad that's over,' said Beatrice to herself as the door closed behind her aunt. 'I really think I'd better explain everything to Uncle Angus. I daresay he will be angry; but I think I can manage him. I wish he would be quick and come in.'

As though in answer to her wish, the hoarse cough she knew so well proclaimed that Mr Macallan had just come in from the City, and was taking off his coat in the hall. Beatrice went to the library door and called him.

'Uncle, come here for a minute; I want you.'

If Mr Angus Macallan was master of the house, Miss Cairnswood was mistress of the master. Her lightest word was law to the old gentleman, and she might have led him a terrible life had she pleased. He followed her into the room, rubbing his hands briskly before he took her head between them and bestowed his usual kiss.

'What is it, Bee?' he inquired, taking the chair she had just vacated.

'Colonel Stardale was here to-day, uncle.'

There was a long pause.

'I suppose you are going to tell me that he proposed to you?' said Mr Macallan at length.

'Yes, uncle.'

'Hum!' Miss Cairnswood had never discussed her last suitor with her uncle, and, influenced by his sister's views, that gentleman thought it quite probable that Beatrice had at last found some one to her mind. But previous occurrences of a like nature rose to his thoughts, and he had his doubts. He therefore tapped his finger-tips together and looked at his niece with an inviting smile.

'And I refused him,' said Beatrice, slowly.

Mr Macallan pursed up his lips, and his smile faded. Beatrice sat waiting for him to speak, and uncle and niece stared at each other for two minutes in silence.

'Does your aunt know?'

'Yes. I'm afraid she's dreadfully disappointed.'

'It is a pity you don't care for him,' remarked Mr Macallan; 'but I would not have you marry any man, however good his position, unless you really liked him.'

Beatrice slipped from her chair and came over to her uncle's side, blushing hotly.

'What's the matter, Bee?' asked the old man, putting his arm round her.

'I must tell you, uncle,' answered Beatrice in a quavering voice. 'I like somebody else. And he hasn't any money; so we can't marry. And I won't marry anybody else. There!'

It was a short but comprehensive story. Mr Macallan, however, had suspected the existence

of some secret of this kind, and his niece's confession was not altogether a surprise. He drew her on to his knee, and petted her hand for a few minutes until she recovered her composure.

'Tell me all about him, my dear. What is he? Could I help him at all?'

Beatrice shook her head.

'I'm afraid not, uncle. You see, he's an artist; he paints most beautifully, but somehow he can't sell his pictures. And he is so dreadfully hard up that he doesn't like to go out in the daytime in his shabby clothes.' And with this, Beatrice completely broke down.

Mr Macallan drew her head down upon his shoulder and soothed her, looking very grave the while. This was indeed an unlucky attachment; an artist who could not sell his pictures, and wore clothes which would not bear the light of day! It was about as bad a business as could be, and he felt that he must not encourage Beatrice by receiving further confidences. Had the 'somebody else' been a steady young man in the City, now, Messrs Macallan & Son might have been able to put something in his way; might have found him some appointment whose emoluments would enable him to marry. But an artist; and one who couldn't sell his pictures! Mr Macallan felt the spring of sympathy cooling in his breast, and he released Beatrice without asking any more questions. He could not let her go without a word of reassurance, however; though, as he spoke, he knew it was not particularly inspiring.

'Well, Bee, if you can't marry the man you do like, I'll never press you to marry one you don't like. Be sure of that.' He put her down, and went up-stairs to find his sister. He knew that Miss Macallan had set her heart upon this brilliant match for their niece, and as a matter of fact, was himself more disappointed than he cared to show. He was keenly anxious to see Beatrice happily settled, though the house would be sadly dull when she left it; but his motives for desiring it differed widely from those which actuated his sister.

Mr Macallan was by no means the wealthy man he was popularly supposed: the China trade was passing through an era of depression which had obliged many old City houses to close their doors during the last few years. Messrs Macallan had weathered the storm so far, but it had tried them sorely, and men behind the scenes said the banks were beginning to look shyly at the firm. It might pull through if things in the East soon took a turn for the better; but if they did not— The knowing ones shook their heads, and spoke in undertones of 'poor old Angus.'

Mr Macallan never mentioned business matters at home; but latterly his sister and niece had noticed the weary air he wore when he came in from the office in the evening. Last year, when the snug little dinners which had been a bi-weekly institution were given up, Miss Macallan thought it a pity her brother should lose his taste for society just when Beatrice had 'come out;' but she never imagined there was any reason for it beyond that he gave—he was not so young as he used to be, and preferred quiet evenings. Then the butler and two or three servants had been dismissed, and the stable

department reduced. It then became apparent to Miss Macallan that retrenchment was the order of the day; but neither she nor Beatrice was called upon to exercise any little economies, and they had no suspicion of the gaunt skeleton in the cupboard which was growing month by month more impatient to show himself. They lived more quietly, but gave up no comfort or luxury to which they had been accustomed, and there was nothing to suggest that money was growing scarcer day by day.

Mr Macallan found his sister in the drawing-room brooding over a novel in a state of moist depression. She, like Colonel Stardale, was asking herself, 'What will people say?' and was answering the large question with the words conviction forced upon her—namely, that Beatrice would never have such a chance again—never.

'Have you seen that wretched girl?' she asked gloomily, as her brother came in.

'Yes; I know all about it.'

'What are we to do with her?' asked Miss Macallan, rocking herself to and fro, while she felt for her pocket-handkerchief.

'She must go her own way in these matters,' replied Angus, poking up the fire; 'but it would have been a great weight off my mind had she accepted the Colonel.'

'She is a dreadful responsibility,' groaned Miss Macallan. 'An awful responsibility.'

'And is likely to become a much heavier one,' added Angus, 'when she is cut off from society.'

'What do you mean?' asked his sister, alarmed by the earnestness of his tone.

'I mean this,' said the old gentleman, turning in his seat to look her straight in the face.—'I mean that we can't go on living in our present style. I can't afford it; and it is only fair to tell you that certain contingencies may arise within the next few months which will oblige me to make a radical change: I shall have to sell off the house, furniture, and all I have.'

'Angus!' exclaimed Miss Macallan, turning pale.

'It is best you should know the truth, Elizabeth. Things may pull round, but I haven't much hope of it. That is why I am anxious to see Beatrice safely housed in a home of her own.'

'What are the contingencies you spoke of?' inquired Miss Macallan.

'It would answer no purpose to explain them precisely. But I may tell you that we are hanging by our last rope: the sale or mortgage of certain property in the East.'

'You mean that the firm will fail if you can't realise the value of the property by a given date?'

'That's it, exactly,' replied Angus with deliberation. He had for so long been staring ruin in the face that he was becoming callous about himself; but he quailed before the thought of his sister, his numerous dependents, and, above all, of Beatrice reduced to penury. His failure would blight her life in all reasonable likelihood. What would she do in a remote London suburb or French country-town, whichever he might select as hiding-place for his fallen grandeur?

'Have you told Beatrice all you have told me?' asked Miss Macallan after a long silence.

'No. I couldn't bring myself to do it after I had heard her story.'

'What story?' asked the old lady, scenting revelations.

'She has fallen in love with a penniless artist. I don't know his name or anything about him, except that he is penniless. And Bee declares she will never marry any one else.'

'Ah!' said Miss Macallan. It is a very inexpressive word on paper; but Elizabeth Macallan's 'Ah!' conveyed whole volumes. Her brother moved uneasily as he heard it, and tried to repair the mischief the monosyllable told him he had done.

'She is very sensible about it,' he said—'acknowledges that she can't marry the man, and doesn't go in for romance or sentimentality about him.'

'I knew there must be something at the bottom of it all,' said Miss Macallan quite cheerfully. Some people derive their purest pleasure from being right at their own expense.

'Don't say anything about it to her,' said Angus; 'it would do no good, and only distress her.' (Miss Macallan emitted a snort of contempt.) 'He never goes anywhere, and they never meet. The affair will die a natural death if we ignore it.'

The lady made a gesture of acquiescence, but privately resolved to learn all Beatrice could tell her about the penniless artist before she went to bed that night. If Angus Macallan had known the sex a little better, he would have acknowledged the unwisdom of confiding so tempting a secret to his sister with instructions to keep silence.

Accordingly, when Beatrice had retired to her room, her affectionate relative pursued her thither, and without much difficulty cajoled her into telling everything relative to her lover.

His name, it appeared, was Ralph Thornleigh; he was the son of a country gentleman, and had come with a little money and some good introductions to seek his fortune in London. He had spent the former gaily, never doubting that his talents would soon be recognised and place him far above the reach of want. Beatrice met him for the first time at a ball; they danced together; went down to supper together; sat out together; danced together again, and sat out a little more. Thereafter, they met ten or a dozen times at parties of various kinds, and in due time discovered that they had been born for one another. He told Beatrice he was not in a position to ask her for any promise, but had every reason to believe he should be soon. She, being perfectly certain in her own mind that his success was merely a matter of months, if not weeks, told him she would wait.

Then there was no actual engagement?—No-o; it couldn't be called an engagement, because Ralph hadn't given her a ring; but there was an understanding. It was true that since he had run through his money, he had been going steadily down hill, and was never seen anywhere; but that didn't make any difference: she had promised to wait for him, and would wait.—How long?—Well, for Ralph's own sake Beatrice hoped it would not be long before people began to buy his pictures; but really she didn't know.—And did Beatrice mean to say that she had

refused Mr Cooper, Captain Geoffreys, Sir Barnaby Phipps, and of all men in the world, Colonel Stardale, all on account of this artist person?—Yes; that was what Beatrice meant; not that she would have accepted any one of them, even if Ralph had not existed, for she did not care for them. She couldn't love any one but Ralph Thornleigh; would marry him if she had to wait till she was forty.—Indeed! And where did she propose to wait?—With Uncle Angus, if he would keep her.—Oh! Then Beatrice had better review her determination very seriously for a day or two. If she was in the same mind about waiting, say by Sunday, Aunt Elizabeth would have something to tell her which might cause her to think differently.

THE RECREATIONS OF EMINENT MEN.

RECREATION is as necessary in the economy of life as work. There is profound philosophy in the nursery lines about all work and no play. Health of body and vigour of mind are essential to the full enjoyment of life; and recreation, amusement, diversion, is a really important factor in the promotion of this desirable condition. It stimulates the imagination, and lifts us out of the ruts along which the routine of our ordinary life forces us to travel. Voltaire, indeed, went so far as to say that 'amusement is the first necessity of civilised man.' On the other hand, a great living French critic represents 'amusement as a comfortable deceit by which we avoid a permanent *tête-à-tête* with realities that are too heavy for us.' We agree with neither dictum. Why should we put amusement into competition with the realities of life? It is simply a relaxation from those realities, and in that respect is, as Voltaire says, a necessity, though not 'the first necessity of civilised man.' We can't afford to part with any advantage. We learn by laughter as well as by tears, we grow strong by rest as well as by work. The breeze playing round the temples is as necessary to the vigour of the mind as a dose of metaphysics or a chapter of Plato. Dean Swift's favourite maxim was, 'Vive la bagatelle!' He thought trifles a necessary part of life, and perhaps found them necessary to himself.

Mr Gladstone's recreations take the form of writing pamphlets on theological controversy, or felling trees; and no professed wood-cutter is more expert in laying prostrate a mighty oak than the right honourable gentleman. Chemistry engrosses the leisure moments of his political opponent, Lord Salisbury. Carteret, another English statesman, when driven from office, 'retired laughing,' says Macaulay, 'to his books and his bottle.' Fox found relief from political work in his loved Greek authors, as did the late Lord Derby, the Rupert of debate. Talleyrand in the intervals of ministerial work played whist. Peirese, a French antiquary, found his amusement amongst his medals and intaglios; the Abbé de Maroles with his prints, of which he collected about one hundred thousand, which are now in the National Museum of Paris. Rohault,

a Cartesian philosopher of the seventeenth century, wandered from shop to shop to observe the mechanics labour. Goldsmith tells us of a famous painter whose whole delight, during his confinement in prison for debt, consisted in drawing the faces of his creditors in caricature. King Louis XIII. of France spent much of his time in catching small birds or making *jets-d'eau* with quills.

It is said of George Herbert that 'the one delight of his life in the way of recreation was music, setting and singing his own hymns and anthems to viol and lute.' Many learned men have found recreation in the same way. A byework of this kind always provides a delightful rest or change. Bishop Warburton confessed that music was always a necessity to him when engaged in intellectual labour. Addison says: 'A man that has a taste for music, painting, or architecture, is like one that has another sense when compared with such as have no relish of these arts.' Milton loved music, and used to play upon an organ. Carlyle tells us that 'the main recreations' of Frederick the Great 'were music and the converse of well-informed friendly men'—two things of which, we may remark, George Eliot was also passionately fond. Dr Johnson, it would seem, had no sympathy with those who thus amused themselves. A lady after performing with the most brilliant execution a sonata on the pianoforte in the presence of the great Doctor, turning to him, took the liberty of asking him if he was fond of music. 'No, madam,' replied the philosopher; 'but of all noises, I think music is the least disagreeable.' He would agree with the poet who says:

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard are
sweeter.

The favourite recreation of Pope's leisure hours was the society of painters. Nothing was more agreeable to the poet than to spend an occasional evening with his friend Kneller, who, to use the words of Thackeray, 'bragged more, spelt worse, and painted better, than any artist of his day.' Warburton tells an amusing anecdote of the two friends. Mr Pope was with Sir Godfrey Kneller one day when his nephew, a Guinea trader, came in. 'Nephew,' said Sir Godfrey, 'you have the honour of seeing the two greatest men in the world.' 'I don't know how great you may be,' said the Guinea man, 'but I don't like your looks. I have often bought a man much better than both of you together, all muscles and bones, for ten guineas.'

Another great painter, Sir Joshua Reynolds, used to amuse himself in his last days in his house in Leicester Square with a little tame bird, which, like the favourite spider of the prisoner in the Bastille, often served to while away a lonely hour. But this proved a fleeting pleasure, for one summer morning, the window of the chamber being by accident left open, the little favourite took flight, and was irrecoverably lost, although its master wandered for hours in the square and neighbourhood in the fruitless endeavour to regain it.

The favourite recreations of the late Field-marshal Count Von Moltke were chess and whist, which he rarely missed playing after dinner. The Count was an authority on the culture of

roses; and at Kreisau, where he spent most of his time after his retirement from active service, he possessed one of the finest and most unique collections of roses in Germany.

Sir William Temple relaxed his mind from the affairs of state by clipping his apricots or cultivating his tulips. Gardening was an exercise in which he much indulged. An epicurean himself, he says in his famous *Essay on Gardens*: 'Epicurus passed his life wholly in his garden. There he studied, there he exercised, there he taught his philosophy; and indeed,' he goes on to say, 'no other sort of abode seems to contribute so much to both the tranquillity of mind and indolence of body which he made his chief ends.' Other great men, as well as Epicurus and his disciple, Sir William, have loved gardening without, however, finding it to contribute to that bodily indolence of which the philosopher speaks. What a sturdy specimen of manhood was Martin Luther, for example, and yet gardening was a favourite amusement with him. Writing to a friend to procure him some seeds, he says: 'While Satan rages, I will laugh at him, and enjoy my Creator in the garden.' An ingenious writer has observed that 'a garden just accommodates itself to the perambulations of a scholar, who would perhaps rather wish his walks abridged than extended.'

In Pope's letters there is a characteristic account of the mode in which men of learning take exercise. 'I, like a poor squirrel, am continually in motion indeed, but it is about a cage of three foot; my little excursions are like those of a shopkeeper who walks every day a mile or two before his own door, but minds his business all the while.' Archbishop Whately was seen to most advantage at Redesdale, his country-seat near Dublin, gardening, tree-cutting, grafting, and romping with his children and dogs. With him, as with many eminent men, Bismarck, Sir Walter Scott, Hogarth, Rubens, Henry Irving, and others, dogs were great favourites. One especially, which he possessed at Oxford, was noted for his climbing performances; and it was the great delight of Dr Whately to exhibit his feats in Christ Church meadow. On the very morning on which he had received the letter of Lord Grey offering him the see of Dublin, a visitor who was a stranger to him was asked out to see the feats of his climbing dog. The animal performed as usual; and when he had reached his highest point of ascent, and was beginning his yell of wailing, Whately turned to the stranger and said: 'What do you think of that?' 'I think that some besides the dog, when they find themselves at the top of the tree, would give the world they could get down again.' A striking remark just then for one who was not aware of the offer Whately had just received.

Another great prelate, Bishop Thirlwall, amused himself in the same way. When the mind was jaded over one of his elaborate charges, or some abstruse philological problem, he used to take a stroll in his garden at Abergwili, book in hand, or surrounded with his domestic pets. We all know how the poet Cowper cheered his melancholy hours many a time with the gambols of his pet hares, 'Tiny, Puss, and Bess.'

While Kepler worked out the secret of the heavenly bodies, 'going over his calculations sixty

times,' he now and then turned aside to write almanacs for his daily bread. So the weary worker took his recreation. Addition in his later years used to retire to the picture-gallery of Holland House, called afterwards the Long Room. There he sought repose and the solace of strong waters. The tradition is that he placed a bottle and a glass at each end of it, and so alternately exercised his lips and his legs. Now and then, by way of a change, he would stroll down to a coffee-house at Kensington to drink his solitary glass, and thus endeavour to forget awhile public business and domestic troubles. It used to be a pet amusement with Molière, the French dramatist, to ensconce himself in the corner of a barber's shop and there silently watch the air, gestures, and grimaces of the village politicians, who in those days, before coffee-houses were introduced into France, used to congregate in this place of resort. The fruits of this study may be easily discerned in those original sketches of character, from the middle and lower classes, with which his pieces everywhere abound, and which made his plays so popular amongst his countrymen. 'Courage, Molière,' cried an old man from the pit; 'this is genuine comedy.' And the success of the poet vindicated the critical wisdom of the old man.

The only relaxation Kant, the celebrated German philosopher, allowed himself was a walk which he invariably took during his life at Königsberg at about the same hour every afternoon. His usual stroll was along the banks of the Pregel towards the Friedrich's Fort; and in these walks he was always a careful observer of the phenomena of Nature. He told his friends one day how, as he passed a certain building in his daily walk, he had noticed several young swallows lying dead upon the ground. On looking up, he discovered, as he fancied, that the old birds were actually throwing their young ones out of the nests. It was a season remarkable for the scarcity of insects, and the birds were apparently sacrificing some of their progeny to save the rest. 'At this,' added Kant, 'my intellect was hushed; the only thing to do here was to fall down and worship.' Another great philosopher, Bishop Butler, used to take his recreation, according to one of his chaplains, in a somewhat singular manner: he would walk for hours in the little garden behind his palace at Bristol 'in the darkest night which the time of the year could afford.'

It may be mentioned that some learned men have found amusement in composing works on odd subjects. Seneca wrote a burlesque narrative of Claudian's death; Pierius Valerianus wrote a eulogium on beards; and a French author has in modern times composed with due gravity and pleasantry a learned treatise, entitled *Éloge de Perruques* (A Eulogium on Wigs). Gaspar Talia-cotius, of whose feats of surgical skill Butler in his *Hudibras* gives an amusing account, wrote a treatise in Latin called *Chirurgia Nota*, in which he teaches the art of ingrafting noses, ears, lips, and other members of the human body with proper instruments and bandages—a book which has passed through two editions. Dr Johnson somewhere observes that it seems to have been in all ages the pride of art to show how it could exalt the low and amplify the little. To this

ambition perhaps we owe the frogs of Homer, the bees of Virgil, the butterfly of Spenser, the quincunx of Sir Thomas Browne, and the 'little celandine' of Wordsworth.

A GRIFFIN AND HIS SERVANTS.

THE ways of a Griffin are hard: his fellow-countrymen hoax him; whilst the dusky sons of the soil plunder him. The latter do this more or less during the whole of his sojourn in India, but not to the same extent as they do it while in his griffinage. For that period he is as a sheep in the hands of the shearers, and shearers too who are not particular as to what depth they cut in removing the fleece. But never yet was callow Englishman in the hands of the Philistines as early in his career in India as I was; for before the ship that bore me to that sultry clime hove to off Garden Reach, Calcutta, a Madrassé 'boy' of some thirty summers appeared on deck and appropriated me to his service. His name was Ramma Sawmy. Where he came from, to this day I cannot tell; but there he was before—it appeared to me—the steamer had stopped. He looked round, spotted me, a palpable griffin, and making a salaam, asked if 'Master' wanted coolies to take his baggage on shore. I certainly did; and before I had time to make terms for their services, my trunks were on the top of a gharry and I was inside. Ramma Sawmy got on the box, and away we drove to the *Auckland Hotel*. I had intended going to another (Spence's); but Ramma Sawmy thought differently, informing me 'many gentlemen go there, no much room.' On this point I have no cause to find fault with him, for I liked the *Auckland*, and could not have done better; but that was not the point—it simply showed what a master mind Ramma Sawmy had. He evidently was completely at home at the *Auckland*, and I was at his mercy there. He spoke to the manager about my room, saw my luggage safely deposited therein, paid the coolies, and then said he should like to enter my service.

Being at an hotel, I did not quite see what I should want with a servant; but Ramma Sawmy told me 'all gentlemen keep servant,' if only for the look of the thing. Besides, I was inexperienced in the ways of punkah coolies and other necessities of life in India; these it would be his business to look after for me, otherwise my life would be a burden in such an enervating climate. I succumbed; and Ramma Sawmy was engaged there and then at twenty rupees a month—twelve or fourteen would have been ample—to be my servitor as long as I remained in Calcutta; with a proviso, that if he suited, he would go up country with me when my destination was decided upon.

Once engaged, my domestic entered on his duties with great promptitude; he put my things in order; sorted out my dirty linen, the accumulations of the voyage, made a list of it, as he intended bringing a man for it in the morning, and then suggested I should take a drive on the Mall.

But by this time I was beginning to wonder if it would be judicious to leave Ramma Sawmy in possession of my property, and thought of the Latin proverb which asks, 'Who shall guard the

guards themselves?'—so suggested the propriety of Ramma Sawmy giving me references. This was too much for him. He felt hurt—I could see it by the twitching of his mouth as he said he would in the morning bring documentary evidence of his goodness so overwhelming, that I might consider myself lucky in having secured the services of such a paragon. He spoke with so much emotion, I believed him, and took my first drive in Calcutta, happy in my mind at the thought of being able to leave my belongings in the care of such a guardian.

Early the next morning he was by my bedside with coffee and a biscuit; these I demolished whilst he arranged my clothes, then he placed his testimonials in my hand. I read them once, I read them twice, and think I should have read them a third time, had I not looked up and seen Ramma Sawmy standing with bowed head, the picture of silent reproof. Tears came as I grasped his hand, for was he not a Mutiny hero; had he not saved the lives of a certain lady and her children; had he not been a good and faithful servant to sundry generals, colonels, and commissioners; and I had ventured to doubt, for one short moment, such a man! 'But never again, Ramma Sawmy! Only serve me as you have served your king—as a great cardinal once observed—and so long as my salary is duly paid, so long shall you receive a portion of it.'

Confidence being established between us, Sawmy suggested going to the bazaar to purchase blacking and sundry little articles of daily use. To do this he wanted rupees, which were to be accounted for in due course; but these, as well as many more rupees, were not altogether satisfactorily accounted for; though perhaps I was not a competent judge of the value of the things bought. He also assisted me in purchasing several articles of intricate workmanship in the China bazaar, presents for home. Besides this, he helped me greatly in beating down the numerous 'box wallahs' who came in swarms to my room with articles for sale.

It was wonderful what a number of things I found necessary, or was persuaded were so, whilst staying in Calcutta; I therefore welcomed the order I received one morning to go to Allahabad and report myself to an official there. It was now I found out the real value of my treasure; he packed my things, sent the heavy baggage off by steamer, told me what we should want on the journey, and laid in stores for it. He depicted the meagre fare we should obtain *en route*—the chances of a breakdown, and consequent privation if not amply supplied with tinned provisions. I therefore left him with a free hand, whilst I devoted my last few hours to home letters.

In the one to my mother I told her of the dusky treasure I had secured; begged her to increase her subscription to the S.P.V.—a Society profanely called by a friend one for the propagation of vice in foreign parts—and finally assured her that her parting advice to be kind and patient to the mild Hindu should be carefully carried out.

My letters posted, presents packed and made over to my agents for despatch, I had not a care as we crossed the Hooghly to get to the railway station at Howrah, where we commenced our journey to the North-western Provinces. I took

our tickets to Raneegunge, giving Ramma Sawmy his, whilst I chummed with a doctor and two young officers bound for Patna.

Arrived at Raneegunge, the extent of our railway journey, I looked for Ramma Sawmy amongst the native passengers, but could not see him, for, like the vulgar boy of Ingoldsby, 'he was not there;' and to quote Ingoldsby again, slightly altered—'never to this hour have I beheld that native boy.'

I should like to pause now and express my feelings in red ink, but dare not, so will describe Raneegunge instead. It will be more soothing, for it will give me no trouble. In fact, the railway station and an hotel comprised the place as far as I saw it. The first I had done with when Ramma Sawmy could not be found there; the latter I stayed at for an hour or two, simply to get my dinner. It was a barn-like edifice, cheerless and unhome-like, whilst the food was high, so was the price of it. Perhaps I took a jaundiced view of everything that night. But I was not dull during dinner, for amongst the people at the table was a young fellow suffering from sunstroke or D.T. He had a pistol, which he presented at the head of a servant whenever he called for anything. This kept things lively, especially when on some one saying, 'It is not loaded,' he replied, 'Oh! isn't it?' and shot at a lamp hanging on the wall, smashing it. This was too much for his neighbours, who seized him, took the pistol, and threw it out of the door. A general row now began, in which not seeing my way to join profitably, I got into the conveyance which was to take me to Allahabad, and drove off.

In due course I arrived at my destination, reported myself to the proper authority, who told me I had better get a staff of servants used to camp-life, as my next two years would most likely be spent under canvas. Easier said than done, especially as I was warned against English-speaking natives. That I quite agreed with, for could not Ramma Sawmy speak it perfectly. There was, however, one exception to this rule; this was a native clerk, whose chief qualification had to be a knowledge of English.

Whilst looking for this member of my staff, my baggage arrived from Calcutta. It was duly delivered, and I looked forward to gazing at my belongings with fond delight; so I did—on what there was; but how little! First I wept, then 'swear-words' came to my relief, and if they were as effective as they were potent, Ramma Sawmy departed before his time to a place where my appropriated clothing would be superfluous. Later on, I heard from home that the cases I delivered to my agents containing, as I believed, choice works of native art, simply covered odd specimens of coarse pottery. What I said when I heard this was of the same nature as the pottery; it will therefore be well if I refrain from repeating it. It will also be well if Ramma Sawmy and his wicked ways be left alone, whilst I relate my first experiences with young Bengal.

I have said my native clerk was expected to know English, and this is what the first applicant for that post sent me as a specimen of his idea of the language:

RESPECTED SIR—I beg to say that my mind is greatly confounded: will you kindly let me know

if I may enter your service or may I go back to my house; Mr — told me verbally that when you start I shall be joined to your staff at —: still I have no result on the subject but now (sir) if your honor give me order I will ascertain the fact what is with all possible means; and having learnt the meaning of the cause I shall act according to my own will; I now beseech your forgiveness in haste; when I would be duly favoured by your kind reply, by your doing so I will lose no time to offer up my Prayer to the almighty father for your long life and prosperity.—I remain, sir, your most obedient servant,

WOMESH CHUNDER BANERJEE.

This literary production was of the sort Huckleberry Finn described as 'interesting but tough;' it was also so peculiar that I longed to see the writer, and *hear* English 'as she is spoke' on the plains of Hindustan. It also occurred to me that I might get this worthy to write my home letters; they would impress my relations with the idea that I was studying the language and getting befogged with it. I therefore sent for Mr Banerjee, who appeared in a spotless white surtout; side spring boots, with their tags standing out at right angles to his legs; close-cropped hair, and an umbrella.

The English language as spoken by young Bengal does not give one the idea of being a plain one—flowery rhetoric and metaphor take the place of our homely phrases, and Mr Banerjee kept these well to the front during our interview. But on the whole he seemed a satisfactory person, and I engaged him.

I have forgotten, I see, to say that, just before leaving Calcutta, Ramma Sawmy wanted an advance in cash, to enable his family to live whilst he was away. He got it, and that fact rankled in my bosom more than all his other delinquencies put together; so, when Mr Banerjee suggested having a month's pay in advance for his family's benefit, my cholera rose, and I 'went for' Mr Banerjee. Luckily for him, I tripped and missed my man, who, with a yell of terror, bolted, his white garments streaming in the wind, his umbrella sailing away like a parachute, whilst spasmodically he shouted: 'Do you want to kill, sir?' No, I didn't; I only wanted to impress on him my views on the subject of monetary advances. It was not to be, though, for Mr Banerjee got safely to a house in the bazaar, where I left him, and hoped the next griffin he came across would be able to run faster than I could.

The next servant whose peculiarities afforded me food for reflection was a jokist, the only native I ever heard of in that line of business. His name was Kurreem Bux, and the way he once 'played it on me' was something any man might be proud of, especially as it was the chance of a lifetime; he grasped the situation and got his reward. A lion had been killed in the Central Provinces, and a friend—a great 'shikari'—told me they always went in couples; if therefore, we could get leave and post down sharp, we might bag the mate of the one shot. Leave was obtained, and away we went. A small staging bungalow, built for some surveyors, was situated in the jungles not far from where we expected to get news of the lion, if it existed;

this we had permission to use, and to it we sent our luggage a day or two in advance. Never shall I forget the place or its inhabitants. They principally consisted of the insect tribe, known entomologically as *Cimex lectularia*. And weren't they hungry! Truly, I believe the fiend in human form who gave us leave to use the place was coming before long to it, and wished his tenants to have the edge taken off their appetites, and we were to do it. But it was not to be; they were too much *en évidence*. One look at them was enough; we left the bungalow, and took up our quarters beneath a banyan tree.

After dinner, we arranged our plan of campaign, and then curled ourselves up to sleep the sleep of the just, just as the moon began to rise. We must have slept long, for when I was disturbed by my man, Kurreem Bux, pressing my foot gently, the moon was well up, and the place nearly as light as day.

'Sahib, sahib,' softly whispered Kurreem, 'there is the lion.'

In a moment I was 'all there.' Yes; certainly I could see the tail half of some animal behind a bush, apparently eating.

'What is he doing there, Kurreem?'

'That is where the cook killed some fowls, and I suppose the lion is eating the entrails.'

Quite satisfied with this explanation, I took my rifle, looked at my chum, who was fast asleep, and crept from bush to bush till I could get a fair shot at the beast. I fired; the bullet went thud, and I waited to see if the other barrel would be wanted.

What a row there was in a moment; the whole place seemed alive with people. My chum was shouting 'What is it?' the servants were bolting right and left; Kurreem was shouting 'A lion, a lion!' and my quarry was kicking away in the bush where it fell.

Now, whilst I was deliberating about the wisdom of going up to a wounded lion, a native appeared from behind a bush close to where I had fired; he went to the animal, and after giving vent to a wail of woe that rent the skies, said—at least, according to the *Delhi Gazette*:

Oh! sir,
Was no other animal ready?
Why couldn't you shoot a jackal or cur,
And spare me my hard-working Neddy!

I had shot a villager's donkey. Kurreem Bux disappeared for several days, and on his return kept at a respectful distance. Eventually I forgave him; and no doubt, when peace was restored, he had many a chuckle as he thought of how he had sold a Sahib.

SOME OLD POLITICAL TOASTS.

THE decline and fall of the old health-drinking customs have naturally rendered the art of political toasting of little account. Beyond the conventional sentiments usually given at party banquets and convivial gatherings—the cause, and the leader—Political Toasts have but little existence. It was much otherwise a century ago. Your toast and your song were not then a figure of speech. Health-proposing and health-drinking were serious matters, and no one could shirk his duty therein. Any member of a dinner-

party or other social gathering was expected, if called upon, to give a sentiment which the rest of the company could honour. Of course, many of these sentiments became stereotyped, and several collections were made containing many hundreds of these favourite accompaniments to good liquor.

As political passion then ran high, and party feeling was inflamed, it is not surprising to find the political toast figuring prominently in the social life of the period. In the course of his Welsh wanderings in 1794, Coleridge was at Bala, and at some public table gave the health of the then famous Dr Priestley of Birmingham; whereupon the loyal parish apothecary, who was present, said: 'I gives a sentiment, gemmen! May all republicans be gullotened!' A comprehensive proposal, and somewhat sanguinary withal, but very pithily expressed. The political toasts of the last century were often marked by great coarseness, and what one might almost call brutality. There are several collections devoted to sentiments of this type, and some of them display amazing ferocity.

Many framers of political toasts were fond of displaying their ingenuity by disguising their exact intentions under some allusive sentiment or phrase of double meaning. On the 24th of January 1798, the birthday of Charles James Fox, there was a great dinner at the famous *Crown and Anchor*. The Whigs assembled in force—two thousand are said to have been present—with the Duke of Norfolk in the chair. The first toast was the health of Fox, and then the Duke proposed successively, 'Rights of the People,' 'Constitutional Redress of the Wrongs of the People,' with other catch-words and phrases which the Whigs then inscribed on their banners. The health of the chairman was drunk, and then the irrepressible Duke gave 'Our Sovereign's Health—the Majesty of the People!' This was sailing rather too near the wind, and the king promptly dismissed the Duke from his various offices. On the 1st of May in the same year, the Whig Club had a dinner at the *Freemasons' Tavern*, and Fox repeated the offence by giving as a toast, 'The Sovereignty of the People of Great Britain.' As soon as the king heard of this performance, he ordered the great Whig's name to be erased from the list of Privy Councillors.

Toasts of this character were not confined to public gatherings. At private dinners the custom of proposing sentiments was universal, and when ardent politicians got their knees under the same table, the toasts given reflected the political views of those assembled. When Samuel Rogers was a young man of twenty-nine, he once dined at a friend's house with Thomas Paine, freethinker and republican. One of the toasts given was the 'Memory of Joshua,' with reference, no doubt, to the Hebrew leader's conquest of the kings of Canaan, and his disposal of them thereafter by hanging and otherwise. Paine observed that he would not treat kings like Joshua. 'I'm of the Scotch parson's opinion,' he said, 'when he prayed against Louis XIV.—"Lord, shake him over the mouth of hell, but don't let him drop!"' Paine then gave as his contribution to the toast-list, 'The Republic of the World,' which Rogers noted as

a sublime idea. It was a kind of anticipation of the Laureate's lines in *Locksley Hall*:

Till the war-drums throbbed no longer, and the battle flags were furled
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

In Ireland in 1803, when aid from France was expected by those disaffected towards the English rule, a popular toast was 'The Feast of the Pass-over.' Early in the present century, Pitt Clubs were very numerous throughout the country. They were founded in support of that great minister's policy during the titanic struggle with Napoleon, and continued to flourish long after Waterloo had finally ended that contest. The favourite toasts were, 'The Duke of Wellington,' 'The Gallant Blücher,' and then, 'True Blue and Prussian Blue—the colours that beat Bonaparte black and blue!' It has been ingeniously surmised that this toast, and the popularity at that time of the Prussians, gave rise to Sam Weller's singular form of welcome to his father, whom he saluted with, 'Vell, my Prooshan Blue!'—a phrase which was unintelligible to the competitors for Mr C. S. Calverley's prizes, given in 1857, for proficiency in the 'Pickwick Papers,' and was even a stone of offence to the learned examiner himself.

The Jacobites were extremely ingenious in their methods of showing convivial disloyalty without too openly committing themselves. Every one knows the method of drinking the health of the king 'over the water;' but this was only one of many devices. In 1715 they were fond of toasting an individual called Job. This was not the much-tried man of infinite and proverbial patience, but simply a combination of the initials of James, Ormonde, and Bolingbroke. Other favourites were 'Kit'—which in the same way represented King James Third—and 'the three Bs,' which mystery meant Best Born Briton, and so the Chevalier. In earlier days, during the Commonwealth, the Cavaliers are said to have expressed their feelings towards the usurper by a tolerably transparent device. They put a crumb of bread into their glass, and then, before drinking it off, exclaimed, 'God send this *crumb well down*!' For a long time after King William III. met his death from his horse having stumbled over a molehill in the park of Hampton Court Palace, the Jacobites kept the memory of the humble earth-borer fresh by drinking to the health of the 'Little gentleman in black velvet.' Among the wilder spirits, the health-drinking was not complete unless it were performed on the bared knees. As Wildrake sings in *Woodstock*:

Then let the health go round;
For though your stocking be of silk,
Your knee shall kiss the ground, a-ground, a-ground,
a-ground,
Your knee shall kiss the ground.

On the other side, the supporters of the settlement of 1688, and all who detested the Stuarts, had plenty of sentiments whereby to testify, in bacchanalian moments, to their loyalty to the House of Hanover. The famous 'Calves'-head Club' distinguished itself in this connection. Their favourite day of meeting and holding high festival was January 30, the anniversary of the execution of King Charles I., and their toasts smack of the brutality of the time. Among their

sentiments were, 'The Pious Memory of Oliver Cromwell,' 'The Glorious Year 1648,' 'The Man in the Mask'—referring to the king's executioner—and others of similar hue. We have travelled a long distance since such toasts as the last named could be tolerated in decent society. The most devoted admirer of the rule of Oliver Cromwell would hesitate nowadays to toast that 'Man in the Mask' whose personality is as little capable of satisfactory identification as is his of the Iron Mask. Political sentiments do not now go hand in hand with the flowing bowl—the overflowing bowl—as they used to do, and political toasts, except of the most conventional kind, are practically extinct.

IN AUTUMN DAYS.

Do you think of the long ago, sweet heart,
As we stand by the old brook's side,
And, russet and brown, the leaves float down
To drift away with the tide?
Do you think of the days gone by,
When we sat by this dimpled stream
Dreaming for hours 'mid its gay wild flowers,
As only youth can dream?

The haws are ripe on the fading boughs
Where the thrushes used to sing,
When the sky was blue and the blossom new
In the fresh and joyful Spring;
And I dared to plead my love
Till your lips sweet answer gave,
While, rich and bright, the quivering light
Lay on the silver wave.

You say we are older now—and wise;
And the time of dreams is o'er,
For our children play on the sunny way
Where we kept our tryst before.
So you pluck the crimson haws,
Which are stirred by no brown wing,
And give a sigh to the days gone by,
And the vanished bloom of Spring.

But look up into my face, sweet heart!
You have been my wife for years:
We have had our share of toil and care,
And wept together some tears.
Yet our hearts have aye been bound
In a bond so truly blest,
That I cannot tell (I love so well)
If Autumn or Spring is best.

E. MATHESON.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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A RUSSIAN 'DAY OF RECOLLECTION.'

THE Russian people are perhaps, of all European nationalities, the most tenaciously conservative in the maintenance of their ancient national customs, holidays, and Church observances. Whilst many of their ceremonies are somewhat interesting, and even sensational in their character to the traveller, none can be possibly more so than the popular holiday known amongst the Russians as the 'Day of Recollection,' or 'Festival over the Dead.' On the morning of the 28th of July, Russian style, or 9th of August, English style, whilst on a visit to St Petersburg, we were informed that this annual holiday was to be observed in the churchyard of Smolensk, situated in Vasili Ostrof. Accompanied by an interesting and intelligent Scot, who has been located in Russia for nearly thirty years, and who, accordingly, knows the Russian language as well as his mother-tongue, we proceeded to the scene of action. We were not long of being made aware of the fact that something of an unusual character was going on in the city. At the tram-car starting-point we found quite a crowd of people collected, most of whom carried well-loaded bags, bundles, and baskets, and looked as if they were setting out on a somewhat lengthened journey. Car after car was loaded and despatched only to be succeeded by others. To escape the crowd, we secured a drosky. The farther we proceeded, the greater the throng became. It reminded us of the crowds we have seen hurrying along to the race-meetings or important fairs in our own country. When we got within half a mile of the church of Smolensk, the long avenues, broad streets, and lanes looked almost solid with people. As the police would not allow our drosky-man to proceed farther, owing to the block, we had to dismount, leave our driver to fall into his place behind a long line of vehicles of every description, and follow the crowd on foot. It was a crowd certainly as big as desirable, but perfectly manageable. Everybody was in holiday dress and in holiday humour. Many carried

large memorial wreaths beautifully decorated with flowers. There was nothing of a sombre hue in all that crowd. The memorial wreath was being borne along as gaily as if it had been a marriage bouquet. It was difficult for us to believe that these people were moving to a field of the dead. Besides those carrying flowers, there were others carrying provisions, bread (black and white), teapots, tea-urns, hot-water urns, and bottles of all shapes and sizes.

When at a crawling pace we reached the entrance to the church and churchyard, we found a detachment of police drawn up. As the people passed through the archway the police moved about in search of 'vodka' or spirit bottles, an order having been issued by the chief that all vodka bottles were to be seized. Having passed this entrance, we now reached the short avenue to the church of Smolensk. Here it was "all excitement and a perfect babel of sounds, and in respect of noise and numbers not unlike a gigantic Scotch or English fair of the olden times. Here, however, the comparison ceases. On the right of the entrance to the church stood a large open booth constructed of canvas, supported by poles. It was literally packed with religious devotees. At one end was erected an altar with sacred relics and 'ikons' and everything quite in accordance with the high ritual of the Russian Church. It was a dazzling, gaudy show of tawdry gold and silver ornamentation in full blaze with tapers and candles. Outside, a good sale of tapers was going on. Within this booth many were on their knees, others were kissing the glass coverings of the pictures of the saints, or crossing themselves and displaying their religious fervour in many strange ways. One man quite as earnest as his fellow-devotees in bowing, kneeling, crossing himself, and kissing the pictures of the saints, carried a formidable bottle in his pocket. On one side of the entrance stood ten nuns of dark, swarthy complexions, dressed in black and wearing hats of various shapes, sugar-loaf and cylindrical, from which long heavy black veils were suspended. These nuns had come from the

remote interior, and were on a begging tour for the poorer country churches. There were men also eagerly clamouring for contributions for certain churches burned down in the interior. Not far off was a miscellaneous lot of lame, halt, and blind soliciting alms. This booth was well patronised; and the money drawn from the sale of tapers and candles, in addition to the voluntary contributions, must have brought a fair harvest to those who presided over it.

Leaving this extraordinary exhibition of devotion, superstition, and imposition, we crossed over to see what was doing within the church of Smolensk. Within the porch stood two rows of miserable creatures, old and middle-aged. The sight of this abject collection of humanity was positively sickening for its sadness. Round the porch were people engaged in the sale of charms, trinkets, curios, and flowers. The church of Smolensk, which is dedicated to the Virgin, looks a somewhat aged structure, notwithstanding the whitewash and paint which have not been spared upon it. Its altar is a fine one, and of course there is no lack of sacred pictures—gold, silver, and jewelled ornamentation—candelabra, paintings, frescoes, banners, rare old service-books, and other objects of religious veneration. As the worshippers entered, very many of them purchased candles and tapers, proceeded with them to the altar, and after lighting them there, they placed them in the candelabra reserved for such offerings. The church is now quite ablaze with light, and presents a spectacle—as the gold, silver, and jewelled treasures glisten so dazzlingly—which moves the worshippers. The pictures of the Saviour and the Virgin were special objects of veneration, and all eagerly pressed forward in succession to kiss those holy pictures. There were some people kissing the floor of the church, others were devoutly crossing themselves and kneeling. Very few could be charged with remissness. In the centre of the church stood pitchers full of holy-water, around which the people were congregating, eager to get the tin cups into their hands. The water was disposed of in cupfuls. Mothers were encouraging and pressing their children to partake of it, while some were even putting it into the mouths of tender infants. The floor of the church was thick with sand, caused by the traffic of so many feet. A miracle-working picture of the Virgin Lady of Smolensk attracted much attention, and many kisses were lavished on the glass which protected it. Whilst we were examining with some interest this highly venerated work of art, a woman dressed like a peasant approached us carrying a basket covered with a white cloth. From this basket she produced a small phial containing an oily-looking liquid, which she offered for sale. It had been specially blessed, she said, by coming in contact with the miracle-working Virgin, and was warranted to cure all manner of diseases. Strongly she pressed its

virtues upon us, saying, ‘Although you are Germans and foreigners and dumb to what is going on, you ought to make some sacrifice for the mother of God.’ As we still declined to make the purchase, she opened the cork, put some of the oil on the tip of her finger, and was about to proceed to anoint us; however, at this point we slipped through the crowd and escaped her further attentions.

The heat now growing stifling, the smell by no means the most fragrant—around us nothing but kissings, genuflections, prostrations, crossings, and drinking of the holy-water increasing rather than diminishing, we made our way out of the church to enjoy a little fresh air in the churchyard. The main avenues were crowded. There were priests, police, soldiers, sailors, artisans, boatmen in their red shirts outside their trousers, and picturesquely attired women and children promenading to and fro. There were vendors of fruit, flowers, sweets, and Seltzer water stationed here and there. There was, however, no jostling, no rudeness in all that crowd. The humblest ‘moujik’ was greeting the other by taking his cap off, shaking him by the hand, and from his heart wishing him all happiness. There was the utmost courtesy and kindness manifested by every one to young and old. Different classes moved freely together. There was no stiffness, no formality, no reserve.

The churchyard of Smolensk, we were informed by an officer of police, is one hundred and twenty acres in extent, and the number of grave-diggers employed is twenty-four. We have seen many lamentably neglected and insanitary churchyards in our own country; we have seen nothing, however, like this. It is simply a wild, neglected field of rank grass, neglected trees, and shrubs enclosed by a hideous wooden fence. There are avenues and roads broad and narrow intersecting it, but all neglected and unkept. The monumental stones are nearly as thick as they can be planted. There are obelisks, flat stones, pillars, miniature chapels, shrines, stones in every conceivable shape and form, picturesque and grotesque, and attached to every stone is the ‘ikon,’ or holy picture. On many of the monuments lamps were burning, and on numerous graves were lighted candles. The most common form of monumental design, however, was the Greek cross, in stone or wood, and in some cases in plain rough logs and posts. There were other tombs like caves, grottoes, rockeries, and mounds of turf of pyramid shape. Some resembled ordinary wooden packing-boxes, others again closely resembled large umbrellas and parasols. The decorations were in some cases lavish, and very beautiful indeed. Roses, everlastings, heather, dried flowers, and wreaths of brilliant colours were lovingly bestowed as offerings and memorials.

As we turn away from the main avenues to wander amongst the tombs, what a remarkable sight presented itself! In every direction there

were family parties holding picnics amongst the graves. Within many a little grave enclosure, a table stood, spread with eatables and drinkables, and the family party sat round as happy looking as if they were picnicking in the woods. Other family groups were seated in large aviary-like structures made of wood and wire-netting, with tables spread within and seats all round. Within these enclosures feasting with their relatives were many types of St Petersburg society, from the well-clad, highly respectable-looking men of business down to the humblest and poorest labourer, and not a sad face amongst them. This resting-place of the dead was transformed to-day into a scene of festivity. Some tables were covered with the usual tea-party provisions, others again with the more solid materials of the supper-table. Teapots and tea-urns were everywhere. The chief drink was 'vodka,' which, notwithstanding the police prohibition, was too conspicuously present. There is a group, and it is not the only one, seated round a table, well furnished with Russian sausages, buns, black bread, fish, and small cucumbers, and too intent over the vodka. The children are playing around, having disposed of their cloaks and hats on the family gravestone. There is an old man, bald-headed, in his red shirt over his trousers and long boots, seated on the family burying-ground with his aged wife beside him, and before them eggs, cucumbers, and black bread. It is a very strange, yet pathetic sight. It is impossible for them to look happier than they do now.

As we moved along, we heard the sounds of chanting. Here was a family party of men and women, most respectable looking and well clad, kneeling together on the family burial-ground. A priest in deep sonorous tones was reciting or singing the 'panebeda,' or the requiem for the dead. The others crossed themselves, waved their hands, kissed the ground, and seemed intensely agitated. The priest alone stood up, full bearded and moustached, and with long streaming hair. On his head he wore a cylindrical hat of purple velvet, over his shoulders a shawl-like garment of silver and gold braided work, with large gold crosses behind, and in his hand he carried a censer. The service only lasted a few minutes. The fee of twenty copecks (fivepence) was then handed to the priest, who withdrew for duty elsewhere. As soon as the service was over, there was mutual congratulation, and on every face there was an expression of delightful satisfaction. Down immediately they sat together around the well-furnished table, and there they feasted. As we wandered about, the voices of the multitude reminded us of the sound of the sea. Here is an enclosure with eleven persons seated within feasting gaily and drinking vodka.

Changing our route, we came to the finest monument in the churchyard, and, let it be said, one that is kept in a singularly tasteful and creditable condition. This is the monument erected in memory of those soldiers of the Finnish Regiment of Guards who perished in the explosion in the Winter Palace some years ago. The monument is a very handsome granite structure, planted on an artificial mound. It is of obelisk shape, and its top is surmounted by a

jewelled golden cross placed on a gilded globe. On the face of the obelisk are printed the names of the unfortunate soldiers. The decorations are of a purely military character, comprising Russian eagles, bayonets, cuirasses, helmets, swords, guns, and cannon tastefully arranged; whilst the graves are beautifully decorated with wreaths and flowers and strewn with rice. This monument was surrounded by numerous spectators, who showed their respect for the dead and their veneration for the holy pictures near it by uncovering and crossing themselves.

After leaving this interesting memorial, we continued our walk, and everywhere there was very much the same thing to be seen—religious fervour and devotion commingled with drinking, feasting, and merriment. Seated on a little enclosure with his wife and relatives we came upon a burly lieutenant of police well known to our friend. We halted to get some information from him. He informed us that he had some children buried within this enclosure, and that now he was having a glorious day. Turning to the writer, he said: 'Ah, our friend has never seen the like of this in his country. They have nothing like this in Schottland.' When we asked him about the vodka-drinking connected with this Recollection Day, he replied: 'Why, the police order is, there must be no vodka; however, all the same the more vodka comes.' He also informed us that this was the oldest cemetery in St Petersburg, and it was estimated that hundreds of thousands of bodies had been interred here, and that from time immemorial those strange rites which he was engaged in had been observed.

Leaving our friend to enjoy himself, we came upon some flat tombstones sprinkled with rice, and others strewn with black bread, white bread, and hard-boiled eggs crumbled down, as oblations to the dead. There were also several very curious circular and square wire-netted enclosures containing memorial crosses. There is a large enclosure closely resembling a cage in the Zoological Gardens in which three massive wooden Greek crosses stand covered with beautiful wreaths and flowers; whilst seated in true picnic-like style is a merry group of individuals feasting.

We have now reached another church. Beggars are standing round the doors, crying: 'Remember the poor churches in the interior!' 'Remember the church of Michael the Archangel!' Several nuns also, with fur round their long-veiled hats, were imploring for assistance. Near this church we were attracted by an old tombstone covered with written papers. We inspected some of them, and they proved to be the petitions for prayers for the dead given to the priests. Having been disposed of, they were apparently thrown out to make room for others. Many of those sheets of note-paper contained long lists of names of the departed.

Making our way out of the churchyard, we saw near the church of Smolensk a man beating an iron plate suspended from the branch of a tree, as a signal for the people to withdraw. Passing through the gates, we noticed the police keeping a sharp lookout for pickpockets, those plagues of Russian crowds. A 'tractir' or restaurant planted at the very church gate was doing a roaring trade. Outside, the scene was one of great animation.

Every upper window had its occupants. The streets were crowded, the drosky-men in long lines were drawn up, waiting for patrons, and the noise from the innumerable overflowing tractors or cafés was simply deafening.

So terminated this remarkable day spent in the churchyard of Smolensk. When such a holiday as this was instituted, who can tell? It belongs to the dim and distant past, and is a relic of semi-barbarous times. It carried our minds at once back over the long centuries to the days of old pagan rites and practices. We had read in classical authors how the Roman sepulchres were bespread with flowers and covered with crowns and fillets, how the little altar was erected, on which libations were made and incense burned, and how the ancient tombs were frequently illuminated with lamps. We had read of the feast the *Silicernium*, kept both for the living and the dead associated with it, and how certain things, such as beans, lettuce, bread, and eggs, were laid on the tombs as the *cæna feralis*. It was remarkable indeed to find something not unlike this a recognised ceremony in the Russian church, and a living and popular institution in a civilised and cultured capital like St Petersburg.

BLOOD ROYAL.*

CHAPTER XIII.—AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR.

His father's death put Dick at once in a very different position from the one he had previously occupied. It was a family revolution. And on the very evening of the funeral, that poor shabby funeral, Dick began then and there to think the future over.

Poor people have to manage things very differently from rich ones; and when Edmund Plantagenet was laid to rest at last in the Oxford cemetery, no member of the family save Dick himself was there to assist at the final ceremony. Only Gillespie accompanied him to the side of the grave, out of all the College; but when they reached the chapel, they found Gillingham standing there hatless before them—urged, no doubt, by some late grain of remorse for his own prime part in this domestic drama; or was it only perhaps by a strong desire to see the last act of his tragedy played out to its bitter climax? After the ceremony, he left hurriedly at once in the opposite direction. The two friends walked home alone in profound silence. That evening, Gillespie came up to Dick's rooms to bear him company in his trouble. Dick was deeply depressed. After a while, he grew confidential, and explained to his friend the full gravity of the crisis. For Mr Plantagenet, after all, poor weak sot though he was, had been for many years the chief bread-winner of the family. Dick and Maud, to be sure, had done their best to eke out the housekeeping expenses, and to aid the younger children as far as possible; but still, it was the father on

whose earnings they all as a family had depended throughout for rent and food and clothing. Only Maud and Dick were independent in any way; Mrs Plantagenet and the little ones owed everything to the father. He had been a personage at Chiddingwick, a character in his way, and Chiddingwick for some strange reason had always been proud of him. Even 'carriage company' sent their children to learn of him at the *White Horse*, just because he was old Plantagenet, and a certain shadowy sentiment attached to his name and personality. Broken reprobate as he was, the halo of past greatness followed him down through life to the lowest depths of degradation and penury.

But now that his father was dead, Dick began to realise for the first time how far the whole family had been dependent for support upon the old man's profession. Little as he had earned, indeed, that little had been bread and butter to his wife and children. And now that Dick came to face the problem before him like a man, he saw only too plainly that he himself must fill the place Mr Plantagenet had vacated. It was a terrible fate, but he saw no way out of it. At one deadly blow all his hopes for the future were dashed utterly to the ground. Much as he hated to think it, he saw at once it was now his imperative duty to go down from Oxford. He must do something without delay to earn a livelihood somehow for his mother and sisters. He couldn't go on living there in comparative luxury while the rest of his family starved, or declined on the tender mercies of the Chiddingwick workhouse.

Gradually, bit by bit, he confided all this, broken-hearted, to Gillespie. There were no secrets between them now; for the facts as to poor Mr Plantagenet's pitiable profession had come out fully at the inquest, and all Oxford knew that night that Plantagenet of Durham, the clever and rising history man, who was considered safe for the Marquis of Lothian's Essay, was after all but the son of a country dancing-master. So Dick, with a crimson face, putting his pride in his pocket, announced to his friend the one plan for the future that now seemed to him feasible—to return at once to Chiddingwick and take up his father's place, so as to keep together the *clientèle*. Clearly he must do something to make money without delay; and that sad resolve was the only device he could think of on the spur of the moment.

'Wouldn't it be better to try for a school-mastership?' Gillespie suggested cautiously. He had the foresight of his countrymen. 'That wouldn't so much unclass you in the end as the other. You haven't a degree, of course, and the want of one would naturally tell against you. But you might get a vacant place in some preparatory school—though the pay, of course, would be something dreadfully trivial.'

'That's just it,' Dick answered, bursting with

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shame and misery, but facing it out like a man. 'Gillespie, you're kindness itself—such a dear good fellow—and I could say things to you I couldn't say to anybody else on earth that I know of, except my own family. But even to you I can't bear to say what must be said, sooner or later. You see, for my mother's sake, for my sisters', for my brothers', I *must* do whatever enables me to make most money. I must pocket my pride—and I've got a great deal—ever so much too much—but I must pocket it, all the same, and think only of what's best in the end for the family. Now, I should *hate* the dancing—oh, my dear, dear fellow, I can't tell you how I should hate it! But it's the one thing by which I could certainly earn most money. There's a good connection there at Chiddingwick, and it's all in the hands of the family. People would support me because I was my father's son. If I went home at once, before anybody else came to the town to fill the empty place, I could keep the connection together; and as I wouldn't spend any money—well, in the ways my poor father often spent it, I should easily earn enough to keep myself and the children. It'll break my heart to do it; oh, it'll break my heart; for I'm a very proud man; but I see no way out of it. And I, who hoped to build up again by legitimate means the ruined fortunes of the Plantagenets!'

Gillespie was endowed with a sound amount of good Scotch common-sense. He looked at things more soberly. 'If I were you,' he said in a tone that seemed to calm Dick's nerves, 'even at the risk of letting the golden opportunity slip, I'd do nothing rashly. A step down in the social scale is easy enough to take; but once taken, we all know it's very hard to recover. Have you mentioned this plan of yours to your mother or sister?'

'I wrote to Maud about it this evening,' Dick answered sadly, 'and I told her I might possibly have to make this sacrifice.'

Gillespie paused and reflected. After a minute's consideration, he drew his pipe from his mouth and shook out the ashes. 'If I were you,' he said again, in a very decided voice, 'I'd let the thing hang a bit. Why shouldn't you run down to Chiddingwick to-morrow and talk matters over with your people? It costs money, I know; and just at present, I can understand, every penny's a point to you. But I've a profound respect for the opinions of one's women in all these questions. They look more at the social side, I'll admit, than men; yet they often see things more clearly and intelligently, for all that, than we do. They've got such insight. If they demand this sacrifice of you, I suppose you must make it; but if, as I expect, they refuse to sanction it, why, then, you must try to find some other way out of it.'

Gillespie's advice fell in exactly with Dick's own ideas; for not only did he wish to see his mother and Maud, but also he was anxious to meet Mary Tudor again and explain to her with regret that the engagement which had never existed at all between them must now be ended. So he decided to take his friend's advice at once, and start off by the first train in the morning to Chiddingwick.

He went next day. Gillespie breakfasted with him, and remained when he left in quiet possession of the armchair by the fireside. He took up a book—the third volume of Mommsen—and sat on and smoked, without thinking of the time, filling up the interval till his eleven o'clock lecture. For at eleven the senior tutor lectured on Plato's *Republic*. Just as the clock struck ten, a hurried knock at the door aroused Gillespie's attention. 'Come in!' he said quickly, taking his pipe from his mouth. The door opened with a timid movement, standing a quarter ajar, and a pale face peeped in with manifest indecision. 'A lady!' Gillespie said to himself, and instinctively knocked the unconsumed tobacco out of his short clay pipe as he rose to greet her.

'Oh, I beg your pardon,' a small voice said in very frightened accents. 'I think I must be mistaken. I wanted Mr Richard Plantagenet's rooms. Can you kindly direct me to them?'

'These are Mr Plantagenet's rooms,' Gillespie answered as gently as a woman himself, for he saw the girl was slight, and tired, and delicate, and dressed in deep mourning of the simplest description. 'He left me here in possession when he went out this morning, and I've been sitting ever since in them.'

The slight girl came in a step or two with evident hesitation. 'Will he be long gone?' she asked tremulously. 'Perhaps he's at lecture. I must sit down and wait for him.'

Gillespie motioned her into a chair and instinctively pulled a few things straight in the room to receive a lady. 'Well, to tell you the truth,' he said, 'Plantagenet's gone down this morning to Chiddingwick. I—I beg your pardon, but I suppose you're his sister.'

Maud let herself drop into the chair he set for her, with a despondent gesture. 'Gone to Chiddingwick! Oh, how unfortunate!' she cried, looking puzzled. 'What am I ever to do? This is really dreadful.' And indeed the situation was sufficiently embarrassing; for she had run up in haste, on the spur of the moment, when she received Dick's letter threatening instant return, without any more money than would pay her fare one way, trusting to Dick's purse to frank her back again. But she didn't mention these facts, of course, to the young man in Dick's rooms, with the blue-and-white boating jacket, who sat and looked hard at her with profound admiration and sympathy, reflecting to himself meanwhile how very odd it was of Plantagenet never to have given him to understand that his sister was beautiful! For Maud was always beautiful, in a certain delicate, slender, shrinking fashion, though she had lots of character; and her eyes, red with tears, and her simple little black dress, instead of spoiling her looks, somehow served to accentuate the peculiar charms of her beauty.

She sat there a minute or two, wondering what on earth to do, while Gillespie stood by in respectful silence. At last she spoke. 'Yes, I'm his sister,' she said simply, raising her face with a timid glance towards the strange young man. 'Did Dick tell you when he was coming back? I'm afraid I must wait for him.'

'I don't think he'll be back till rather late,' Gillespie answered with sympathy. 'He took his

name off Hall ; that means to say,' he added in explanation, 'he won't be home to dinner.'

Maud considered for a moment in doubt. This was really serious. Then she spoke once more, rather terrified. 'He won't stop away all night, I suppose?' she asked, turning up her face appealingly to the kindly-featured stranger. For what she could do in that case, in a strange big town, without a penny in her pocket, she really couldn't imagine.

Gillespie's confident answer reassured her on that head. 'Oh no, he won't stop away,' he replied, 'for he hasn't got leave ; and he wouldn't be allowed to sleep out without it. But he mayn't be back, all the same, till quite late at night—perhaps ten or eleven. It would be hardly safe for you, I think, to wait on till then for him. I mean,' he added apologetically, 'it might perhaps be too late to get a train back to Chiddingwick.'

Maud looked down and hesitated. She perused the hearth-rug. 'I think,' she said at last, after a very long pause, 'you must be Mr Gillespie.'

'That's my name,' the young man answered, with an inclination of the head, rather pleased she should have heard of him.

Maud hesitated once more. Then, after a moment, she seemed to make her mind up. 'I'm so glad it's you,' she said simply, with pretty womanly confidence ; 'for I know you're Dick's friend, and I daresay you'll have guessed what's brought me up here to-day even in the midst of our great trouble. Oh, Mr Gillespie, did he tell you what he wrote last night to me?'

Gillespie gazed down at her. Tears stood in her eyes as she glanced up at him piteously. He thought he had never seen any face before so pathetically pretty. 'Ye-es, he told me,' the young man answered, hardly liking even to acknowledge it. 'He said he thought of going back at once to Chiddingwick, to take up—well, to keep together your poor father's connection.'

With a violent effort, Maud held back her tears. 'Yes, that's just what he wrote,' she went on, with downcast eyes, her lips trembling as she said it. Then she turned her face to him yet again. 'But, oh, Mr Gillespie,' she cried, clasping her hands in her earnestness, 'that's just what he must never, never, never think of!'

'But he tells me it's the only thing—the family has—to live upon,' Gillespie interposed, hesitating.

'Then the family can starve!' Maud cried, with a sudden flash of those tearful eyes. 'We're Plantagenets, and we can bear it. But for Dick to leave Oxford, and spoil all our best hopes for him—oh, Mr Gillespie, can't you feel, it would be too, too dreadful? We could never stand it.'

Gillespie surveyed her from head to foot in admiration of her spirit. Such absolute devotion to the family honour struck a kindred chord in his half-Celtic nature. 'You speak like a Plantagenet,' he answered very gravely, for he too had caught some faint infection of the great Plantagenet myth. 'You deserve to have him stop. You're worthy of such a brother. But don't you think yourself it would be right of him—as he does—to think first of your mother and his sisters and brothers?'

Maud rose and faced him. 'Mr Gillespie,' she cried, clasping her hands, and looking beautiful as she did so, 'I don't know why I can speak to

you so frankly : I suppose it's because you're Dick's friend, and because in this terrible loss which has come upon us so suddenly we stand so much in need of human sympathy. But, oh—it's wrong to say it, of course, yet say it I must ; I don't care one penny whether it's right or whether it's wrong ; let us starve or not, I do, do want Dick to stop on at Oxford!'

Gillespie regarded her respectfully. Such courage appealed to him. 'Well, I daresay I'm as wrong as you,' he answered frankly ; 'but, to tell you the truth—so do I ; and I honour you for saying it.'

'Thank you,' Maud cried, letting the tears roll now unchecked, for sympathy overcame her. She fell back again into her chair. 'Do you know,' she said unaffectedly, 'we don't care one bit what we do at Chiddingwick ; we don't care, not one of us! We'd work our fingers to the bone, even Nellie, who's the youngest, to keep Dick at Oxford. We don't mind if we starve, for we're only the younger ones. But Richard's head of our house now, heir of our name and race : and we were all so proud when he got this Scholarship. We thought he'd be brought up as the chief of the Plantagenets ought to be.' She paused a moment and reflected ; then she spoke again. 'To leave Oxford would be bad enough,' she went on, 'and would cost us all sore ; it would be a terrible blow to us ; though I suppose that's inevitable : but to come back to Chiddingwick, and take up my dear father's profession—oh, don't think me undutiful to his memory, Mr Gillespie, for our father was a man—if you'd known him long ago, before he grew careless—a man we had much to be proud of—but still, well, there ! if Dick was to do it, it would break our very hearts for us.'

'I can see it would,' Gillespie answered, glancing away from her gently, for she was crying hard now. His heart warmed to the poor girl. How he wished it had been possible for him to help her effectually !

Maud leaned forward with clasped hands and spoke still more earnestly. 'Then you'll help me with it?' she said, drawing a sigh. 'You'll work with me to prevent him? I know Dick thinks a great deal of your advice and opinion. He's often told me so. You'll try to persuade him not to leave Oxford, won't you?—or if he leaves, at least not to come back to Chiddingwick? Oh, do say you will!—for Dick's so much influenced by what you think and say. You see, he'll want to do what's best for us—he's always so unselfish. But that's not what we want : you must try and make him neglect us, and think only of himself ; for the more he thinks of us, the more unhappy and ashamed and desperate he'll make us ; and the more he thinks of himself, why, the better we'll all love him.'

It was a topsy-turvy gospel : but one couldn't help respecting it. Gillespie rose and 'sporting the oak'—closed the big outer door, which stands as a sign in all Oxford rooms that the occupant is out, or doesn't wish to be disturbed, and so secures men when reading from casual interruption. He told Maud what he had done ; and Maud, who had been brought up too simply to distrust her brother's friend, or to recognise the rules of polite etiquette on such subjects, was grateful to him for the courtesy. 'Now, we must talk this out

together,' he said, 'more plainly and practically. It's a business matter: we must discuss it as business. But anyhow, Miss Plantagenet, I'll do my very best to help you in keeping Dick on at Oxford.'

A NEW WORLD FOR THE CAMEL.

THE Soudan Expedition gave Australians their first important lesson in the uses of the camel. Before that they regarded the beast as an interesting object in natural history, and of a certain commercial value in some little-known parts of the world; but it never seriously entered their heads to turn it to regular practical account on their own vast plains. Over fifty years ago a few enthusiasts endeavoured to excite attention to the benefits which would accrue from using the camel as a beast of burden; the early Governors pressed the matter with spirit at various junctures from the establishment of Botany Bay, and many of the explorers were distinctly favourable to the employment of the animals. But these influences were utterly powerless to effect the purpose contemplated. The population had brought with them a knowledge of the horse and ox, and these they used in their carrying-enterprises over a continent as little adapted in many respects to those particular animals as are the plains of Central Asia. The young men who answered the call to arms in the panic of a few years ago were, however, in great proportion natives of the soil, and although inheriting a fixed regard for horse and bullock, they were not blind to the special uses they saw made of the camel along the skirts of Arabian deserts. When they returned, they brought with them a wider view of things; and while, admitting that much of Australia suits the horse-team and bullock-team, they were equally emphatic in declaring that much more of the country seemed destined by nature to be the carrying-ground of the camel alone. The new idea is growing, and already five lines of camel traffic have been opened up and are in regular work. Altogether, over two thousand camels are in daily march.

Once the camel comes to be generally known, rivalry of horse and ox will in the interior of the country be out of the question. Except on the coast districts, the bullock has almost excluded the horse already. On the great inland plains, travelling day by day over barren spinifex country, the horse was found too valuable an animal for the work before him. The bushman's solid work was done by bullocks. But what sort of expeditions were those trips of his? He yoked ten or a dozen bullocks to his dray or wagon; he drove as many more along before; so that when accidents happened he would have substitutes; and he did his three or five hundred miles in a period, and amid privations and hardships, which almost invariably made a gap in his life. Ten miles a day is a fair average for a team of bullocks. They must be turned out before sundown to feed and water; and if food or water is scarce, they have to be looked after

carefully during the night. The teamster must keep on foot all day, accompanying them with comments complimentary or objurgatory, as occasion requires; or urging them with his long echo-raising whip to dash over a pinch in a hill or a rut in a creek. He is sometimes eight or ten months from home at a stretch, and there are cases recorded when his trip covered over two years. Occasionally he takes his wife and young children with him, and then his life is simply that of a gipsy, with the romance taken out and the hardest of hard work put in.

The immediate consequence of substituting camels for bullocks will be the shortening of those long trips. A camel will do eighty-four miles in eighteen hours with three hundred pounds on his back. To go that distance would take the average bullock team ten or eleven days. From the stand-point of civilisation, this is of the highest moment. It is nothing for men to pierce the desert on a trip of exploration, returning in a year or two years or after a longer interval; but it is a serious matter for a man to undertake the making of a home and rearing of a family while his ordinary occupation is one which keeps him almost continually on the road. But the camel will be also cheaper. The wear and tear of bullock-flesh take away half the profits. Bullocks are stupid animals. Yoke them together when breaking them in, and if they can get a tree between them there will be at least one broken neck. They will walk down the steep bank of a waterhole and drown themselves. They starve in dry country and bog in wet. The camel is, on the other hand, a rational beast. He can find his own living wherever he may be. Forms of vegetation which other animals pass by, the camel thrives on. Thistles are one of his luxuries. Above all, his ability to do without water for a lengthened period marks him out as the true beast of burden for the Australian interior.

Points of objection are, it is true, still raised against him. He is said to frighten other animals. The ordinary stockhorse takes to the bush as soon as his eye lights on the ungainly-looking creature. Cattle flee from him in terror. But that is merely because he is as yet strange to them. Familiarity will remove that objection. When evening comes, the bullocks are merely unhitched from the wagon, and the goods remain as they are until the wagon is hitched on next day and the journey renewed. With camels, each has to be unloaded each night and loaded up again on the following morning, necessitating the periodic handling of bales and packages. This is certainly a disadvantage, and goods often reach their destination in a damaged state in consequence; but there are various ways of lessening the evil, if not of preventing it, and experience is rapidly supplying the requisite knowledge. There are other objections; but taking the good with the bad, the camel remains among the most desirable acquisitions the Australian inlands can cultivate. Over one million square miles of the country are still unknown desert. West Australia alone has six hundred and fifty thousand square miles, supposed to consist of arid plains, salt lakes, and mud-flats, but practically outside the sphere of our information. These wide deserts have work for a million camels; while the

highways running into them and connecting them with the oases of civilisation in one part and another should give constant occupation to at least three times as many.

RALPH THORNLEIGH'S PICTURE.

CHAPTER II.

It need hardly be said that when Miss Macallan again approached Beatrice on the subject of her artist-lover she found her as firm in her purpose to 'wait' as before; and she therefore proceeded to enlighten her niece regarding the condition of her uncle's pecuniary difficulties without further ado.

She prefaced her remarks by assuring Beatrice that she had not come to plead Colonel Stardale's cause; she did not want to marry him, and that was an end to it; moreover, it was exceedingly doubtful whether the Colonel would renew his offer now, even though Beatrice did change her mind. However, it was not upon this matter she had intended to speak, but on another infinitely more serious, and touching them all very closely. She and Beatrice had both noticed how silent Angus had lately become, and how worried he often appeared. Well, the truth had come out at last; things in the City were rapidly going from bad to worse, and they were on the verge of ruin. A few weeks might see them turned out of this comfortable house, and buried alive in third-class lodgings somewhere in the East End. Miss Macallan did not mind it so much upon her own account; she was growing old, and it did not matter what became of her; but her heart sank within her when she thought of poor Angus. But there! It would do no good harping on it; the change was inevitable, and must be met with stout hearts. They must show Angus that poverty had no terrors for them, and relieve him of the thought that his misfortunes would destroy their happiness; for that was what preyed upon him more than anything. She would say no more about the matter.

But Beatrice preserved so stubborn a silence that Miss Macallan began to fear she had not spoken with sufficient plainness, and resuming the thread of her discourse, said a great deal more; and by dint of judiciously-worded insinuations and assurances, made Beatrice understand that two courses were open to her, and two only.

What they were, required no great cleverness to comprehend; Beatrice had realised that she stood where two roads met, as soon as her aunt began to paint the trials in store for her uncle.

'I—I will think over it,' she said to her aunt, who showed unmistakable signs of beginning again; and without waiting for any rejoinder, she fled to seek refuge in her room. Once there, she locked herself in, and sank down on the hearth-rug to decide along which path duty lay, and try to muster up courage to follow it.

While Beatrice wrestled with her troubles upstairs, Mr Macallan and his sister were closeted together in the library below: they had been discussing the prospective change in their circumstances, and had come round again to the effect it would have upon their niece.

'I am afraid she thinks we blame her for refusing Colonel Stardale,' remarked Mr Macallan, 'she has been so very silent for the last day or two. I hope you have not been bothering her about it, Elizabeth?'

Miss Macallan drew herself up, and seemed about to reply angrily; but somewhat to her brother's surprise, she answered in tones of confidential reassurance.

'Do you know, Angus,' she said, 'it has more than once crossed my mind since Thursday that Beatrice is already regretting her hasty refusal of the Colonel?'

'I wish I could think you were right,' said the old gentleman earnestly. 'If we could only stave off the crash till she is in safety, I could meet it with a lighter heart.'

'I am certain my idea is correct,' affirmed Miss Macallan; 'but I hardly know what to do. Whether to ask the Colonel to call again, or'—

'Do nothing,' interrupted her brother. 'Bee is as honest as the day; and if she changes her mind, we shall very soon hear of it.'

'One never knows,' murmured Miss Macallan fretfully; 'girls are so strange about these things nowadays.'

'By the way, Elizabeth,' said Angus after a few minutes' pause, 'I almost forgot to tell you. Don't say a word to Beatrice about my monetary embarrassments: she might think we wanted to coerce her into retracting her refusal of Colonel Stardale.'

'Perhaps she might,' mumbled Miss Macallan, feeling rather uncomfortable.

'After all, our aim is to secure her happiness, and a brilliant match is not the way to obtain that for a girl like Bee unless her heart be in it.'

'No,' whispered Miss Macallan, who was growing decidedly nervous.

'So just let her remain in ignorance for the present. If she should wish to recall Colonel Stardale, I won't have it on my conscience that any pressure has brought about her change of mind.'

Miss Macallan could not find words to answer her brother; she stood in great awe of him, and dared not risk revealing that she had just done what he now forbade. She could not undo it, but she could at least conceal it from him; and she went at once in search of Beatrice.

'I have been talking matters over with your uncle,' she began, taking a seat near Beatrice. 'And I have just come up to warn you not to mention his difficulties before him. He is so dreadfully cut up and miserable, particularly on your account, that I want you to be very careful to hide from him the fact that you know anything of the business. It would only add to his distress if he thought you had heard of it sooner than is absolutely necessary.'

Beatrice was too much absorbed with her own trouble to think of weighing the motives which prompted this speech. She promised to bear her aunt's instructions in mind, and avoid saying a word which might betray her knowledge; and relapsed again into the question which absorbed her mind. Should she throw over Ralph Thornleigh and marry Colonel Stardale?

Two days passed, and neither Mr Macallan nor his sister had received any indication of the

state of their niece's feelings. Miss Macallan had not again mentioned Colonel Stardale nor her brother's affairs; but she was waiting with no little impatience for the seed she had so carefully sown to bear fruit. Twenty times a day she was tempted to ask Beatrice what she meant to do, but forbore, reflecting that it might be unwise to display too much anxiety. Had she only known it, her niece had already made up her mind, and was bracing herself to take the step which would commit her past redemption. She found it impossible to condemn her uncle to poverty and disgrace, when it lay in her power to save him; but she put off declaring her resolve from hour to hour, in the desperate hope that something might transpire to save her; whence or in what shape she did not attempt to conjecture. But Miss Macallan's patience was rewarded at last. Beatrice sought a private interview with her uncle, and told him she had been thinking over Colonel Stardale's offer, and had come to the conclusion she had done wrong in refusing him. She liked him very much—a great deal better than any of the others, and it seemed hopeless to go on waiting until Mr Thornleigh could afford to marry. She thought she had better try and forget him and accept the Colonel. What did Uncle Angus think?

Uncle Angus was a good deal surprised at her change of mind, but did not say so. He only told her that such a matter as this was one she must decide entirely for herself. She must not allow anything other people said to influence her for a moment; for he would never countenance her marriage with a man for whom she did not entertain the feeling due a husband from his wife. He would, however, admit quite frankly that if she had brought herself to see Colonel Stardale in a warmer light, he should welcome him as her husband, and sincerely rejoice to see her so well provided for. She had better tell her aunt that she wanted to retract her refusal, and leave her to put the matter straight; he had no shadow of doubt but that the Colonel would be only too glad to learn what Beatrice had just told him.

So Beatrice went up to see Aunt Elizabeth, and Aunt Elizabeth kindly undertook to do what she could. She was going to Lady Bankfield's that afternoon, and was sure to see the Colonel there. She was, beyond expression, delighted that Beatrice had taken a proper and sensible view of the business, and was quite certain she would never regret it. Of course, it was by no means a foregone conclusion that Colonel Stardale would come tamely back at her summons; men had pride, and it would be a very delicate subject to touch on; indeed, she did not see how she could bring it up at all unless he referred to it first. However, Beatrice might rest assured she would do her best.

Of this Beatrice was only too certain: nevertheless, she clung obstinately to the hope that her aunt's mission might fail, and passed the afternoon in awful suspense. When evening drew near she took her station at the drawing-room window to watch for Miss Macallan's return; her heart stopped beating as she saw the old lady coming across the square, for there was unmistakable triumph in her bearing. Aunt Elizabeth had seen the Colonel, and was em-

powered to inform her niece that he would do himself the pleasure of calling at No. 65 next day. He had been most kind; and while Miss Macallan launched forth in paeans of praise, extolling the Colonel's tact and courtesy, which had made a pleasure of her painful task, Beatrice crept away to her own room. She felt that the sun had gone out.

From that hour she entered upon a new and strange existence: she moved and spoke like one in a dream, without interest or feeling. Colonel Stardale came to renew his offer next afternoon, and she was dimly conscious that his manner spared her all sense of awkwardness, and was grateful to him accordingly. She submitted to his stately caresses without revulsion; she was simply acting a part, and he appeared to be doing the same. In truth there was something slightly artificial in the Colonel's style of wooing. There was about it a studied calm; a majestic deliberation; a total absence of unseemly ardour, which had roused Beatrice's keen sense of the ridiculous before, but now made his unwelcome addresses supportable. Colonel Stardale was too sincere an admirer of Colonel Stardale to have much love to spare for any one else. If the principals were undemonstrative, however, their remissness was more than atoned for by Miss Macallan. Colonel Stardale remembered that lady's congratulations with a shudder, to the very last day of his life. When the Colonel led Miss Cairnswood into the drawing-room and said: 'Permit me, Miss Macallan, to beg your felicitations,' she seized both his hands and shook them until the camelia in his button-hole fell on to the floor, emitting alternate sobs and blessings. There could be no doubt of her sincerity; but the Colonel was glad when the ordeal was over.

Mr Macallan's mode of congratulation was much more to his taste, though there was a shade of genuine sadness in it. 'You don't know yet what you have won, sir,' he said simply; 'but I know what I am about to lose.'

The Colonel could not remain to dinner that evening, and Beatrice bade him good-night with something like relief. As soon as he had gone, she went to her room to write to Ralph Thornleigh; and while she wrote, her apathy fell from her; she lived again; she realised her position fully for the first time; but the recovered power to think and feel left her as she sealed her letter, and seemed to depart with it.

The weeks rolled by, and Beatrice heard nothing more of the disaster she had been told hung over the house; her uncle was going about his work in the City as usual, and she was fain to admit to herself that there had been a marked change for the better in his spirits since the date of her engagement; and this was the one gleam of comfort her sacrifice brought her.

Already she was tasting the sweets which would fall to the lot of Mrs Stardale: houses whose doors had been closed to Miss Cairnswood opened wide to the prospective bride of the Colonel, and Miss Macallan, who shared her niece's social progress, was wafted into a realm of mundane bliss which was no preparation for the poverty-stricken trials she professed to anticipate.

Ralph Thornleigh's answer to the letter Beatrice had written him on the day she accepted

Colonel Stardale had only served to strengthen her affection for him. The hardest blow brought out the truest ring. He told her she had done right; that, under the circumstances, she could not have acted otherwise; he knew her too well to believe for a moment that she had thrown him over for the sake of wealth, and his love for her remained unchanged. But this being so, justice to Colonel Stardale required that they should cease to correspond—for the present, at all events. If there had been any wrong, he was to blame for having asked her to wait for him when he saw no reliable prospect of attaining a position which would allow them to marry.

Beatrice had never mentioned Ralph Thornleigh's name to Colonel Stardale, though she told herself daily that she ought in honesty to tell him the truth regarding her sudden change of mind. But she hesitated to make a confession which she thought might reflect upon her uncle's probity. It was impossible to dissociate him from his sister, who had been the real promoter of the business; so she kept her own counsel, and the secret did nothing to enhance the small enjoyment she found in her new life. Matters in the City were at a stand-still in so far as the impending crash was concerned, though, if her aunt had spoken truly, it might be expected to occur any day now.

Colonel Stardale was certainly everything she could have desired, always considerate and attentive, without displaying overmuch affection or appearing to look for it from her. He never allowed a day to pass without coming to Warriston Square; and when Beatrice pled an excuse for declining to drive with him, as she often did, he accepted it unquestioningly with icy calm.

No date had yet been suggested for the wedding, though Miss Macallan exhibited daily increasing eagerness to begin preparations for the great event.

'If you ask my advice,' she was wont to say to her niece, 'I would say, order the trousseau at once, and name the day.'

But Beatrice steadfastly declined to ask for this advice; she refused to order so much as a pocket-handkerchief; and the bare mention of 'the day' roused her from her torpor, and goaded her to the energy of wordy combat, whence Miss Macallan perforce retired beaten.

Then the old lady sounded the Colonel on the subject, and met with no better success. Undignified haste was foreign to Colonel Stardale's temperament, and he baffled Miss Macallan's most persistent representations with his high-minded indifference to detail. His desire, he said, was to study the wishes of his fiancée; any date she considered suitable would be agreeable to himself, provided due notice were given to the world. They might begin to think about it towards the end of the season, perhaps; that was—ah—usually the time when these things took place.

'But the season hasn't even begun!' exclaimed Miss Macallan, now thoroughly alarmed at the bridegroom's bland content with the policy of procrastination, 'and won't begin for a month or more.'

'I am—aware of it,' replied Colonel Stardale with unmoved calm; 'but—ah—Beatrice is not in a hurry; and I am—ah—not in a hurry. At the same time, you, Miss Macallan, have right

to claim some word in the matter. I will gladly leave it to you ladies to decide.'

Thus thrown back on Beatrice, Miss Macallan attacked her again with ominous hints that unless the marriage took place within a month or two, it might never come off at all. Angus would be in the Bankruptcy Court, and'—

'And then?' inquired Beatrice, as her relative paused.

'You know what I mean,' stammered Miss Macallan. 'The Colonel would never allow his wife's relations to be disgraced.'

'I understand you,' replied Beatrice, fixing her clear steady gaze upon her aunt. 'I will ask Uncle Angus whether an early marriage would relieve him from his embarrassments.'

Whereat Miss Macallan gasped in alarm, and subsided into frightened silence. She dared not let her brother know what she had done, and could not acquaint Colonel Stardale with their position until he had actually made Beatrice his wife; but if Messrs Macallan & Son could not keep their heads above water until after the marriage, her plans might prove futile, and poverty be her lot after all. She could not venture to press Beatrice further, and found with dismay that she must resign herself to wait until such time as her niece elected to put an end to her suspense.

A few weeks after the engagement had been made known to the world through the medium of the Society journals, Colonel Stardale took a step which was destined to have an important bearing upon the future. It was nothing in itself: he merely asked Beatrice to accompany him to his own particular man, Mr Gustav Schenks, to be photographed; she did so, and the result was a master-piece of portraiture. Had the Colonel remained satisfied with that, this chronicle had never been written; but some imp of mischief suggested that he should have it copied life-size in oils, and the Colonel adopted the idea on the spot. Such a picture, he thought, would form a graceful addition to the wedding gifts he had already ordered; and by having it painted from the photograph, the matter could be kept secret from Beatrice, who would doubtless appreciate it the more if it came as a surprise.

The first thing to be done was to find an artist. The Colonel numbered among his friends some of the greatest painters of the day; but he knew well that it was all an ordinary mortal's life was worth to ask one of them to paint from a photograph: he might as well ask their services to paint a signboard for a tavern. Moreover, painters of repute are prone to take their own time over commissions, however exalted the rank of their patrons; and this picture must be ready before the wedding day.

Could Mr Schenks help him? The great photographer shook his head; he was much grieved to deny anything to so valued a customer as the Colonel, but such business was quite beyond his sphere. Colonel Stardale was disappointed, thinking, with reason, that inasmuch as he was photographed in Mr Schenks' studio in about nine different attitudes at every change of the moon, that artist ought to stretch a point to oblige him.

Mr Schenks did reconsider the matter when it was laid before him in this light, and undertook

to make inquiries about a painter to whom the commission might be entrusted. His diligence was crowned with success: a couple of days later he wrote to say that he had obtained the name and address of a young artist who did work of this description, and who would gladly undertake the Colonel's order on moderate terms. His address was No. 210 Wenside Street, Holborn, and his name was Ralph Thornleigh.

THE CALENDARS.

FROM the most casual glance at a planisphere or celestial globe one is led to associate the noble and sublime science of astronomy with shepherd life. In the pastures of the newly-created world the first human beings had very little society, and all they saw from day to day was their flocks grazing and frisking about them. There were several signs, however, by means of which, if they were only observant, they could have roughly calculated the flight of time. Thus the departure of the birds in the autumn and the fall of the leaves warned them of the approach of winter, and fixed an epoch recurring with periodic regularity. But in their wanderings in search of new pastures, the necessity of an unerring guide became of paramount importance, and naturally the heavenly bodies came to be adopted as a great compass or wondrous directing and date-marking machine, fixing the regular periodic flow of time. Thus the heliacal rising of one certain star heralded the advent of the shearing season, while the appearance of the Pleiades in the east preluded the seedtime; and thus two dates of the utmost importance to a primitive and pastoral people came to be fixed. And as in this simple astronomy the shepherds traced the annals of the stars among their flocks and herds, so in like manner they traced the history of their flocks among the stars.

Thus the course of the sun came to lie amid sheepfolds and their surroundings. At one time of the year the zodiacal constellation Taurus, the bull, the lord of the herd, marked where 'the father of day' was located. At another time the Ram, the master of the fold, served to designate his position.

The lion, the terror of herdsmen, was also placed in the sky, together with the dreaded scorpion; and besides these concomitants of the life of a shepherd, he placed likewise above him still dearer associations, such as the children of his household, Gemini; the virgin, Virgo; the ear of corn, Spica Virginis; and his instruments of husbandry, the Plough and the Sickle.

The best possible proof of how far the stars had entered into the life of man may be found in the worship of the Sabæans of antiquity, who adored the starry hosts as Infinite God. But this epoch of mystery evidently preceded the dawn of observation, and the most important period in connection with the subject of time-measuring commenced when men began to turn the celestial

sphere into a mighty rustic habitation, modelled on the basis of their own immediate surroundings.

Even the dog, the type of watchfulness, was translated to the heavens; the bright star Sirius, whose heliacal rising in the days of ancient Egypt presaged the overflowing of the Nile, a periodic event of the greatest national importance.

Thus, from the earliest times the heavenly bodies in their seasons have been regarded as grand time-measurers; but long before the stars had been observed for astrological or other purposes, the sun and moon more intimately connected with man's existence came to be regarded as time-marking machines; and it is on the motions of these two celestial bodies that all Calendars have been based.

It would be reasonably expected that the sun, which is the great source and supporter of life upon the earth, and the regulator of the seasons, would be generally adopted as a measurer of time; but men were also struck by the constant and regular return of the phases of the moon, and from this fact they were led to use the moon as the basis for their calendar.

The Mussulman year is purely lunar, and consists of the period embraced by twelve revolutions of the moon around the earth, or three hundred and fifty-four and one-third days. The Israelites never adopted the solar year, not even when they lived so long in the land of Egypt, for we find them, so soon as they were settled in the Promised Land, using the lunar month and the lunar year. The ancient Jewish year had only three hundred and fifty-four days; twelve days were added sometimes at the end of the year, and sometimes a month of thirty days after the month Adar, in order to bring it into agreement with the solar year. But the Jewish calendar received a reform in the fourth century after the Christian era, and it is this improved calendar which is used by the Jews of our day for fixing their festivals and religious ceremonies. It is extremely ingenious, and is based on the course of the moon. The year is composed of twelve lunar months when common, and of thirteen lunar months when embolismic; and these years succeed each other in such a way that after a period of nineteen years the commencement of the Jewish year arrives at the same epoch as the solar year. The Jewish year is therefore a lunar-solar year; and the civil year of this remarkable people, in common with all Oriental nations, commences with the new moon of September, and the ecclesiastical year at the new moon in March.

The Egyptians, who reached a high state of civilisation in the dim twilight of remote antiquity, calculated the year as consisting of three hundred and sixty days, or twelve months of thirty days. In the pursuit of astrology—that vain attempt to evolve the secret of the supposed mystic connection between the celestial bodies and the destiny of man—the Egyptians were unconsciously laying the groundwork of the sublime science of astronomy; and in a period of continued observation they found that the year of three hundred and sixty days fell short of a true solar year by five days. This new year came into force and commenced on the 26th of February 747 B.C., and this day was the

beginning of the era of Nabonassar. The year of three hundred and sixty-five days was followed for a period of seven hundred and twenty-three years; but in the year 25 B.C. a supplementary day was added every four years, and this year of three hundred and sixty-five and one-fourth days became a fixed year, and was adopted by the Romans when they conquered Egypt. This year was also adopted by the Copts, and the first year of the era of the martyrs commenced on the 29th of August 284 A.D.

The Greeks, the most cultured of the nations of antiquity, were rather slow to turn their powers of observation to the sky. They employed at first—borrowing from the Egyptians and the Babylonians—the year of three hundred and sixty days, divided into twelve months of thirty days. Each month consisted of three decades; and this is the sole example in ancient history of a week of ten days. Meton of Athens in 432 B.C., having observed the summer solstice, found that a period of nineteen solar years contained two hundred and thirty-five lunations exactly, and that at the end of this period the sun and the moon returned to the same point in the heavens. This discovery was considered so important, that an account of it was carved in letters of gold upon the temple of Minerva, and hence the origin of what is generally known as the Golden Number. For the purposes of chronology, the Greeks counted the years by means of Olympiads; the first Olympiad occurred 776 B.C., and the last in the year 440 of the Christian era.

The Roman year, as instituted by Numa and regulated by the moon, consisted of three hundred and fifty-five days, divided into twelve months of unequal length. But this year of three hundred and fifty-five days did not correspond to the periodic return of the seasons, and in the time of Julius Cæsar the Roman calendar had fallen into great disorder. To correct this confusion, Cæsar sought the assistance of Sosigenes, a distinguished astronomer of Alexandria; and it was decided that the civil year should consist of three hundred and sixty-five days, six hours—in other words, that there should be three consecutive years of three hundred and sixty-five days, and that the fourth should contain three hundred and sixty-six days, the extra day being intercalated between the 23d and the 24th of February; and as the 24th was the *sexto calendas*—six days prior to the 1st of March inclusive—the additional day was called *bis-sexto-calendas*; hence the origin of our word *bissextile*. This change took place in the year 44 B.C.; and to correct the disorders in the calendar, it was necessary that the previous year should consist of four hundred and forty-five days. The Julian year is still actually followed by the Russians, Greeks, and some Oriental Christians.

The year as fixed by Julius Cæsar being fully eleven minutes longer than the true solar year, another change was made in the year 1582, when Pope Gregory XIII. ordered that Thursday the 4th of October 1582 should be followed by Friday the 15th of October. This, as it has been called, the *New Style*, was not adopted in England till the year 1752. The quarter days are Christmas, Lady Day, Midsummer, and Michaelmas; so, when the *New Style* came into operation, these

days were advanced, so to speak, eleven days, and thus became the 5th of January, April, and July, and the 10th of October—most important days in connection with Stock and Annuity business.

RUBE THE RATCATCHER.

It is milking-time at Hayling's Farm. In the warm, quiet, sunny atmosphere you can hear distinctly the tinkling of the milk as it falls into the pails, and the clink of the buckets as the milkers every now and then get up and go to a fresh cow. The warm afternoon sun is shining in at the cowhouse door, and the cows are standing peacefully flicking their tails, to keep off the intrusive flies that come in and settle on them. Every now and then the cart-horses move in the stable, rattling their head-pieces as they pull the hay out of the racks above their heads. Up by the farmhouse the two sheepdogs that are chained across the path to keep away tramps are lying flat out on its sun-warmed stones. On the roof of the granary, pigeons of every colour are bowing and strutting—blue rocks the colour of the bloom on a plum; white fantails arching their necks and spreading their tails; red ones with the shifting colours on their necks turning from green to purple, from purple to blue, with every turn of their heads in the sun. They fill the air with their low monotonous cooing—a peaceful sound on a hot summer's afternoon. As they all fly down past the kitchen window, presently the sun on the fantails' white feathers is so dazzling that they flash a bright reflection into the room; they settle on the path, and begin to peck about.

By-and-by a cart drawn by a bony old white horse comes rattling down the lane and stops at the farm-gate, and a man gets out and enters the farmyard. The old horse immediately goes off to the hedge and begins to munch the long grass in it. Inside the cart is a disreputable-looking terrier, with one eye closed up from a swelling over it where a rat has caught him. He sits up in the cart with his head rather on one side, and one ragged ear cocked, listening to the barking of the two sheepdogs, that had woke up from their slumbers directly the cart stopped, and are now dancing round on the ends of their chains, barking furiously at the man as he comes through the farmyard and up the little path. He pauses when he reaches them; then, seeing that they cannot get quite across the path, slips past them, and goes up to the door. The pigeons fly up with a brilliant flash of colours as he does so. He is a thin, middle-sized man, with pale red hair, and light eyelashes, under which his eyes, that are much the darkest thing about him, have a curious, shifty, humorous expression. He is clad in ragged whity-brown clothes, that give him the appearance of a very untidily-tied-up brown-paper parcel. He taps gently with his knuckles on the door—a tap that is as furtive as his face—then turns round and looks down the path and at the two long narrow borders on either side of it, in which lilies, cabbage-roses, bachelor's buttonholes, lavender, lad's love, and white pinks, are mingling their gay colours and filling the air with fragrance. Then he shuffles with his feet, and makes faces at the two dogs, that are still

straining at their chains and barking, making them more furious than ever. No notice being taken of his tap, he knocks again, this time a little louder; then, as still no one comes, he goes and looks under the flapping butter-cloth that hangs over the dairy window to keep out the sun and dust.

The dairy looks deliciously cool this hot afternoon with its fresh whitewashed walls and damp stone floor, over which buckets of icy-cold water from the deep well outside are thrown constantly, to keep the air cool. In one corner stands a quantity of cream jars of all shapes and sizes, some of pale rough red pottery, others of rich shiny red brown with pale yellow linings. On the shelf of deal, white with constant scrubbing, that runs round the dairy, stand great primrose-coloured milkpans, filled with milk; and one shelf is covered with pots of fresh deep yellow butter ready for to-morrow's market. The very sight of such a dairy carries one's thoughts away to the low-lying meadows, where the cows are standing knee-deep in the long grasses, on which the white clouds throw swift shadows as they pass, and every breeze that blows by takes away with it a warm milky fragrance; where the swallows are flying low, and the only sounds are the cows' deep sighs of contentment and quick cropping of the sweet dewy pasture. The sight of the yellow butter in conjunction with a smell of hot cake that is issuing from the kitchen apparently, from the expression of his face, suggests to Rube the ratcatcher that he is very hungry, and he drops the corner of the butter-cloth and turns away again. Then he goes and looks through the lattice window into the kitchen. The stone floor has evidently just been freshly whitened and the hearth swept; the kettle is boiling away briskly; but the room is quite unoccupied, save for a great black cat that is sitting blinking dreamily at the red coals.

Going back to the door, Rube begins to knock on it in good earnest; when it is pulled open from the inside and the mistress of the farm confronts him. 'Gracious! Rube, have you never been kept waiting before a moment, that you put yourself into such a flying stare. I declare you made noise enough to wake the dead!'

Rube looks at her with a sly twinkle under his flickering eyelashes. 'I knocked and I knocked,' he says, touching his hat and bobbing at every other word, 'and I got quite anxious. I did zay I thought zummat must hae bin the matter with you, and I was just agwine to call out'—

'None of your nonsense, Rube; you knocked three times, for I heard you.'

Rube only grins imperturbably.

'Well, what do you want?'

'I yeard as you've a ter'ble lot o' ratses about, and I come to zee if you'd like vur me to come over with my doags and fer'ts one day.'

'Well, they are a nuisance. They rob my hens' nests and carry off my young chickens. I don't know but that 'twould be as well for you to come. I'll think about it, and let you know.'

'Better make up your mind at once, ma'am,' says Rube persuasively. 'I've a rare handy farrier; I'll want he will polish 'em off. I've bin up along to Farmer Abel's all the afternoon, and he killed three dozen in a hour.'

'Now, don't you try to gammon me, Rube; I've known your yarns too long.'

Rube passes this by as though he does not hear. 'It be ter'ble dry work, rattin' be,' he says reflectively, looking past Mrs Hills, and fixing his eyes on the key of the beer, which hangs on a hook on the dresser.

'Ah!' says Mrs Hills pointedly, 'you finds it so, if all the tales one hears be true.'

'Don't you believe all the tales you years, ma'am,' replies Rube, unabashed. 'Zome volks be that primed with spiteful tales about their neighbours, as they'd bust if they didn't let zome o' 'em out.'

At this moment, Joseph, the milkman, comes up the little path with a bucket of warm foaming milk in each hand. He is a tall old man, with a long shrewd weather-beaten face. He looks sharply at Rube as he passes into the dairy, where he begins pouring the milk into the pans, keeping his ears well open to the conversation outside. Mrs Hills is just fixing a day, when her attention is caught by a loud whisper behind her of 'Missus!' She looks round to see Joseph contorting his face into the most extraordinary grimaces. He beckons to her with a long forefinger, keeping well out of Rube's sight.

'Whatever's the matter, Joseph?' asks Mrs Hills, going up to him.

'Don't you hev that 'ere Rube, Mis' Hills,' he whispers, still grimacing and nodding his head; 'he puts down more ratses than ever he kill, I'll warrant he do.'

'What do you mean, Joseph?'

But Joseph only winks solemnly, wags his head, points at the door, and lays his finger on his lips.

Rube, outside, is vainly endeavouring to catch what is being said; there is something the same expression on his face as that of the cock-eared terrier in the cart.

'Rube! Now I think of it,' says Mrs Hills, coming out to the door again, 'I can't have you, after all; your dogs would make such a rout with the fowls; and I never could bear ferrets—nasty crawly things. You might let one of 'em go, and I should never be able to sleep abed again.'

Rube made a pretty shrewd guess as to Joseph's share in this sudden dislike to ferrets; but he took it very coolly; he touched his hat to Mrs Hills; gave Joseph, who had come out again with his clinking pails, a calm wink, and walked off.

'What did you mean, Joseph?' asked Mrs Hills, watching him.

'Why, it be like this yere. T'other day he went over to Farmer Hollis's rattin', and he zhuts hisself into the barn wif all his doags and fer'ts. "Wait a bit," zays he, "and I'll zoon get 'em out," zays he; and he zhuts to the barn-doors. Wull, arter a minute or two, Muster Hollis years a gurt n'ise gwin' on inzide, him a hollerin' "Hilloo! Hilloo!" like mad; and he goes and look drough the air-hole into the barn, and then he zees the whole chap a-pullin' the ratses out o' his pockets and drowin' 'em down and shoutin' out "Hilloo! Hilloo! Hilloo!" like as though they was a-comin' out o' the walls, and he was a-zettin' the doags at 'em!'

In the meantime Rube had gone out through the farm-gate into the road again, where he found the old horse had eaten a great patch clear in the

hedge. After he had turned the horse round, he got into the cart and rattled up the lane again. As he drove along, the rackety old cart swaying from side to side, and the old horse stepping out with such high action that his knees were nearly as high as his long Roman nose, every one he met had a nod or word for him. 'Well, Rube, how be the world agwine with you?' called one man as he passed.

'Oh! shall soon hae enough to retire on the Continong!' replied Rube airily.

Rube the ratcatcher had begun life as a doctor's coachman; but his career in that capacity had been soon cut short through his incorrigible laziness. After that, he took to doing odd work; then he married a widow from the workhouse with six children—'to better hisself,' he said—on which occasion he had come out gorgeously attired in a blue coat with brass buttons, and light gray trousers, that he had borrowed from a young farmer for whom he worked, as he wished to 'look like a gennelman for once in 's life.' The marriage turned out a very happy one; and they managed to keep their heads above water somehow, she by taking in washing; and he by ratting, clipping horses, driving pigs, and hiring out the old horse, which he supported by begging a little hay or straw here and there at the farms round, cutting grass from the hedges, or tearing it out on pieces of waste ground, while he sat in the hedge, generally accompanied by half-a-dozen children, smoking his pipe, and keeping guard over it—an occupation that just suited him. Each season in turn gives something, for he knows the sunny copse, or sheltered bank of the silently stealing watercourse, where the first primroses come out; and later, when they are plentiful, where to search among the nettles and moist dead leaves of last year for the dewy white violets and their pale blue sisters. Again, when every country lad has a bunch of them in his cap, he leaves them to gather the slender-stemmed cowslips and the bluebells. He knows, too, the tangled copse where the first marsh marigolds blow, glowing like cups of purest gold above the peaty waters of the brook, as it glides slowly along under the brambles. And now his flower-harvest is nearly over, for everywhere there is a faint scent of flowers opening. The amber-cinctured bees are busy the livelong day; the milk-white cuckoo-flowers are pushing up to greet their namesake; the spotted-leaved orchis-flower stands tall amongst the grass; the buttercups are so thick that the meadows look shot with gold; and the dwellers in the little market-town where Rube sells his flowers can fill their hands as full as they list in the course of a country evening stroll.

By-and-by come the mushrooms, and Rube wanders for miles over the downs searching for them carefully, avoiding the 'fairy rings' as he does so, for he is deeply superstitious, and fancies that any one who steps into a fairy ring passes under the influence of the fairies. There is a spot on a particularly lonely and bleak part of these downs around which is some dark story. It is very far back, and nobody knows exactly what it is; but there are vague tales of sights seen there and sounds heard. The Deadman's Ridge it is always called; for it is a mound rising suddenly, covered at the top with a great patch of weeds. The country-folks associate these weeds with the

story; for 'If you buries a pig or a hoss in a vield, doan't nettles and weeds come as thick as can be; and so 'twould be wi' a man,' they say.

The foot of man is hardly ever heard there, for the shepherds shun it, and not even a poacher will come, for it is lonely enough by day; and it must be dreadfully so by night, when the moon is silvering the downs, and the wind-blown trees and tall weeds are throwing wavering, mysterious shadows. Only the bat flits over it, or the owl glides by, showing dimly through the gloom; or, by day, the swallow skims past; or a sheep, straying from the flock, stops to nibble for a moment at the long rank herbage, then goes bleating off again. And in winter, when the wind is driving up icy from the snow-fields it has blown over, sweeping the desolate downlands, and sending a shower of snow-flakes in front of it, or whirling up a few dead leaves, its loneliness will remain unbroken for days at a time, save when sometimes a seagull will float by, coming inland from where the sea heaves dark and sullen.

About this spot Rube has one of his favourite stories. 'I was gwine athart the Deadman's Ridge, a-musherrooming, one day, when I zeed a gurt white hoss come a-gallopin' along the down wi' fire blowin' out vrom 's nose and 's hoofs like as though they 'd just a come off o' John Saunders' anvil, and scritchling like as though he 'd a got summut ter'ble the matter wi' un. And when I zeed un, I vell on my vace as vlat as a Chale Bay mackerel; and when I gets up again, there warn't nothin' to be zeen, only the grass looked zort of zinged like.'

On wintry nights, when Rube tells this tale, leaning out of the dark chimney corner of the *Golden Lion*, the firelight lighting up his curious white face, and the pupils of his eyes dilating like a cat's, there is always a scroop of chairs moving on the stone floor, as every one hitches his a little nearer, with an uncomfortable remembrance of the long lonely walk home he will have under the gloom of great elm-trees, past bleak waste grounds, or ghostly cross-roads. And when a move is begun, there are always a good many remarks, such as, 'Be you a-comin' wi' me, Bill?' or, 'I med just zo well come wi' you, Harry;' and no one has ever been known to accept Rube's challenge of, 'Wull, now, I'll be bothered if I wun't go up over now and zee if I can't zee nothin', if an one o' you wull come wi' me'—with which he always ends his story, whereby he has earned a cheap character for intrepidity. There are one or two sceptics, however, who profess not to believe a word of the whole story, averring that they believe that all Rube saw was Farmer Rook's old white horse, and that he got the whole thing up on purpose to scare people from going to get mushrooms there; which I think myself is quite within the bounds of probability.

When the blue haze of autumn lies over the distance, and the sun, that has lost its summer heat and brilliancy, steepes everything in a mellow light, he saunters along by the hedges, a big basket on his arm, blackberrying. Every now and then he will put one in his mouth, closing one eye as he does so with the air of a connoisseur tasting a glass of rare wine.

Amongst his many failings, Rube possesses the rare virtue of a contented spirit. Wherever you meet him, whether sauntering over the downs on

a balmy evening, or ratting in a bleak field, with a bitter wind driving a cold sheet of rain in his face; whether paddling with bare feet up the stream for cresses on a raw autumn day, or lying dozing in a hedge in the warm summer sun—his face always wears the same expression of humorous happy-go-lucky contentment. 'It baint money nor good vittals as makes folks happy,' Rube often observes; 'vur I've a zeen amany as hae got all, they lookin' as zure as a dead mouse in a sink-hole; it be the right way o' lookin' at things. Now, I don't believe as there be anythin' in the world as I wants myself, except'—very insinuatingly—'as you'd hae a bottle o' my embrocation!' For Rube is an inventor in his way. Besides the embrocation, he has invented a rat-trap that will never work, and a mole-trap that is equally unsuccessful, though he himself will volubly assure you that 'nothin' ever worked pertier than they does;' and not long ago he appeared at Hayling's Farm with an account of a wonderful rat poison he had invented. 'Tis the most wunnerful ever you zee, ma'am! I'll warnt it is! Only vive shillen the bottle! And wull kill every rat in the place; and no cat nor dog wun't touch it, nor no fowls; but the ratses wull eat it up zo greedy; and it kills 'em off afore they can zay Hullo! You zay the word, ma'am, and I'll bring you up zome, only vive shillen the bottle!'

'Very well, Rube; you bring a bottle, and put it down; and as soon as I see the rats dead, I'll pay you.'

'Ah! But wun't zee 'em; they 'll hae crawled away to their holeses.'

'But you say they die so quick; and if nothing else won't eat it, you can put it down in the middle of the rickust, or anywhere else away from their holes.'

A slight change came over Rube's face. 'Vurry well, ma'am, I'll bring un,' he replied cheerfully; but though he has been to the farm on fifty different errands since, he has never yet brought that bottle of rat poison.

UNSUSPECTED DANGERS.

As if there were not already sufficient ills that flesh is heir to, quite a rage for discovering new ones appears to have set in, despite Shakespeare's excellent advice that we should

Rather bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of.

Were we to heed all that is written in these days of ultra-scientific research on what we have termed Unsuspected Dangers, we should live in a state of constant dread, and existence would become intolerable.

We have always considered walking to be one of the healthiest forms of exercise, but it appears, from a theory lately started by a French army doctor named Colin, that the shock caused by the heel of the boot striking the ground is extremely bad for the nervous system. Dr Colin, who has been making extensive experiments, declares that this constant jar, slight as it is, has in time a prejudicial effect on the spine and brain; and to this is due a great part of the feeling of fatigue after long walks. Especially is this the case

with soldiers, who have considerable weight in arms and accoutrements to carry. In a day's march of about twenty-one miles this shock is repeated about forty thousand times, and to this Dr Colin ascribes the frequent headaches suffered by the men after long marches. As a means of prevention the doctor proposes india-rubber heels.

This news is bad enough for man; but poor woman has an additional cause for uneasiness, arising from the very ground on which she treads—the dust, mud, and other accumulations on pavements having been proved from recent investigation to contain bacilli of the most dangerous character. As if this were not sufficiently terrifying, a Viennese doctor has lately been experimenting with some grapes which he bought. After rinsing the dust from the grapes in pure spring water, he found the water very dirty. As an experiment he injected some of this water into three guinea-pigs. One died in two days of peritonitis; the other two also died after a lapse of over a month. On examination, the bodies showed pronounced tuberculosis originating in the site of inoculation.

Man, however, comes in for his share, since an American chemist has discovered that there is death not only in the pot but in the pot-hat, and threatens us with lead-poisoning from the 'sweat-band,' as the glossy white leather lining which goes against the forehead is accurately if not euphoniously termed. This truth is endorsed by the statement of Dr James Startin of Harley Street, who promulgates the warning that eczema on men's foreheads is often caused by their wearing hats the linings of which have been whitened and glazed with arsenic and other irritating substances. He recommends that the lining should be of silk or some soft undyed material. The discovery by Dr J. F. Geisler, the American chemist above mentioned, according to the *British Medical Journal*, came about in this wise. He bought a tall hat in New York, which there is termed a 'stove-pipe,' and which caused him more than the average amount of discomfort. One day the hat was accidentally exposed to an atmosphere containing sulphuretted hydrogen, and a discoloration of the sweat-band was noticed, which on examination was found to be due to the formation of sulphide of lead. Careful analysis of the band showed it to contain no less than 0.8585 grain of lead per square inch, or 37.548 grains for the whole band.

Nor are the children free, since it has been remarked that the wearing by them of red stockings coincides with pustular eruptions on their legs and feet. The Board of Health in Paris employed M. Schutzenberger, a chemical expert, to ascertain whether the dyes colouring the stockings contained poisonous matter. In his Report he says that all the many specimens submitted to him derived their red colour from matters obtained from aniline and containing a large proportion of antimoniatic oxide. As children perspire freely, this matter enters into solution, and is thus taken into the pores. The Professor had no doubt that it was the cause of the pustular rash which accompanies the use of red stockings. The Board of Health thereupon reported in favour of the interdiction for wearing apparel of dyes obtained from metallic prepara-

tions. That this, at all events, is no cry of 'Wolf' was proved by the sad case of Mr Cronin, chief of the town police in Pretoria, South Africa, who in June last year was laid up with fever and a swelling that commenced with the feet and ankles, extended over the whole body till his eyes were nearly closed, the result, according to local medical opinion, of poisoning from coloured socks.

Another note of warning is sounded from South Africa to ladies who are given over to an inordinate love of bangles. Last January a Kaffir girl presented herself at Grey's Hospital, King-williamstown, desiring that her arm should be amputated. It appeared that the bangles which she wore had so compressed the flesh as to produce extreme inflammation, and it became absolutely necessary that the arm should be amputated. The operation was successfully performed by Drs Blaine and Brownlee, and the patient will now no more wear ornaments on that arm at least. To such an extent will fashion, even amongst the dusky savages, enslave the fair sex.

The danger through arsenical poisoning in our homes is not confined to the wall-papers, having been found often present in cretonnes and imitation Indian muslin in poisonous quantities. A bad specimen of cretonne has yielded on analysis nineteen and a half grains of white arsenic, two and a half grains having been known to be a fatal dose. Some months back a London doctor experimented upon forty-four samples of cretonne supplied by a local tradesman, not one of which was absolutely free from the poison; eleven of them were grouped by the analyst as 'very bad,' and nine as 'distinctly dangerous.' It is quite a common occurrence to have pieces of these substances in a room containing sufficient arsenic to give one hundred people a fatal dose. A very popular impression has been that greens and blues are the dangerous colours, but the analyst declares that reds, browns, and blacks are more dangerous still. With relation to this matter, the following letter on arsenical poisoning through green candles was contributed to the *Times* in March 1889 by Major Leadbetter, Chief Constable of Denbighshire, and cannot be too widely published:

'A curious case came under my notice lately which, I think, is of public value. A children's party and Christmas tree resulted in most of the little people, and many of the older ones, being seized with symptoms of mineral poisoning. The fact of several who were present who had not partaken of food or liquid of any kind being in the number of those affected directed my attention to the coloured candles on the tree. These I had examined by the county analyst, Mr Lowe, of Chester, whose report is to the effect that the green candles were coloured with arsenical green, to the extent that every eight candles would contain one grain of arsenious anhydride. He further reports that the red candles were coloured with vermilion. There is no doubt, therefore, that we had not farther to seek for an explanation of the symptoms—a crowded room, with the atmosphere charged with arsenical and mercurial fumes sufficiently accounting for it. It is only fair to state that I learn the candles were not of English manufacture, and were bought with the toys.'

A common cause of blood-poisoning was recently quoted by a doctor at one of the Berlin hospitals, to which institution a seamstress was admitted suffering from blood-poisoning, caused by using a common metal thimble, when she had a slight scratch on her finger. On examination, the thimble was found to have two or three small spots of verdigris inside. Commenting on this, the *Lancet* says: 'Steel thimbles are much safer, and cost very little. Another variety in common use is enamelled within, and is, if possible, freer from objection. Let us not forget to add a caution that cuts or scratches on the hand should never be neglected by sewing-women as long as dyes continue to be used in cloth manufacture.'

The foregoing are far from exhausting the stock of such recent disclosures: the drinking of tea is said to have an injurious effect upon the complexion, by darkening the skin and causing pimples; but what is perhaps the unkindest cut of all, a Berlin scientific gentleman informs us that danger lurks in a kiss. He has counted and classified the bacteria which lodge in the human mouth—some twenty-two distinct species. His conclusion is that persons who cannot abstain from so dangerous a habit as kissing should indulge in it through the medium of a respirator!

To know what we are ignorant of has always been deemed one of the chief pleasures arising from the study of the sciences, and if from time to time unpleasant truths be discovered, as they must be, it is a moot-question whether their publication is in every case beneficial or necessary; and though it is well to be forewarned, there are cases in which 'where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise.'

AN EVENING MUSING.

THE witching scents of thorn and orchard-blooms
Come blended on the soft cool airs that pass;
Around my ears the fitful beetle booms,
And faintly lies the shadow on the grass.

The tree, transfigured by the parting rays,
Throws out the colours of the radiant bow;
And o'er the heath-clad hills a glowing blaze
Doth added glory to the heights bestow.

Lo! in the west the golden-coloured isles
Of fleecy cloudlets seem to lie and dream;
The gazer looks with pleasure o'er the miles
So tiring in the early fervent beam.

The night-moths wander from the snow-white sprays
With aimless course; and joyous fly and flit
Along the borders of the garden ways
Through odours thick where crocus-lamps are lit.

Sweet scents, sweet sights of pensive eventide,
We hail your reign, an earnest of that Shore
Where Love shall welcome those with sorrow tried,
And where the mourner shall not sorrow more.

WILLIAM J. GALLAGHER.

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SPILT MILK.

A GOOD deal of plain common-sense is to be found in some of the homeliest of our proverbs; while others, that are far more elegantly worded, often fall very far short of the truth. They may sound well; but strip off the tinsel of the well-turned expressions, and very little of the real ore will be discovered lurking underneath. 'There's no good crying over spilt milk;' and yet, though the futility of the proceeding is universally believed in theory, how very seldom does the practice coincide with the belief! We spill our pails of milk over and over again, and, what is worse, we waste precious time in shedding idle tears over our loss! How wise were these old Egyptians, if, as runs the legend, they magnified the indulgence of regret into one of the deadly sins, a feeling to be fought against and sternly repressed.

As this century rushes to its close, our lives are becoming more and more crowded; fresh interests, wider fields of knowledge, new questions have arisen in this our age to occupy our minds and thoughts. Life's little day is all too short for the multifarious daily toils, joys, sorrows, matters of business, affairs of our own, and others, and minor details which fill it to overflowing; and it is certainly too brief to allow us to sit with folded hands and tearful eyes brooding over the grave of bitter memories and a dead past. As a great writer has so truly said: 'Life is so far like the chase that it admits of but little leisure for hesitation, none whatever for regret. How should we ever get to the finish, if we must needs stop to pick up the fallen or to mourn for the dead?'

Our dear ones are taken from us; the King of Terrors lays his icy finger on their brow, and with them seems to vanish also the sunshine from our lives. Earth's beauty and the countless charms of Nature only mock our bitter suffering, the flowers lose their fragrance, the zest of living goes from us, and grief casts its gloomy shadow on our path. In spite of all this, however, it

will bring us no alleviation to encourage this state of things to continue; we must make an effort—a violent one, if needs be—to emerge from the darkness which at present threatens to obscure our whole horizon, for we cannot spend the rest of our lives in the gray twilight of a gentle sorrow. All the ardent, hopeless longing which fills our breasts, all the tears that were ever shed, will not bring back to us those we have loved and lost; and all that we *can* do is to shoulder manfully the burden laid upon us, rise up and face our trouble, and strive to win resignation, if not forgetfulness, by taking up and doing bravely our appointed work in the world.

It is not, however, only the loss of our nearest and dearest by death which brings into our lives the element of regret. There are the countless misunderstandings, the thoughts and words of bitterness and anger, which are always intensified in proportion to our love for the offender. We say or do something which no amount of after-repentance is capable of undoing, and it may be that a few words can have the power to change the whole current of our existence, and leave behind them a poisoned sting for which there is no antidote. Most disastrous and unforeseen effects sometimes result from thus yielding to the mistaken impulse of the moment, and then—in sackcloth and ashes we regret those hasty words or rash actions which may have ruined two lives, and destroyed not only our own chances of happiness but another's as well. It is in these cases that the practical advice of the friendly proverb should force itself into the midst of our useless self-reproaches and sad reflections.

The milk is spilt, true enough, and by reason of our own carelessness, if nothing worse, but what good will it do us to cry over it? On the contrary, let its remembrance prove as a beacon in our path to warn us against similar dangers, so that the next time we see the frail barque of our Happiness about to dash itself to pieces against the rocks, we may be able to bring it

to a place of safety by the aid of the anchor of past experience and common-sense. There was that investment you thought so promising and secure, but which your friends warned you was unreliable and risky. The people who listen to and act upon the advice they ask for are in a small minority; so you walked unheeding into the pitfall prepared for you, and—the result fully justified your counsellor's warnings. *That* pail was overturned, and your money gone beyond recall, but tears will not help you in this case either!

Perhaps some of the most useless hours ever spent by man or woman are those which are wasted in vain regrets for that which 'might have been.' These are words to conjure with, and imagination is too apt to invest that particular form of happiness which has evaded our eager grasp with a radiancy and a glory which probably it would not in reality have possessed. The deprivation of delights that have been tasted can by some natures be borne to a certain extent with equanimity; but man, or woman either, can seldom think with calm philosophical resignation of joys which might have been their portion had affairs turned out or been arranged differently. There is scope there for all the idealisation of which our minds are capable; the picture of what 'might have been' shines before our enraptured gaze, surrounded by a rose-coloured halo; and in proportion as we exaggerate to ourselves its charms and attractions, we are filled with disgust at our present mode of life.

There are times in the lives of almost every one when the beaten pathway diverges into two or more different turnings, and the question arises as to which shall be traversed. There is a pause in the daily routine of existence; a crisis of some kind has been arrived at, and for good or ill our decision must be made. Shall we turn down this shady lane, filled with the scent of violets, and wander by the side of the limpid brook, babbling sweet music between mossy banks? Or shall we choose by preference the dusty, sun-scorched road, dry and monotonous, which stretches its interminable length before us? Or, again, shall we cross those low-lying meadows to the right, and having climbed the numerous stiles and obstacles which bar our path, seek the inviting coolness of the green woods beyond? Whichever course we decide on, we must abide by our decision; and then, it usually follows that our errant fancy leads us into wild imaginings as to what would have been our lot had our steps led us in another direction. It is the unattainable, the flower which grows just beyond our reach, the happiness which is not ours, and never can be, which possesses such a charm for the majority of human beings. Our choice has been made, however, and it is too late now for idle regrets; so, if we are wise, we will try to console ourselves like the fox in the fable, and say that perhaps, after all, the other paths might not have proved so charming as we imagined them, and that 'all is for the best, in the best of all possible worlds!'

In some cases the pail of milk takes the form of failure, either in one particular undertaking upon whose success we have set our hearts, or in a series of petty disappointments which sap

our vital energy, and threaten eventually to overshadow our lives. What can be more bitter than the conviction of failure to a man whose ambition has soared high as the eagle, and descended with the rapidity of a rocket? The dreams of his boyhood, the hard work and never-tiring activity of his later years, his eager efforts to attain the object of his hopes, be it the laurel wreath, the golden crown, a scheme of scientific importance, or what you will—all is wasted, and he feels inclined to say with Balzac, when the world went so awry with him, and even his brilliant genius availed him nothing: '*Hélas, c'est une vie manquée!*'

It has sometimes happened, though, that failure has led to after-success, and perseverance and dogged persistency have reached the winning-post in triumph, while faint-heartedness and despondency have fallen out of the race.

Besides the causes for regret which we have already mentioned, there are the constantly recurring pin-pricks of daily life, which are sometimes harder to bear patiently than a great sorrow demanding an heroic effort. We are always upsetting our milk-pails, and then sitting down to cry, instead of making the best of it. We make mistakes—who is there that does not? We lose opportunities either for our own advancement or for doing good to our friends. We make a fiasco of our business affairs; we enter into arrangements against the advice of others, and which we afterwards repent; we form undesirable intimacies, from which we find it difficult to retire gracefully; we are extravagant, and run into debt—in fact, the number of ways in which we spill our milk is legion; but instead of mending matters, it is only adding to our folly to be for ever bemoaning it. If our regret makes us wiser for the future, well and good; but even then it must not be indulged in to a great extent; and we fear in most cases our tears have not even that excuse, for when they are dried, we usually set to work, repeating the spilling and crying process all over again!

BLOOD ROYAL.*

CHAPTER XIV.—BREAKING IT OFF.

AT Chiddingwick meanwhile, Dick Plantagenet himself had been oddly enough engaged on rather opposite business. When he arrived at the house in the High Street, so long his father's, he found Maud flown, of course, and nobody at home but his mother and little Eleanor. Now, if Maud had been there, being a forcible young person, in spite of her frail frame, she would soon have stirred up Mrs Plantagenet to take her own view of the existing situation. But the widow, always weary with the cares of too large a family for her slender means, and now broken by the suddenness of her husband's death—thus left without Maud's aid, was disposed like Dick himself to take the practical side in this pressing emergency. To her, very naturally, the question of bread-and-cheese for the boys and girls came uppermost in consciousness. And though it was terrible they

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should have to face that sordid question at such a moment as this, yet that was a painful fate they shared after all with the vast majority of their fellow-creatures, who constantly have to consider practical difficulties of daily bread at the very time when their affections have just been most deeply lacerated. The more Dick talked with his mother, indeed, the more did he feel himself how imperative a duty it was for him to resign his dream, and return home at once, to do what he could for her and his brothers and sisters. He was a Plantagenet, he reflected, and *noblesse oblige*. That motto of his race stood him in good stead on all such occasions. If do it he must, then do it he would. A Plantagenet should not be ashamed of earning his livelihood and supporting his family in any honest way, however distasteful. For no matter what trade he might happen to take up, being a Plantagenet himself, *ipso facto* he ennobled it.

Fired with these sentiments, which, after all, were as proud in their way as Maud's equally strong ones, if not even prouder, Dick went out almost at once to inquire at the *White Horse* about the possibility of his keeping up the rent of the rooms as his father had paid it; for if the scheme was to be worked, no time must be lost over it, so that the lessons might be continuous. He was a capital dancer himself (worse luck!), and a tolerable violinist; and for the matter of that, Maud could help him with the music; though he shrank, to be sure, from the painful idea that the heiress of the Plantagenets, a born princess of the blood royal of England, should mix herself up any longer with that hateful profession. Oh, how his soul loathed it! Indeed, on second thoughts, he decided 'twould be best for Maud to be set free from the classes for her ordinary music lessons. While his father lived, he couldn't have done without Maud; but now the head of the house was gone, never more should she be subjected to that horrid slavery. Enough that one member of the family should give himself up to it for the common good. Maud, poor delicate high-strung Maud, should at least be exempt. If he needed any help, he would hire an assistant.

The interview at the *White Horse* was quite satisfactory—too satisfactory by far, Dick thought, for he longed for a decent obstacle; and as soon as it was finished, Dick felt the hardest part of his self-sacrifice was yet to come. For he had to give up not only Oxford, but also Mary Tudor. For her own sake he felt he must really do it. He had never asked her to think of him till he got his Scholarship; and it was on the strength of that small success he first ventured to speak to her. Now that Oxford must fade like a delicious dream behind him, he saw clearly his hopes of Mary must needs go with it.

They were never engaged; from first to last, Mary had always said so—and Dick had admitted it. But still, they had come most perilously near it. During the long vacation, when Dick had had some coaching to do for matriculation at a neighbouring town, he and Mary had almost arrived at an understanding with one another. Dick was a gentleman now—he had always been a gentleman, indeed, in everything except the artificial position; and since he went to Oxford he had that as well, and Mary felt there was no longer any barrier of any sort interposed between

them. But now, all, all must go, and he must say farewell for ever to Mary!

It was hard, very hard: but duty before everything! With a beating heart he mounted the rectory steps, and for the first time in his life ventured to ask boldly out if he could see Miss Tudor. It would be the last time, too, he thought bitterly to himself—and so it didn't matter.

Mrs Tradescant was kinder than usual. Mr Plantagenet's sudden death had softened her heart for the moment towards the family—perhaps even towards Maud herself, that horrid girl, who committed the unpardonable offence—to a mother—of being prettier and more lady-like than her own eldest daughter. The lady of the rectory was in the school-room with Mary when Ellen the housemaid came in with the unwonted message that Mr Richard Plantagenet—'him as has gone up to college at Oxford, ma'am, has called for to see Miss Tudor.' Mary blushed up to her eyes, and expected Mrs Tradescant would insist upon going down and seeing Dick with her. But Mrs Tradescant had a woman's inkling of what was afoot between the two young people; and now that that horrid old man was dead, and Richard his own master, she really didn't know that it very much mattered. Young Plantagenet was an Oxford man, after all, and might go into the Church, and turn out a very good match in the end for Mary Tudor. So she only looked up and said with a most unusual smile: 'You'd better run down to him, dear; I daresay you'd like best to see him alone for a while, after all that's happened.'

Taken aback at such generosity, Mary ran down at once, still blushing violently, to Dick in the drawing-room. She hardly paused for a second at the glass on her way, just to pull her front hair straight and rub her cheek with her hand—quite needlessly—to bring up some colour.

Dick was dressed in hasty black from head to foot, and looked even graver and more solemn than usual. He stretched out both his hands to hers as Mary entered, and took her fingers in his own with a regretful tenderness. Then he looked deep into her eyes for some seconds in silence. His heart was full to bursting. How could he ever break it to her? 'Twas so hard to give up all his dreams for ever. At last he found words. 'Oh, Mary,' he cried, trembling, 'you've heard of all that's happened?'

Mary pressed his hand hard and answered simply, with a great lump in her throat: 'Yes, Dick dear, I've heard—and all these days long, I've lived with you constantly.'

Dick sat down on the sofa and began to tell her all his story. He told her first about his father's death and the things that had followed it; and then he went on to the more immediately practical question of what he was to do for his mother and sisters. His voice trembled as he spoke, for he was very, very fond of her; but he told her all straight out, as a Plantagenet should, without one word of the disgrace he felt it would be; he dwelt only on the absolute necessity of his doing something at once to provide for the family. 'And under these circumstances, Mary,' he said at last, looking down at her with some moisture in his brimming eyes, 'I feel that my duty to you is perfectly plain and clear; I must release you unconditionally from the engagement

which, as we both know, has never existed between us.'

Mary looked at him for a moment as if she hardly took in the full meaning of his words; then, in a very low and decided voice, she answered clearly: 'But I don't release you, dear Dick—and I shall never release you.'

'But, Mary,' Dick cried, unable to conceal his pleasure at her words, in spite of himself, 'you mustn't think of it, you know. It's—it's quite, quite impossible. In the first place, I shall never be able to marry at all now, or if ever, why, only after years and years, oh, Heaven only knows how many.'

'(That's nothing!') Mary sobbed out parenthetically; 'if necessary, I could wait a thousand years for you.'

'And then again,' Dick continued, resolved not to spare himself one solitary drop in his cup of degradation, 'it would never do for you to be engaged—to the local dancing-master. If it comes to that, indeed, I'm sure Mrs Tradescant wouldn't allow it.'

With a sudden womanly impulse, Mary rose all at once and flung herself, sobbing, on her lover's bosom. 'Oh, Dick,' she cried, 'dear Dick, I'm proud of you, so proud of you, no matter what you do—prouder now than ever! I think it's just grand of you to be so ready to give up everything for your mother and sisters. You seem to me to think only of them—and of me—and not a word of yourself; and I say it's just beautiful of you. I *couldn't* be ashamed of you if you sold apples in the street. You'd always be yourself, and I couldn't help being proud of you. And as for Mrs Tradescant, if she won't let me be engaged to you, why, I'll throw up the place and take another one, if I can get it—or else go without one. But I'm yours now, Dick, and I shall be yours for ever.' She threw her arms round his neck and, for the first time in her life, she raised her lips and kissed him. 'Why, what a wretch I should be,' she cried through her tears, 'if I could dream of giving you up just at the very moment when you most want my help and sympathy! Dick, Dick, dear Dick, we never were engaged till now; but now we *are* engaged, and you won't argue me out of it!'

Dick led her to a seat. For the next few minutes the conversation was chiefly of an inarticulate character. The type-founder's art has no letters to represent it. Then Dick tried to speak again in the English language. (The rest had been common to the human family.) 'This is very good of you, dearest,' he said, holding her hand tight in his own; 'very, very good and sweet of you! It's just what I might have expected; though I confess, being engaged chiefly in thinking of the thing from the practical standpoint, I *didn't* expect it, which was awfully dull of me. But we must be practical, practical. I must devote myself in future to my mother and sisters; and you mustn't waste all the best of your life in waiting for me—in waiting for a man who will probably never, never be able to marry you.'

But women, thank God, are profoundly unpractical creatures! Mary looked up in his face through her tears, and made answer solemnly: 'Oh, Dick, you don't know how long I would wait for you! I want to tell you something,

dear; to-day, I feel I can tell you; I could never have told you before: I wouldn't tell you now if it weren't for all that has happened. Eighteen months ago, when you first spoke to me, I thought to myself: "He's a charming young man, and I like him very much, he's so kind and so clever; but how could I ever marry him? It wouldn't be right; he's the son of the dancing-master."—And now, to-day, dear Dick, you darling good fellow, if you turn dancing-master yourself, or anything else in the world—if you sweep a crossing, even—I shall be proud of you still; I shall feel prouder of you by far than if you stopped there selfishly in your rooms at Oxford and never gave a thought to your mother and sisters.'

She paused for a second and looked at him. Then once more she flung her arms round his neck and cried aloud almost hysterically: 'Oh, Dick, dear Dick, whatever on earth you do, I shall always love you; I shall always be proud of you!'

And when they parted that morning, Richard Plantagenet and Mary Tudor were for the first time in their lives engaged to one another.

That's what always happens when you go to see a girl, conscientiously determined, for her sake, much against the grain, to break things off with her for ever. I have been there myself, and I know all about it.

THE SENSE OF SMELL IN ANIMALS.

TASTE and Smell are closely allied, even in man; while in the lower forms of life, especially the aquatic, the organs cannot be differentiated, though there is no doubt of the existence of the sense of smell, for the presence of odoriferous bodies is recognised. What we speak of as the *taste* of certain things—garlic, for example—is really the *smell*, for garlic is tasteless; a blind-folded man can hardly distinguish between the taste of an onion and an apple or between various kinds of wine; nor can a man, when in a dark tunnel, tell whether his pipe is alight or not. Smell, indeed, has been called 'taste at a distance.'

The sense of smell in the higher animals protects the respiratory tract; for the membrane lining the nose forms part of the organ in man and other mammalia; hence, the current of air needed for respiration also conveys odoriferous particles to the nose—thus unwholesome air may be quickly recognised and avoided. Further, the organ of smell being near the mouth, food may be easily examined by its smell before being actually tasted. This nasal membrane contains the olfactory cells, from which a delicate filament passes to the surface, ending in birds, reptiles, and other lower vertebrates, in a fine hair or group of hairs. A second filament runs deeper into the tissue, and is almost certainly there connected with the terminations of the olfactory nerve.

Insects, however, breathe differently, and therefore their organ of smell is probably differently situated, though it is true that some naturalists have endowed even insects with a nose having an organ of smell at the tip; while others have decided that this organ must be near the spiracles

or breathing apertures in the insect's body. It is now, however, almost certain that their organ of smell is in the feelers or antennæ, and partly perhaps in the palpe also. These latter are small jointed appendages attached to the lower lip. Possibly some smells may be recognised by the former, and others by the latter. When food was hidden from some cockroaches by a wall, it was found, evidently by its smell; but the cockroaches could not find it when similarly hidden, after their antennæ were removed. Carrion flies deprived of their antennæ cannot find putrid flesh. The emperor moths, and many other insects, discover their mates by means of their antennæ.

These slender, hair-like antennæ are of the greatest importance in insect life, though the complete and exact purpose (or purposes) they serve is still somewhat a matter of conjecture. They contain thousands of minute hollows, or pits and cones—often filled with liquid—each of which forms a termination to a different nerve, with its special sensory rod or hair. A wasp has some twenty thousand of these pits and cones; a drone-bee still more, the queen and working bees nearly as many; while cockchafers have from thirty-five to thirty-nine thousand; so that it is possible for the antennæ, small as they are, to contain the nerve-terminations, not only of the organ of smell, but also those of hearing and of touch. The small tubes or cones on the antennæ of some creatures, the hairs on others, and the tufts of hairs scattered over the body of yet others, are also connected in some way with the sense of smell.

But whatever may be the means, there can be no doubt that smells are not only perceived, but preferences shown that often seem strange to us. In that charming book, *Recollections of a Happy Life*, Miss North gives an example of some flies choosing a horrible-smelling food. One year when fungi were her particular hobby, she collected as many varieties as possible. Of these, Miss North says: 'One had a most horrible smell; it came up first like a large turkey's egg, and in that state was inoffensive; and as I was very anxious to see the change, I put it under a tumbler in my bedroom window one night, and the next morning was awakened by a great crash. Behold, the tumbler was broken into bits, and the fungus standing up about five inches high with a honey-combed cap, having hatched itself free of its restraining shell, and smelling most vilely. Good and bad smells are merely a matter of taste, for it soon attracted crowds of a particular kind of fly, which seemed thoroughly to enjoy themselves on it.'

Some stapelias have also a bad smell that attracts flies; in trying to get at the nectar, they are caught, cannot escape, and probably have their lives sucked out. The smell is so offensive that flies have even laid their eggs in the flower, mistaking it for carrion!

Bees are very fastidious in the matter of smells; they appear to object to the human breath, especially that of persons recovering from illness; therefore, to approach a hive with safety, be cautious how you breathe. It is probably chiefly by the sense of smell that bees and ants recognise their friends—that is, the members of the same hive or colony—for bees sprinkled with scented

syrup and then introduced into a strange hive will not be molested, as other intruders invariably are. Has each hive or colony, then, its own special smell? Even if this be the case, yet there is probably some other means of recognition as well, for some ants were purposely immersed for three hours, and were yet recognised after their bath—Mr McCook, however, disputes this—and friends have been recognised after a separation of six months, and in one case of nearly two years. Although there may be four hundred thousand or more ants in one nest, yet a stranger is at once known and attacked. Even when the pupæ and, in one case, the eggs were removed and restored to the nest later on as ants, they were treated as friends; for ants never appear to get ill-tempered or to quarrel with members of the same colony.

Sir John Lubbock mentions that when he put a few drops of Eau de Cologne or rose-water near the entrance of a hive, a number of bees at once came out to see what was the matter. This they did for several days, but finally lost their curiosity, and took no further notice. Ants are less excitable, and showed but slight surprise when various scents were placed in their path, though they evidently noticed them. A few drops of scent, however, instantaneously stopped some ant-fights, the foes becoming quite friendly, the scent appearing to overpower the smell of the enemy. It is by this sense of smell that ants chiefly find their food.

Animals sometimes show a curious fondness for scents that must be quite foreign to them in their natural state. For example, the late Rev. J. G. Wood describes a pet of his, a coati-mondi, a creature like a raccoon, that loved scent, always finding out any scented handkerchief, even if hidden. It would roll the handkerchief up into a ball, then sniff at it for some time in ecstasy, finally turning round and slowly rubbing it up and down its tail! Leopards, too, oddly enough, are extremely fond of scent; this susceptibility was the sole means used by a lady to completely tame a young leopard which eventually became a great pet. Whenever this leopard was obedient and gentle, she would give it a cardboard tray filled with lavender water; but no such treat was allowed if it scratched or put out its claws. The leopard used to sniff at the scent in the tray for some time and then roll over and over it till all was gone.

It is hardly necessary to dwell on instances of the keenness of this sense in animals; it is one of their chief means of protection from danger; for with many, such as the deer, it is this sense which gives timely warning of the approach of enemies; while some, such as the skunk and gambat, emit a most offensive smell when attacked, as a means of self-defence. With others it helps in the search for food and perhaps water; and with many it acts as a guide in the search for mates.

Smell also forms one of the chief means by which wild animals recognise their friends; some even have special glands like little pockets, which secrete odorous substances. The olfactory region is large in horses, sheep, and swine, but still larger in carnivorous creatures. In seals it is so large and protuberant that it almost blocks up the entry of the respiratory passages, probably

also serving somewhat to warm the air as well as to arrest every passing smell.

The sense of smell is by no means so developed in man as in dogs, cats, and other animals; but it is often abnormally keen in individuals deprived of other senses; blind deaf-mutes, for example, can recognise their friends, and form an opinion about strangers, solely by means of this sense. Possibly, however, animals are only sensitive to certain smells, while unconscious of others that affect us. If this be the case, they would naturally be able to follow up one particular scent more easily than a man—this scent, to which they are sensitive, being to them less confused with others. Dogs are able to track their masters through crowded streets, where recognition by sight is quite impossible; and can find a hidden biscuit even when its faint smell is still further disguised by Eau de Cologne. In some experiments Mr Romanes lately made with a dog he found that it could easily track him when he was far out of sight, though no fewer than eleven people had followed him, stepping exactly in his footprints, in order to confuse the scent. The dog seemed to track him chiefly by the smell of his boots; for when without them, or with new boots on, it failed; but followed, though slowly and hesitatingly, when his master was without either boots or stockings. Dogs and cats certainly get more information by means of this sense than a man can; they often get greatly excited over certain smells, and remember them for very long periods.

Many birds, as is well known, are guided to their food by the sense of smell; but it is doubtful whether this sense is actually as keen in birds and reptiles as has been usually supposed. Mr A. R. Wallace tested the acuteness of smell in vultures, when he was in South America, by throwing food into long grass or wrapping it up in paper. The vultures, which were extremely persistent and annoying in following him, would hop close up to the paper, but without discovering it contained anything eatable, however putrid, and therefore palatable, the contents might be. Nor could they find food when hidden by the long grass. If sticks were thrown down, they would eagerly fly after them, evidently under the impression that they were eatable; yet the vulture's olfactory nerve is five times as large as a turkey's! The sense is, however, very highly developed in the apteryx—the ostrich of New Zealand. This bird has, in proportion to its size, the largest olfactory nerve of any bird, probably even finding the worms beneath the ground, which form its food, by means of smell. Birds, in common with cold-blooded reptiles and amphibians, cannot dilate or contract their nostrils; in fact, these are merely apertures, often so small—as with the heron—that the point of a pin can hardly enter. In crows, these apertures are protected by a stiff bunch of feathers, and in scratching birds by scales. Pelicans have no external nostrils, scents reaching their organ of smell by the palate.

The nostrils of cetaceans are high up, on the top of the head; these form their 'blowholes,' and can be completely closed. With the exception of the baleen or whalebone whales, they have, however, no olfactory organ, and therefore no sense of smell. The external orifices in water-

snakes, seals, crocodiles, and alligators can also be closed by means of a valve.

Many fish habitually seek their food by means of smell, slightly aided by touch, but very little by sight. Many 'scent' or search for olfactory impressions. The nostrils are usually double and pocket-like, closed with a valve, and do not communicate with the mouth. Prawns can certainly smell, for, when blind, they can still find food and also find their way home. Crayfish have, besides their long antennæ, smaller antennules, each of which has an inner and an outer filament. On the under surface of the outer filament are two bunches of minute flattened organs; these are probably olfactory.

Oysters are very deficient in the matter of senses; they do not even appear to possess a sense of taste, which seems somewhat unfair. They have no eyes—though slightly sensitive to light—no sense of hearing, and very little, if any, of smell; in fact, a very slight sense of touch seems to be all that is left them. Owing to their sedentary habits, they have lost, or nearly so, the foot, which in molluscs often contains the nerves of various organs, such as that of hearing. The foot of a snail is a very superior organ, and contains numerous sensory nerves. Probably some are olfactory, for, though the sense chiefly resides in the horns, the snail still possesses this sense in some degree, even after the horns are removed. The anterior pair of horns or tentacles in a snail have a nerve-knot or ganglion at the end, from which fibres pass to the surface. These may also be olfactory nerves.

The actual cause of smell is still a matter of some dispute and uncertainty. One theory is, that scent is due to particles given off by the smelling substance; if so, they must be infinitesimally small particles; for a single grain of musk is said to scent a room for years; and scent in air that has been filtered through cotton-wool is still recognisable, though the cotton-wool would have removed substances as minute as the one hundred-thousandth part of an inch in diameter. It is more probable that the sense is excited only by the gas or vapour given off by substances, not by the solids or liquids themselves. For water-breathers, however, the substances may be in solution.

Professor Ramsay has lately propounded the very interesting theory that smells are caused by molecular vibrations, slower than those which give rise to heat or light, different smells being caused by vibrations of different rates. This explanation, however, still remains in a theoretical stage.

We know that when we have a cold, so that the mucous membrane becomes thickened, as well as when it is too dry, smells lose their intensity: the olfactory surface, to be sensitive, must be moist therefore. So, too, when the atmosphere is moist, as in the morning, the scents of flowers are more perceptible than when it is dry.

Different odours can be smelt and separately recognised at the same time. It has been suggested that it is because the olfactory nerve has a direct connection with the brain that smell is such a suggestive sense; that 'memory, imagination, old sentiments and associations, are more readily reached by the sense of smell than by almost any other channel.' Dr Oliver Wendell

Holmes says: 'There may be a physical reason for this strange connection between the sense of smell and the mind. The olfactory nerve is the only one directly connected with the hemispheres of the brain, the parts in which, as we have every reason to believe, the intellectual processes are performed.'

RALPH THORNLEIGH'S PICTURE.

CHAPTER III.

'Mrs TOTWORTHY,' said Ralph Thornleigh to his landlady one morning, 'I've got an order for a picture.'

Mrs Totworthy paused in her work of clearing the breakfast table to stare at her lodger. He spoke with a gravity which would have befitted an announcement that he had been committed to prison for debt. It was puzzling; and she waited to hear more; but Mr Thornleigh evidently had nothing further to say, for he took a letter off the mantel-piece behind him and began to read it.

'And there bein' a matter of three weeks' rent a-owin', I'm glad to 'ear it, Mr Thornleigh,' said Mrs Totworthy. 'I 'ope as you'll arsk for a pound or two on account.'

'I'll pay you up to date if I can get a small advance,' replied her lodger. 'I'm sorry to have been so behindhand lately; but things have not been going well, you know.'

Mrs Totworthy nodded good-naturedly; poor folk understood poor folk, she said, and it should never be told as 'ow she was ever 'ard on them as worked for their bread like herself. And after stealing a furtive look at the letter Mr Thornleigh held in his hand, she took up the tray and left the room.

'There can't be two Colonel Stardales in London,' murmured the young man to himself as the door closed; 'and yet it would be strange if I were brought in contact with *him* in this way. Let's see; I am to be at his chambers some time this morning between eleven and twelve.' Here Ralph raised a hand towards his watch-pocket, and let it fall again with a little sigh. 'It went ten some time ago,' he continued half aloud; 'so I may as well start at once, as it's a long way.'

He put on the most presentable coat in his limited wardrobe, took his hat, and set out for St James's Street, wondering what might be in store for him. This Colonel Stardale wrote saying that Mr Gustav Schenk, the photographer, had recommended Mr Thornleigh as an artist capable of executing a small order, and requesting him to call and receive directions about the work. The note was written in the third person, and no Christian name or initial proved the writer's identity with the future husband of Beatrice Cairnswood.

Ralph Thornleigh had not been himself for the last few weeks; he had battled bravely with poverty, even with want, until the day he received that letter from Beatrice telling him of her engagement to Colonel Stardale. Then he lost heart: hope and ambition took wing together, and left him caring little whether he had work or not. He felt no jealousy of his unknown rival; only a helpless envy for the wealth which had gained him Beatrice. If the man whose letter lay

in his pocket were her intended husband, he could meet him and converse as composedly as though he were a total stranger.

He found the house without difficulty, and was ushered up-stairs into a luxuriously-furnished room, where he was requested to wait until 'the Colonel' was informed of his arrival. Many months had elapsed since Ralph had been inside a gentleman's house, and he stood looking round at the treasures which filled the room, awkwardly conscious that his shabbiness was out of place here. As he glanced from one picture to another, an envelope lying on the writing-table caught his eye, and half involuntarily he looked at the address, 'Colonel Melton Stardale;' and the handwriting was that of his lost love.

He had scarcely taken in the fact that he had indeed been summoned by Beatrice's future husband, when the door opened, and the Colonel entered. 'Mr Thornleigh, I believe. Sit down, Mr Thornleigh. I am indebted to you for your prompt attention to my note.'

Ralph bowed silently, and took the chair indicated. It was obvious that Colonel Stardale had no suspicion who he was, and he waited to hear what work the gentleman had for him to do.

'I am informed that you excel in copying portraits, Mr Thornleigh,' the Colonel went on, 'and shall be glad if you have time to undertake a commission of the kind for me.'

Ralph would be very happy. He was to enlarge a photograph of Colonel Stardale, no doubt.

'I have a copy of the portrait here,' said the Colonel, opening a drawer and handing a cabinet photograph he took therefrom to Ralph. 'I trust you will be able to do justice to it.'

With a superhuman effort, the young man controlled himself as he took the picture in his hand. His heart was beating as though it would burst; but he sat listening to his patron's directions with a face as unmoved as that on the card before him.

'I could have wished the lady to have given you a few sittings,' continued Colonel Stardale, 'but am anxious to keep the fact that the picture is being painted a secret from her. I—ah—intend it for a wedding gift,' he added with explanatory condescension.

Ralph, who had risen to receive the photograph, grasped at a chair to support himself, and prayed silently that the interview might come to a speedy end. He should betray himself if tried much further.

'Can you manage to paint the picture without sittings?' inquired the Colonel.

Could he portray the face which haunted him day and night! His voice sounded hoarse and distant to himself as he replied that he could; had often done so before.

'Will you be good enough to mention your terms?'

'Twenty-five guineas,' answered Ralph, scarcely knowing what he said.

Colonel Stardale signified his willingness to pay the sum named, and asked that he might be informed when the picture was ready. Ralph promised to write; and declining the glass of sherry his patron offered, reached out a trembling hand for the photograph. He forgot to ask for an instalment of the money; he never thought

of inquiring whether the picture was wanted by any special date; his brain was paralysed, and he groped his way down-stairs like a man walking in his sleep.

He did not remember his empty purse until he arrived in Wenside Street, when Mrs Totworthy reminded him of his promise in respect to that little matter of rent.

'Forgot!' ejaculated the good woman; 'well, I never!'

'I'll write at once,' said Ralph; 'don't bother me just now, there's a good soul.'

Mrs Totworthy studied his pale drawn face for a few seconds and accused him of being ill. When Ralph humbly denied the charge, she modified it to an assertion that he wanted some tea; that beverage, brewed the colour of London double stout, being Mrs Totworthy's panacea for all human ills.

Ralph wrote his letter to Colonel Stardale, and drank the tea his landlady pressed upon him. Then he went out to order a canvas for the picture. He had been telling himself ever since he returned to his rooms that he must harden his heart, and set to work on the portrait as he would upon that of a stranger; that he must forget what Beatrice was—had been—to him, and deal with Colonel Stardale's order as a pure business matter. It had come in the nick of time, for he had hardly a shilling in his pockets.

He ordered the canvas, and arranged to call for it on the following morning. Then he bought something to eat, and decided, as this was the last idle day he was likely to have for some weeks, he had better go for a walk. He had not ventured into the better parts of the town, where he might meet people he knew, for a long time. But this afternoon he was conscious of a hungry yearning to obtain a glimpse of the happier world whence he had so lately fallen; so he turned Westward and went into the Park.

He wandered across the grass, past the Serpentine, and mingled with the crowd. His acquaintance in London had not been a very wide one, and he grew more confident as he strolled along without encountering any one he knew. There were plenty of men there in boots as patched, in hats as disreputable, and trousers as baggy at the knees as his own. No one noticed him; and as he leaned over the railings to watch the carriages as they rolled by in a continuous stream, he began to think that the strict seclusion to which he had condemned himself had been unnecessary; that this would have been a better place to lounge away his hours of enforced idleness than his gloomy rooms. Two or three conveyances passed whose occupants he knew; but though he met the gaze of some, they appeared not to recognise him; and he derived a melancholy satisfaction from their shortness of sight or memory.

It was a lovely afternoon in early March, and numbers of people were driving in the Park; the endless procession of carriages grew denser as Ralph stood watching, and now and then it paused to move on again at a foot-pace until the way became clearer. Ralph had been a great horseman in the days when his father lived, and the horses received more of his attention than their owners. Presently, a pair of thoroughbred bays were sharply pulled up right in front of

him; he looked the animals over with critical admiration as they chafed and fretted, then raised his eyes to glance at the people in the carriage. On one seat he saw Colonel Stardale, and a lady he recognised as Miss Macallan; and as the 'block' eased off and allowed the equipage to move on a few paces, he saw Beatrice Cairnswood right before him almost within arm's length. A half-suppressed exclamation escaped his lips; she turned, and their eyes met. The carriage drove on and Ralph hurried away towards the Corner, and lost himself in the street crowds. He had seen her again after a separation of many months, and with a look upon her face that had burnt into his inmost soul: he felt that unless he found food for his mind, he should lose his reason; that he must work or go mad.

Next morning's post brought him Colonel Stardale's cheque for ten pounds, and he lost no time in cashing it, and bearing home the canvas which was to receive the portrait of Beatrice. Noon found him at his easel, charcoal in hand; but no photograph stood on the ledge before him. He wanted no aid so paltry as that. Mr Schenk's production would only hamper memory, and from memory he intended to paint her.

Never before had Mrs Totworthy known her 'fourth-floor front and attic' so busy, or so silent at his meals; he rarely spoke to her, and though she strove to spur him into speech with stale bread and underdone chops, he ate without remark whatever she placed on his table. It puzzled Mrs Totworthy. Mr Thornleigh at one time had been the lightest-hearted of men; then all of a sudden he had grown miserable and dejected, passing day after day in listless idleness. Now he was all haste and energy, swallowing his breakfast in ten minutes, and rushing up-stairs to the attic 'studio' where he spent every hour of daylight. That the secret of the change lay in the little room under the skylight, Mrs Totworthy could not doubt; but as Ralph kept the door locked, and the keyhole loyally refused to disclose the mystery, the landlady gave up trying to solve it, and exhausted her ingenuity in the wildest conjectures. This state of affairs continued for some weeks; but at length the young artist ceased to work at high pressure, and, as Mrs Totworthy observed, 'took it easy' again. That glimpse of Beatrice in Colonel Stardale's carriage had inspired Ralph Thornleigh. As he hurried out of the Park that day he gave up all thought of copying the photograph with the cold exactness he was used to bestow on such work. He threw himself into the picture heart and soul; he lived in it, and for it only, wielding his colours with a deftness that surprised himself. Now it was finished, and he was lingering over the accessory details, bent on showing up the face to the best possible effect. He spent far more time than was at all necessary over this; but he had come to dread the day when he must part with the picture, and made a lengthy process of 'touching up' an excuse for postponing it. He had not brought the photograph into requisition at all; the pose was simplicity itself, and the dress was not an elaborate creation which required 'copying' in the accepted sense of the term.

Now his labour of love was completed, and for the first time Ralph took Mr Schenk's pro-

duction and placed it beside his own picture. He smiled sadly as he did so; they were so like and yet so different. The photograph showed a calm passionless Beatrice. The portrait showed the Beatrice Ralph had seen for a moment in the Park, and he had caught the expression she wore as their eyes met, with startling fidelity. It was a master-piece; but it was not a copy of the photograph, and Ralph knew it. He did not care; a fierce recklessness possessed him, and he would not raise his brush again. Colonel Stardale should see his bride through her lover's eyes.

He had taken so long to execute his commission that he was not surprised to receive from the Colonel a note asking what progress had been made, and when he might expect to receive the portrait. Ralph wrote back that he had just put the final touches, and would bring the canvas to St James's Street next day. This offer the Colonel declined; he would take the liberty of inspecting the portrait at the studio, with Mr Thornleigh's permission, so that the artist might be spared the trouble of carrying it to and fro if any trifling alterations should be required.

Accordingly, No. 210 Wenside Street was honoured with a visit from that gentleman the following day; and Mrs Totworthy was thrown into a paroxysm of intoxicated pride by the spectacle of a brougham and pair with servants in livery standing for a full twenty minutes at her own door. The oldest inhabitant failed to recall a precedent for such an apparition in Wenside Street; and as Mrs Totworthy marked the rows of open windows thronged with gaping neighbours, she resolved that no irregularity in Mr Thornleigh's weekly payments should cause her to weigh the propriety of giving him notice, as she had sometimes done ere now. A lodger who received such a visitor as this raised the tone of the house, and deserved the utmost consideration.

While Mrs Totworthy and a select circle of female friends were thus innocently enjoying themselves on the ground-floor, Colonel Stardale, seated in Ralph Thornleigh's chair, was studying the portrait through his eyeglass with looks which denoted anything but gratification. After a short survey, he leaned back and beckoned majestically to the artist, who stood at a respectful distance awaiting his verdict.

'I am disappointed, Mr Thornleigh,' he said; 'I am sure the lack of resemblance between your copy and the original must be patent to you. It would be remarked by the merest tyro.'

Ralph could not defend himself, and made no reply.

'I have no doubt you have done your best, but you must pardon my telling you that this is simply a caricature.' He tapped the canvas with his glass as he spoke and paused, as though expecting an answer; but none was forthcoming, and the Colonel continued.

'By no stretch of imagination can it be called a copy, and I will not trouble you to make another attempt. I am surprised at this result of following Mr Schenk's recommendation. I shall take an early opportunity of expressing my views to him on this point.'

It was a matter of supreme indifference to Ralph whether the photographer paid with his life for his *misdeeds*, so he remained silent.

'You are prepared to hear that I cannot accept this—ah—picture, Mr Thornleigh?'

'Of course I do not expect you to take it if it does not give you satisfaction,' replied Ralph.

'I am very sorry to disappoint you,' said the Colonel, rising from his seat. 'We will say nothing about the—ah—small advance you received. The work has, I doubt not, cost you much time.'

'You are very good,' rejoined Ralph, 'but',—, recollecting he had just eight shillings and ninepence in the world, he broke off abruptly.

The Colonel waved a patronising hand, and begged him to say no more on the subject.

'And oblige me, Mr Thornleigh, by destroying that—ah—picture. I will assume that I have purchased the right to request its destruction. Ah! the photograph,' he added, as Ralph handed it to him. 'Thank you, Mr Thornleigh. Good-morning to you, Mr Thornleigh.'

Ralph escorted the Colonel down-stairs, saw him into his brougham, and then came back to his studio, where he sat down and devoured Beatrice's portrait with all his eyes. 'A caricature.' Was it?

'I may be wrong,' he said half aloud, 'but I think not. Anyway, I won't destroy it. I think I'll ask Brandon to come and take a look at it; there's something in it if I'm not mistaken.'

Mr Brandon was a brother-artist who had commenced life in London at the same time as himself, but who had advanced many steps farther than he had on the road to success. He lived in a quiet street off Cavendish Square, and thither Ralph repaired, soon after Colonel Stardale had gone.

He found Mr Brandon at home, and obtained his promise to come to Wenside Street on the following day to criticise the 'Portrait of a Lady,' which he jealously declared to be a creation of his own fancy. His friend knew nothing of Miss Cairnswood, and Ralph had no intention of disclosing the true story.

In due time Mr Brandon appeared at his lodgings, accompanied by another artist whom he had encountered on the way; and the committee of inspection went to the studio.

'Well, what do you think of it?' asked the young painter, after the two had placed his picture in a few different lights, and scrutinised it from as many distances as the room permitted.

'I'll tell you what my opinion is, Thornleigh,' replied Mr Brandon. 'I think that's a work for the Academy, and I shall be surprised if Danes doesn't think so too.'

Mr Danes, who was a man of few words, nodded emphatically. 'Talent there. No two words about it. Love in Despair. The Academy, of course.'

Ralph had fallen in love with his picture, which was scarcely to be wondered at, all things considered. But he had never anticipated that his friends would rate its artistic merits so highly, and slumbering ambition sprang up again.

'If you fellows really mean what you say, I'm sincerely grateful for your advice,' he said. 'But what about the frame? I tell you frankly I'm on my beam-ends, and don't know any maker who would trust me.'

'Know Bubblestock?' inquired Mr Danes, thoughtfully.

Ralph shook his head; he knew Mr Bubblestock's gallery in Bond Street, but had never met the proprietor.

'Sharp man,' said Mr Danes—'knows a picture when he sees one. Give you a letter of introduction.'

'You're very good; but I don't quite follow you.'

Mr Danes, who had seemingly exhausted his stock of language, looked appealingly at Mr Brandon, who promptly explained.

'Bubblestock has a great idea of Danes' opinion, Thornleigh,' he said. 'If Danes advises him to come and see your picture, he will be round here like a terrier after a rat. His approval is a certainty; and he will supply you with the frame if you promise him first refusal of the picture after the Academy closes. He is a very liberal man, and will give you a good price. You will have got your foot on the ladder, my boy, if Bubblestock takes you up.'

Ralph's eyes glistened, and he turned to Mr Danes with a torrent of thanks.

'Notepaper!' demanded that gentleman with brusque but practical economy of words.

He was speedily placed at the table with writing materials, and he scribbled off his note to the great picture-dealer, whose fiat had been the making of more than one artist. 'Go at once,' he said, handing Ralph the missive. 'Don't waste time talking.'

'No one ever accused you of that, Danes,' laughed Mr Brandon as they prepared to leave. 'Good-bye, Thornleigh. I shall come and congratulate you when the critics have said their say about your work.'

When they had gone, Ralph threw himself into a chair to think over the situation. The picture, as a picture, was evidently destined to succeed. But how would Beatrice like to see herself in the Academy in this guise, supposing it were actually 'hung'?

His mind was quickly made up. He went to his desk and wrote to her. He said nothing of Colonel Stardale's commission; that did not affect the point at issue. He told her how, after seeing her in the Park, he had painted her portrait, and how friends whose opinion was trustworthy had strongly advised him to exhibit it. Would she allow him to do so, withholding her name? If she were in the least averse to the idea, he would not think of doing so.

Beatrice replied by return of post; she told him to act upon his friends' recommendation and exhibit the picture with or without her name, as he thought best. If she were thus the means of bringing him success at last, she should be happier than she thought it possible she ever could be again.

So Ralph went to see Mr Bubblestock, and that authority lost no time in coming to see the picture. Our friend was almost happy when he retired that night. The dealer had done more than Mr Brandon predicted. He undertook to send for the canvas, frame it at his own expense, and despatch it to Burlington House. He stipulated for 'first refusal' when the Academy closed, and paid Ralph thirty guineas down by way of earnest money. And, finally, he promised to bear

the young man's name in mind, when he had any work to be done.

That was a red-letter day in Ralph Thornleigh's calendar, and he celebrated it by dining sumptuously at the Criterion. He was very doubtful about his right to dispose thus of Beatrice's picture, when Colonel Stardale had waived the advance he made on condition that the canvas should be destroyed. But he overcame this difficulty; he put a ten-pound note in an envelope, wrote a few lines to the Colonel, saying he wished to keep the picture, and so felt bound to refund the money, and took the letter down to St James's Street himself. That done, he walked home with a clear conscience; Beatrice's picture was his own now to do what he pleased with.

SEWAGE TREATMENT BY THE ALUMINOFERRIC PROCESS.

THE problem of Sewage Disposal is one that is constantly with us, and which appears, nevertheless, as difficult of solution as in the earliest days of sanitary science. Various methods of disposing of sewage are in vogue, each accompanied by its own drawbacks and disadvantages, and no system has yet so demonstrated its claim to superiority as to compel its universal adoption to the exclusion of all others. Indeed, so widely divergent are the local exigences of each individual case, that every locality should be considered in regard to the special circumstances surrounding it; and a hard and fast system applicable to every case is, in our present state of knowledge, scarcely likely to be attained.

As our readers are aware, the methods of sewage disposal may be ranged into three great classes: (1) Direct discharge into a river, an estuary, or the sea; (2) Land irrigation, popularly known as sewage-farming; (3) Chemical precipitation or deodorisation. The first-named system in the case of rivers is obviously productive of much nuisance and danger to public health; and even in cases where discharge to sea is possible, much difficulty prevails in obviating all evil effects, and in completely safe-guarding against unpleasant consequences at all states of the tide and in every wind. Moreover, on strictly chemical grounds, and viewed as a matter of economic science, the loss to the country by such means of immense quantities of fertilising agents, which preferably should enrich and ameliorate the soil, is regarded by practical sanitarians and skilled statisticians as contrary to sound principles.

The second method—treatment by land irrigation—though sound enough in theory, presents many features of difficulty in practical application, the greatest of which is perhaps that of obtaining sufficient land of any kind, especially in densely populated districts, where, of course, sewage treatment is most urgently required. Thus Dr Letheby estimates that to irrigate with the sewage of London would require two hundred thousand acres, or an area nearly three times that of London itself. Another great difficulty is the unintermittent supply to be dealt with, whether the soil needs it or not, and whether the farmer's

operations require manure or not. Moreover, in all weathers the supply is maintained, with the practical result that it is not infrequently turned into the nearest river or the sea in times of necessity, when it cannot be dealt with on the land. Storm-water is, moreover, a constant source of difficulty, as it largely augments the volume of material to be dealt with, and increases to a considerable extent the area of land requisite for the sewage farm. When it is considered that rain is calculated to fall in this country on no fewer than an average of a hundred and fifty days in the year, the importance of considering the volume of rain-water passing into the sewers of a city will be realised.

We now pass to the third system of dealing with sewage—by chemical precipitation; and the problem resolves itself into the practical question of what is the best and cheapest material to yield an effluent clear, colourless, permanently non-putrescent, and capable of sustaining fish-life, whilst producing a 'sludge,' small in quantity, easily filter pressed, containing as much of the manurial constituents of the sewage as possible, and able to be kept without producing smell or nuisance. With a view to meet these requirements, the substance known as 'Aluminoferrie' has been invented and patented by the Messrs Spence of Manchester, and is at the present time already employed in over thirty towns and villages in this country for sewage purification. Aluminoferrie can be applied in two forms, either solid or in a liquid state: in the former case, slabs twenty-one inches long by ten inches wide by four inches thick are manufactured, and are simply placed in a cage fixed in the flow of the sewerage, such method being found very advantageous for dealing with small quantities of sewage up to about half a million of gallons in the twenty-four hours. In the case of larger quantities, it is found more economical to dissolve the aluminoferrie in a special vessel, admitting it when dissolved into the flow of sewage, the quantity admitted being automatically regulated as the volume of sewage fluctuated. The quantity of aluminoferrie required varied necessarily in every instance, and may be stated to range from seven to twenty hundredweight per million gallons of sewage, the latter quantity being requisite when much dye and other colouring refuse requires precipitation. The disposal of the 'sludge'—that is, the solid matter precipitated when the clear effluent has flowed away—is mainly of course one of cost: in some instances it is conveyed to sea; in others, either pressed or uncompressed, it is used for manurial purposes, the advantages of compressing the cake being the great reduction in volume obtained, with increased facility in handling, storing, and transporting.

The advantages of the aluminoferrie process may be briefly stated to be the perfect simplicity of the system, together with the purity of the effluent produced. Being in solid slabs, aluminoferrie is easily handled, and the cost of the substance is only from £2, 15s. to £3, 5s. per ton, varying necessarily with the length of carriage incurred. The process requires little or no alteration of plant, where suitable settling tanks are already provided, and is readily under-

stood and carried out without special skilled supervision. As already stated, the process is being used with much success, and bids fair to obtain extended development as its advantages become known.

THE HOARD OF THE VAZIR KHANJI.

By HEADON HILL.

It was high noon, and traffic through the city gate of Dilnagar had died away. One by one, creaking bullock-carts and footsore travellers, toiling across the dusty plain towards the ancient Kattiawar stronghold, had come to a halt under what shade they could find by the wayside, to wait for the cool of the evening for the fulfilment of their journey. And there were none in the city whose business was so pressing that they were compelled to leave its shelter in the blistering glare of the mid-day sun. In a few days the south-west monsoon—the much-needed *barsāt*—would break, gladdening the thirsty land with plashing showers, and cooling the sultry air with breezes fresh from the Indian Ocean. Then, for a month or two, crowds would jostle through the narrow archway in two unceasing streams from dawn to sunset again. But at the hottest hour of this broiling day the main artery of Dilnagar was pulseless.

Not quite deserted, however, and not quite silent, was the gateway. A wild-looking matchlock-man, one of His Highness the Thakore's bodyguard, slumbered peacefully in his niche, waking the echoes of the archway with a series of blood-curdling snores. The sounds proceeding from the sleeping guard drowned all others, even the lazy hum of the distant bazaar; but a pair of sharp ears listening intently might have discerned a fainter sound, which ever and anon struggled to assert itself in plaintive contrast to the harsh discord that quelled it—the sound of a feeble voice crying in the Guzerati tongue: 'Water! For the love of God, bring me water, or I die!'

The wailing cry came from the foot of the city wall just outside the archway, and at first sight it would have been difficult to identify its origin with anything human; so bent and huddled was the shapeless filth-encrusted form from which the voice proceeded. But on nearer inspection the wizened features and glittering beady eyes, half hidden with masses of tangled and dirty hair, would have proclaimed their owner a man, and a man in sore extremity. He was only sustained from falling prone to the ground by an iron ring round his neck, the other end of which was built or thrust into the city wall in the form of a staple, and which thus kept him in a sitting posture. His clawlike hands were furnished with nails half a foot in length, and these were dug in agony deep into the burning sand. The fragments of a broken *lotah*, or water-vessel, at his side told plainly of the accident that was doing the Fakir Indrajī to death.

For nigh on seventy years the Fakir had borne his self-inflicted torture outside the ancient gateway. There were old men in Dilnagar, but none so old that they could remember the time when that spot had been tenanted. Day and night through the long years the holy man had sat there, bound by his iron ring, begging and

praying by turns till he became one of the institutions of the place, and pilgrims came to touch his hoary locks and go away comforted. His wants and absolute necessities, such as they were, were attended to by the priests of a neighbouring temple, one of whom came twice a day to bring him food and bear off any alms he might have taken. Indrajī retained nothing for himself. None can say for how many years longer he would have kept his post, had it not been for the chapter of accidents which broke his water-vessel and brought the sleepest soldier of the Thakore's bodyguard on duty at the same burning noontide; but as it was, the aged Fakir's time was come.

Fainter and fainter grew the old man's cries for help, till they were little more than a wordless moan. His head fell back against the encircling collar, and his tongue began to loll from his parched lips; but still no one came, and the pitiless sun went on baking the wall behind him to the temperature of an oven. The fierce black eyes were becoming glazed, and the familiar objects on the plain were assuming fantastic shapes in the disordered vision of the dying man, when suddenly a distant footstep brought a ray of hope—a firm, swinging footstep, too, that told of honest boot-leather—not of the shuffling approach of some sandal-shod or bare-footed native. Nearer and nearer up the road from the open country came the welcome sound, and just as Indrajī put all his remaining strength into one last feeble cry of 'Water!' a tall young Englishman sprang to his side, and, unslinging a leathern bottle, held a cup of the cooling liquid to the Fakir's lips.

'Thanks, Sahib, thanks,' the old man murmured in Hindustani as he finished the last drop of the precious draught. 'You come too late to save my life, though in time to make death easier. Thy servant is grateful.'

'Tell me where I can find help or how I can move you from here,' answered the young man, whose dusty, travel-stained appearance and inquiring glances bespoke him a stranger to Dilnagar.

'You have given me all the help I need,' replied the Fakir, 'and I move not from this spot till the Angel of Death releases me from my vow. Indrajī is weary, and thanks God that that time is at hand.—But tell me of yourself, young Sahib. Feringhis are scarce in Dilnagar. 'Tis close on a year since a white face passed through the city gate.'

'It is because white faces, as you call them, are scarce in Dilnagar that I am here,' laughed the young Englishman a little bitterly. 'There are times, as you must know, good Fakir, or you would not have adopted this mode of life, when the society of one's fellows is best avoided. It is so with me.'

'So young, so brave, so merciful, and yet with the sound of despair in his voice!' the old man half whispered to himself, eyeing his visitor intently. For a few moments he seemed to fall into unconsciousness, and gazed out over the plain with a far-away expression on his face that was eloquent of the coming end. But just as the Englishman had decided to go for assistance, the Fakir spoke once more.

'Feringhi,' he said, 'I have not many hours

to live. To-day's parching thirst has conquered a body worn out with the batterings of close on a hundred years, seventy of which I have spent as you see me now. You have relieved me in my sore necessity, and I would fain do you a service. Perchance you will not believe in the old Fakir's charms and amulets, but I beg of you to put it to the test, and see if Indrajī has not spoken truly. Take this, and open it only when you know that I am dead. It will bring you your heart's desire.' As the Fakir spoke, he fumbled in the ragged cloth that girt his loins and drew forth a quill, three inches long and sealed up at both ends. This he thrust into the young Englishman's hand. 'All that that charm may bring you,' he proceeded, 'is yours, bestowed by Indrajī the Fakir for reasons which will hereafter be revealed to you. All that I ask in return is, that you mention that quill and its contents to no one—no matter whether he be Sahib, Hindu, or Mohammedan—till you have read and understood what the quill contains.—Have I your promise to preserve absolute silence? You will not have long to wait before you may break the seals.'

The young man slipped the Fakir's charm into his pocket and gave a careless assent. Naturally, he had no faith in the old mendicant's wizardry; but his good nature prompted him to humour the quaint request. Satisfied that the gift had been graciously received, Indrajī made a sign towards the gateway.

'Now go on your way, Sahib,' he said; 'and as you pass the temple with the red walls, before you reach the great bazaar, stop, of your goodness, and ask one of the holy men to come to me. My blessing go with you.'

The traveller, seeing that he could be of no further use, took the Fakir at his word. Passing through the gloomy archway, where the match-lock-man still slept on, he struck into the main street that led through the heart of the city, and, after giving information of the Fakir's condition at the temple which had been indicated, made his way to the semi-barbaric palace of the Thakore. While he is parleying with the door-keepers and doing his best, by persuasion and a little 'backsheesh,' to obtain an audience of the great man, let us see what it is that brings Basil Heygate on foot and alone to a purely native city in a non-British State, where Europeans are seldom found.

Only a month before, and Heygate had been one of the gayest and smartest subalterns in the 30th Hussars, which regiment was then quartered at the up-country station of Mhow. He was a favourite with his brother-officers and with the men; his father was wealthy, and made him a liberal allowance from home; and his professional duties were carried out in a manner which ensured him a successful military career. Suddenly, one fatal mail-day all his bright prospects were dashed to the ground by the receipt of a letter from England which told him that his father had been ruined by unfortunate speculations, and had died under the shock. It was quite impossible for Heygate to remain in the service under the altered conditions. Without the handsome additions to his pay which he had received from home, he would barely be able to defray the mess expenses of a crack cavalry

regiment; and he took the only course open to him. He laid the circumstances of the case before his Colonel, obtained six months' leave of absence to England, pending retirement, and went down to Bombay with a view to returning home by the next steamer. But here a sudden impulse changed all Basil Heygate's plans. While waiting at the hotel, he chanced on a paragraph in one of the Bombay papers announcing in a jocular vein that Gholam Singh, the Thakore of Dilnagar, was about to purchase the cast-off uniforms of a native infantry regiment, in order to give the half-wild levies who formed his body-guard the semblance of civilised troops. The writer of the paragraph drew a humorous picture of the figure these hitherto half-clad warriors would cut when dressed as regular soldiers, but without any knowledge of drill; and he ended by advising the Thakore to buy up 'a second-hand sergeant-major' to supply the deficiency.

The hint was enough for Heygate. If the Kattiawar chieftain was bent on Europeanising his forces, he, Basil Heygate, was the man to do it for him. It would be a terrible drop for the once gay officer of hussars to swell the retinue of a native rajah, even though he were appointed generalissimo to begin with; but it would be better than the idleness and uncertainty which would be his lot on reaching England; and at anyrate, if he found the new life unbearable, he was not compelled to stay. Again, Dilnagar being a 'protected' State only, and not immediately under British control, there would be none of his fellow-countrymen there to remind him by their presence of his own altered position. As for his retirement from the English army, it would be just as easy to send in his papers from Dilnagar as from London; and having six months' leave, there was no need for haste. After a risky week's voyage in a native craft to Verawal, the Kattiawar port, where he left his baggage, an eighty-mile tramp brought him to the scene of his adventure with the Fakir.

Thus it was that Basil Heygate found himself ushered into the presence of Gholam Singh, Thakore of Dilnagar, and vassal of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Empress of India. Gholam Singh was a fifth-rate potentate, not even deemed worthy by the supreme Government of entertaining a British 'Resident' at his court, the result being that Dilnagar was about the worst administered State in the peninsula. The Thakore taxed his unfortunate people to the last possible *pie*, spending the hardly-wrung revenue, firstly, on the price of immunity from annexation which he paid in the form of tribute to the Government; and secondly, on the selfish and indolent pleasures so dear to the Oriental mind. The history of the State of Dilnagar to some extent accounted for the grasping character of its rulers. Gholam Singh and his family were not indigenous to the soil. He was third in succession to Feroz Singh, a warrior chieftain from the north, who had conquered the country some time about the commencement of the century, only to find that the prize was not up to expectation. The then ruler of Dilnagar was captured and slain by Feroz Singh; but the vast treasure with which the palace was accredited was never discovered, having been concealed just before the entry of

the enemy, in some inaccessible hiding-place, by the Vazir Khanji, prime-minister and chief officer of the household. The Vazir himself was supposed to have fallen in the conflict which resulted in the taking of the city, and with him had apparently perished all chance of ever discovering the whereabouts of the treasure. Those who know the ways of Eastern conquerors will understand that the absence of spoil which was known to exist did not improve the lot of the conquered. Feroz Singh did his best to make up the deficiency by oppressing the people; and his descendants were faithful followers of his example.

His Highness the Thakore received Heygate in semi-state; that is to say, the audience was given in what he called his 'presence chamber,' an apartment furnished with a mixture of real Oriental magnificence and second-hand European goods, bought cheap at some sale in Bombay. He emphasised the unofficial nature of the reception by lying at full length during the interview on a common iron bedstead, which was covered with silken cushions of rare workmanship; and while Heygate was preferring his request for military employment, he played cup and ball diligently. But before he had said a dozen words, Heygate knew that his petition was to be granted. The air of insolent indifference which Gholam Singh chose to wear towards an Englishman not in Government service failed to hide a triumphant sparkle in his lazy eyes at the idea of possessing this well-knit young officer for his own. As Heygate painted in his best Hindustani a glowing picture of what the Dilnagar troops would become under his tuition, successful efforts at cupping the ball became less frequent, and finally the Thakore flung the toy aside and listened unaffectedly. Basil Heygate was a new plaything worthy of attention, after all.

'Your Highness would thus acquire an army, small perhaps in numbers, but one which in discipline and drill would put to shame the forces of Scindiah, Holkar, and the Nizam,' concluded the applicant, who was nothing if not thorough.

'My friend, say no more. I appoint you from this hour to the post of Chief Sirdar of my army. No man who serves Gholam Singh has cause to complain of his master's generosity, and you shall have free quarters in the palace with a salary of two hundred rupees a month,' said the Thakore with the air of a man who was doing a noble deed. The sum he offered to his new 'general' was less than the pay of a lieutenant in the English service; but it would be enough, Heygate thought, in a native city, where there were no social duties and no style to keep up.

'Rajab,' proceeded the Thakore, addressing one of his ministers, 'assemble such of the body-guard as are on duty in the courtyard, so that the Sirdar may see his new command.'

The Thakore proceeded to a window, followed by Heygate and by the other more or less disreputable-looking members of his suite. In a few minutes some fifty men entered the courtyard below, and 'fell in' in a manner which suggested that they had heard of such a thing as drill, if they had never seen it. The attempted imitation of civilised troops was further accentuated by the use of English words of command, which the native havildar in charge shouted

parrot-like without knowing a word of the language he borrowed from. The men were well-built sturdy fellows enough, but uniform was unknown among them. Some few wore the ancient chain-mail in which the Saracens fought; others were dressed in scraps of old European regimentals; those who had tunics not wearing trousers, and *vice versa*; but the majority were in native costume, ragged, and none too clean. They were all armed with matchlocks about seven feet long. The effect of the operation which their officer called 'Shudder humps' with these pieces was so ludicrous that Heygate smiled.

'I understand that Your Highness has purchased European uniform for the men,' he said. 'That will greatly improve their appearance.'

'Yes,' replied Gholam; 'I have well nigh depleted my treasury to do so.'

'If I am to do justice to your patronage,' continued Heygate, 'the men should be furnished with modern rifles, or at anyrate with percussion muskets. A soldier-like appearance while they are armed with those matchlocks is out of the question.'

To the young officer's surprise, his suggestion threw the Thakore into a state of hysterical rage and excitement. He took off his turban and tore his hair; he spat upon the floor and flung his arms over his head; and all the while he bewailed his unhappy lot in having been cheated of what he considered his patrimony by the failure of his ancestor to unearth the plunder of Dilnagar. Here, he moaned, he had set his heart on having a smart body of troops round him; he had ordered a bargain in second-hand uniforms, and a brilliant Sirdar had been engaged; but the whole project was to be spoiled because he had not money enough to buy rifles. His Highness, in fact, comported himself after the manner of a thwarted Oriental potentate, which is very much the manner of a thwarted child. When he became calmer, he dilated to Heygate upon the circumstances of his enforced poverty, and finally dismissed him to quarters which he ordered to be prepared for the new Sirdar. The Thakore closed the interview with an intimation that Heygate's duties would commence on the morrow, when there would probably be entrusted to his care a scheme for providing the bodyguard with muskets or rifles.

For the first time in his life the young Englishman salaamed to what a month before he would have called a 'dirty nigger,' and retired. He had already conceived a wholesome contempt for his master, but, on the whole, he was satisfied with his day's work. At anyrate he had obtained what he came for, and though that was not much, it was the means of earning his livelihood in a profession he understood. Far better than walking about the streets of London penniless in search of employment which was sure to be uncoungeal. Thus he ruminated as he discussed his first meal under Gholam Singh's roof in one of two large but barely-furnished apartments that had been assigned to him. The bedroom contained nothing but a common native 'charpoy,' not nearly so good a one as that on which his own kitmutghar had slept; and the sitting-room boasted only a rickety table and two chairs; but the curried fowl was well cooked and

decently served—a fact which prevented the tired traveller from indulging in too gloomy comparisons between his present quarters and his luxurious bungalow at Mhow.

Heygate's reflections were interrupted by the entry of Rajab, Gholam's prime-minister and general factotum. Rajab was short and stout, with a cunning twinkle in his eye that suggested an entire want of principle, relieved by a dash of droll humour. If he set himself to cheat any one, as in truth he did very often, he would do it with an air of facetious relish, as though he cheated not for gain but for the sake of having his little joke. He saluted Heygate politely, and seated himself in the other chair.

'I bring your orders, Sirdar, for to-morrow,' he began. 'His Highness desires you to take two hundred men and to march to Dhoonghar, thirty miles north of this city. The Begum Luxmeebhai of that place is in arrear with her taxes—luckily for our little project—and you will therefore drive off all her flocks and herds, and also bear off anything of value in the Begum's house. She is reputed rich, and you should return well laden. This plan will save both her and ourselves trouble in computing the exact amount of her arrears, and it will moreover give His Highness the means of purchasing the rifles which his soul desires.'

Heygate listened horror-struck. To head a band of marauding cattle-lifters and to plunder a helpless woman was as impossible to him as to hang the Begum Luxmeebhai on the nearest tree. In his ignorance of the manners and customs of native States, he had supposed that the only function of the 'troops' was to minister to the sense of ostentatious pride to which the protected rulers cling so closely, and his mistake was a revelation to him. He had forgotten that here in his own dominions the Thakore was paramount, and that the wail of the oppressed could easily be stifled ere it could reach the Supreme Government from the wilds of Kattiawar.

Of course he recognised that there was an end of his project at once. His reply was an indignant refusal. 'Tell the Thakore,' he said, 'that he must get some one else to do his dirty work. I did not come here to act as chief cattle-stealer to His Highness. I shall return to Bombay at once; and I will take care that the Government is notified of the way in which the State of Dilnagar is administered.'

Rajab smiled lazily. 'My young friend,' he said, 'do not be rash. His Highness has taken a fancy to you, and most assuredly you would find departure in your present frame of mind a difficult matter.'

'Pshaw!' said Heygate; 'Gholam Singh knows better than to molest an Englishman. I am quite willing to take all risk on that head.'

'Pardon me, my young friend; you are impetuous,' answered Rajab. 'I did not say that you would be molested. I merely intended to convey the hint that here in Dilnagar those who offend His Highness have a bad time of it. Nothing brutal, you know; the days of the bowstring are past. But a pinch of powdered glass or of something stronger in one's food; a quiet prod from a knife on that lonely road between here and Verawal—why, there are a hundred ways of doing it! You understand me, I see.'

Heygate did understand. The price of refusing the post he had so eagerly sought would in all probability be secret assassination, carried out so skilfully that the cause of his death would never be known. But he wavered not for an instant.

'Go and tell your master,' he repeated, 'that I leave for Bombay to-night. Let him touch me at his peril.'

'I will go; but I will give you an hour to think of it before I report to the Thakore. This is unfortunate, and might have been prevented had the Fakir Indrajī not taken it into his silly old head to die this afternoon. We had hoped to get some hint from him, by force if necessary, as to the whereabouts of the secret treasure. He was the only man in Dilnagar old enough to remember the sack of the city.—Think better of your resolve, my brave friend!' and with a courtly bow the plausible Rajab departed.

The news of the Fakir's death did not surprise Heygate, and he had other matters to think of. His best plan would be to start at once before the hour's grace was up, and get as far as he could on the road to Verawal before Gholam had heard of his defection. Thank goodness, he had his revolver, and he would sell his life dearly if any hired ruffians attacked him by the way. Putting his hand in his pocket to see if the pistol was safe, his fingers came in contact with the quill which the Fakir had given him earlier in the day. Now that the old man was dead, he remembered that he was at liberty to open it, and, idly curious as to what he should find inside, he broke the seals. A tiny scrap of discoloured paper covered with Guzerati characters rewarded his search. It was lucky for Heygate that his studies with a view to securing a Staff appointment had included a smattering of the language. With amazement gradually dawning into appreciation of the vast importance of the paper, this is what he read :

'I, the Vazir Khanji, in future to be known as Indrajī the Fakir, write this. The hosts of the conquering Feroz are at hand. I have builded up the treasure in the city wall in order to save it from his despoiling hands. The stone in which my shackle is fixed is the key of the hiding-place. Remove the stone, and the wealth of Dilnagar will be found. While I have life, I guard it from the extortioner. When I die, it shall belong to whomsoever I shall give this paper.'

So the aged Fakir stood revealed as none other than the Vazir Khanji, who nearly seventy years before had sat him down in this mean guise to guard his slaughtered master's wealth from the invader. What a record that brief paper held of fidelity to his self-imposed trust! And to think that he, Basil Heygate, had chanced upon the old man in his need, and had thus become possessed of information which would mean the difference between life and death to him. Well he knew he could never disinter the hidden hoard from the city wall unaided, but at least it would enable him to make terms with the Thakore, which would get him safely out of the country, and at the same time benefit the unhappy inhabitants by relieving their ruler's exchequer.

Heygate's action was prompt. He sent his attendant for Rajab, and astonished that official

with the news that the secret of the treasure was known to him, of course suppressing any allusion to Indrajī. The terms he offered to Gholam were these: in order to insure his own safety against any treachery, he would communicate with the authorities in Bombay as to his whereabouts, asking that Gholam Singh might be held accountable if he did not return in a given time. On receipt of a reply, he would divulge the hiding-place of the treasure on condition of receiving one-tenth part of the value. This arrangement he insisted on having under Gholam's own signature; and he enclosed it with his letter to Bombay—only to be opened in case of his non-return. He had no fear as to the safety of his letter, as the Thakore was in much too great a hurry to finger the spoil to put any obstacle in its way, and as long as Heygate alone knew the secret he was safe.

In ten days an acknowledgment of the letter arrived. Within an hour Heygate conducted the Thakore and his ministers to the spot where the man they had known as Indrajī had sat so long. The ring which had encircled the Fakir's neck had been cut through in order to remove the body, but the stump of the staple still projected from the wall.

'There!' said Heygate. 'Remove that stone, and your quest will be at an end.'

The masons whom they had brought set to work with a will; and as the crowbars chinked and the great stone began to show signs of moving, the young man's excitement was almost painful. What if Indrajī's story was a fiction, after all? Even the fear of the Government would hardly save him from the Thakore's first burst of disappointed rage. But relief came at last; the great stone moved, and toppling forward revealed a sight which struck the bystanders dumb with astonishment. There, in a vast hollow, of which the stone had been merely the doorway, were piled vessels of gold and silver, heaps of precious stones and glittering gems, which had broken loose from the rotting bags that had contained them, an avalanche of gold mohurs that had been apparently shovelled in like chaff, and several chests which spoke of still richer treasures to be explored. Heygate had hardly given a thought to his stipulated tenth share hitherto, expecting at the most a few thousand rupees, welcome but not omnipotent. Now he knew that a tithe of all that shining wealth would save his career, and send him back to the regiment he loved so well with more than enough for his needs.

Three days later, when the hoard had been valued, Heygate was escorted to the city gate with much pomp by the Thakore in person. In his knapsack he had a draft on His Highness's Bombay agents for seven lacs of rupees—the equivalent of fifty thousand pounds. Arrived at the memorable archway, the final parting took place. 'I hope,' said the retiring Sirdar, 'that Your Highness will not now find it necessary to harry the Begum Luxmeebhai or any of your subjects. The Government would be sorry to hear of it.'

To this diplomatic hint Gholam Singh replied suavely enough: 'I am a beneficent ruler, my friend; my people will participate in the wealth

you have brought us. Thanks to you, Dilmahgar will be a paradise of content.'

But a subterranean scowl struggled bravely with the smile on His Highness's face; and as Heygate turned his horse's head for the road along which he had tramped footsore and sick at heart three weeks before, he thought with satisfaction of the letter and agreement lying at Bombay. They stood between him and—well, His Highness the Thakore's pleasure.

BLACK LABOUR IN QUEENSLAND.

THE Bill which has lately been passed by the Legislature in Queensland permitting a renewal of the importation of South Sea Islanders, or Kanakas, for employment on the sugar plantations, has caused a good deal of discussion in England both in the Press and in Parliament. Not unnaturally, the fear has been expressed that a repetition might occur of the abuses which took place prior to the Commission of 1885, in connection with the recruiting of coloured labourers, and that, if the measure passed unchallenged by England, it might be thought her approval was being given to a scheme which has in some quarters been denounced as little better than slavery. The facts of the case, however, show not only that black labour is absolutely necessary in Queensland, unless the sugar industry is allowed to die out, but that the hiring of Kanakas has for years past been conducted under stringent regulations, laid down by the Queensland Government, requiring that ships carrying immigrants shall be licensed, and providing that agents shall be on board to see that 'all islanders have voluntarily engaged themselves, and have entered into their agreements with a full knowledge and understanding of their nature and conditions.' There is evidence, however, that the rules laid down have not in some cases been sufficiently observed. Under the new Act, therefore, they have been made still more severe; and as the Queensland Government seem determined to see them carried out, and to punish any infringement of them, there is no reason to apprehend that the reintroduction of black labour will not be properly conducted. As regards the treatment of the Kanakas when on the plantations, recent testimony, which I can confirm from my own observation in the colony, shows that they are well housed and fed, receive a fair wage, and when their time is up, return to their homes with some money in their pockets, unless, indeed, they have spent it in bright-coloured clothes and handkerchiefs, for which they have a weakness.

The causes which have led to the reintroduction of black labour into Queensland are not far to seek. The tropical heat, although necessary for the growth of the sugar-cane, renders field-labour by the white man so unpleasant, that he will not submit to it, at all events at such wages as the planters can afford to pay. So far, well enough; but the white man in attempting to exclude the necessary Kanaka, and thus adhere to the political cry of 'Australia for the white man'—under which the present Premier, Sir Samuel Griffith, came into power—has almost destroyed one of the most important industries in Queensland. Fortunately, however, the folly

of this policy has now been perceived; the edict against the black man has been withdrawn, and, according to recent accounts from the colony, the sugar-planters, whose estates were going out of cultivation, are again putting forth their energies, and a new era of prosperity may fairly be anticipated.

The exclusion of the Kanaka, so far from being in the interest of white labour, has proved exactly the contrary, for statistics show that the decrease in the numbers of coloured labourers has been followed by a decrease in the same ratio in the employment of white men. According to Mr W. A. Ackers of Townsville, there were seven thousand coloured men employed in 1886 in the Mackay district of Queensland, and eight thousand white people; while in 1888, when the number of coloured men had been reduced to two thousand, the white men employed numbered only four thousand, being a decrease of fifty per cent. in two years. According to the same authority, the wages paid to the Kanakas throughout the colony in 1888 amounted to between fifty and sixty thousand pounds; whereas during the same period the white men employed either directly or indirectly in connection with the sugar industry received as much as one hundred and seventy-four thousand pounds.

The interests involved are of some magnitude. In 1887 the capital invested in this industry was five million pounds, and the value of the machinery for the production of sugar was one million pounds. One quarter of the total area under cultivation in Queensland was under sugar-cane. The value of sugar exported in 1888 was eight hundred thousand pounds; and of the sugar consumed in the colony, two hundred thousand pounds, giving a total of one million pounds. In 1890 the value of sugar exported had diminished by one hundred thousand pounds—the result of the policy above described. As the reintroduction of suitable labour, now resolved upon, means the continuance of an industry of these proportions, the subject is of considerable importance as regards the future prosperity of Queensland.

MARGUERITE.

SHE lingered 'midst the lilies white and fair,
Marguerite,
Herself the fairest flower that blossomed there,
Pure and sweet.
The music of her voice came unto me
Soft and low;
She sang of happy days that were to be
Long ago.

It was a golden dream of Hope and Love,
Born but to die.
The lilies drooped their heads; the storm-clouds came
Across the sky.
And I have wandered on through weary years,
Life's music fled,
Since my fair Love, my little gentle flower,
Lay dead.

JAMES J. STEVENSON.

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THREE AUSTRALIAN BOOMS.

In all countries accustomed to the ups and downs of mining ventures, the news of a large find of either gold or silver causes the most intense excitement. The mere rumour of a rich discovery at any place is sufficient to send hundreds of the Bedouin population of the mining districts flocking to the spot. These seem always ready to flit on the shortest notice to other fields, always ready once more to try their luck in a fresh gamble with Nature. So they wander about from field to field, sometimes making money, more often losing it; seldom, very seldom keeping it when made. In no part of the globe is this more constantly seen than in the Australian colonies. The Australians are indeed a gambling community, always ready for a 'plunge,' whether it be on the almost daily horserace or the last-discovered Eldorado. Wages are high, so the working-man has usually a few pounds to spare. The generality of them cannot resist the temptation to try their luck at the game which has made so many of their employers rich. The successful speculator is always 'en évidence,' an object of envy to some, and a lure to others. The ruined gambler sinks out of sight, and the lesson he might teach is never learned.

When the Broken Hill silver mines were first discovered, and it had been satisfactorily proved that silver really existed in payable quantities, half the population of Australia went 'silver mad.' The land round Broken Hill was pegged out into claims to the extent of thousands of acres. Companies were started by the score, many of them with barely sufficient capital to pay the expenses of sinking a hundred-foot shaft or driving a moderate adit. Every one bought scrip; shares rose at the rate of pounds daily. The clever ones realised fortunes and sold out; the majority held on for that little bit more which all men want, and in many cases lost all. A few of the lodes when properly opened up turned out enormous quantities of silver, and, until the present strikes, paid large dividends. The ma-

jority of the companies have now collapsed, others barely pay working expenses.

Some curious stories are told of fortunes made or missed at this time. One prospector was sinking along the line of a lode which ran through his claim. As he went down, he found the lode kept constantly widening and then 'pinching' again, an almost certain sign that it would soon die out. He therefore sunk till the lode widened again, and then sold his claim for a few hundred pounds, very pleased at having, as he considered, got a very good price for a very bad article. It is only natural to suppose that his guileless joy was not so keen when he heard that the claim had turned out one of the best on the field, worth in the market fully a million sterling.

The 'mining boom' was quickly followed by a 'boom' in property. Mushroom land and building societies started in numbers. Town properties changed hands again and again at enormous prices. Very often no cash passed between buyer and seller, bills being taken in payment—in many cases never met. One block of buildings and the land on which they stood were sold to a speculator, who paid a small deposit, with permission to pull down the building and erect better ones, more suitable for the good time coming. The old material was hardly off the ground before the 'boom' collapsed; the purchaser could not meet his engagements, vanished; and the unfortunate seller found himself with his property once more on his hands, but minus the buildings.

In the meantime prospectors from Broken Hill had gone to the west coast of Tasmania, where silver had, it was believed, been found in the early days of the convict occupation. These men went through almost incredible hardships. The country was covered either with dense bush or button-grass swamp. Riding was impossible. All their provisions had to be carried on their backs; their blankets, wet through by day, were often their sole covering at night. However, their efforts were rewarded, outcrops of ore

being found in all directions. The first lode worked in the neighbourhood of Mount Zeehan gave very good results. A company (the Silver Queen Company) was formed with fifteen thousand pounds capital, which was all called up and expended in sinking and machinery. Within a few months this mine had yielded such a large amount of both argentiferous galena and kaolin ore, that the directors found themselves able to declare two dividends.

A gigantic rush now set in for the field from all the surrounding colonies. Within the next two years, over fifteen hundred eighty-acre claims had been pegged out. Manganese and other outcrops, indications of silver beneath, were discovered in large numbers. Nearly two hundred companies were formed in Hobart alone, others in Zeehan and Melbourne. Roads were made by the Government; also a railway commenced by them from the port of Strahan to the town of Zeehan, which had commenced to spring up as fast as building materials could be put on to the ground. A number of large hotels were built, and no sooner built than crowded—three people often sleeping in a tiny room, others in the bar, on the tables, anywhere. Zeehan, from a small collection of huts, burst into a town of some thousands of inhabitants, boasting of gas and water companies, two Stock Exchanges, a perfect posse of hotels, shops with large plate-glass windows, churches, banks, a town hall and a corporation. Three private railway companies were formed, and very soon commenced work. In the vicinity of Mount Dundas, seven miles from Zeehan, rich discoveries of ore were made; and the market value of some of the mines, judged by the price of the shares, exceeded two hundred thousand pounds sterling, with a keen demand. All the road frontage between Zeehan and Dundas was pegged out into building allotments; had these been built on as intended, the houses would have formed a street as long as from Battersea Bridge to Liverpool Street.

Everything looked prosperous, and the gambling in mining scrip in all parts of the colonies raged more furiously than ever. The country surrounding the lodes (generally dark slaty rocks), the quality of the ore, the general direction of the lodes, all seemed to point to a successful issue. In one of the Dundas mines (the Central Dundas) the writer himself saw a lode which had been cut through ninety feet wide, of black gossan, thickly covered with chlorides, which sparkled like diamonds in the light of our candles. The streets of Zeehan at this time presented a curious, busy appearance, swarming with people of every trade and nationality: miners in their muddy garments, stockbrokers, speculators, visitors, and mining experts (these last quite ready to give excellent Reports about anything provided payment was in proportion), telegraph boys, drays laden with timber, horses with silver ore—all splashing through the mud, and continually passing and repassing up and down the narrow, dirty street. Ore was now being raised in tons and stacked, ready to send away to be smelted when the railways were opened. Men who had made fortunes at Broken Hill came to Tasmania, gave it as their belief that the lodes were 'true fissure,' and backed up their opinion by investing largely in shares. But one doubt was expressed, and this

only by the most cautious—that the enormous output of silver would lower the price of the article so much as to leave no margin for profit.

Suddenly, when things were looking almost at their best, and people were prophesying that the 'boom' had hardly begun, the Bank of Van Diemen's Land closed its doors, forced to do so by the united jealousy of other commercial institutions. Then followed other banks and building societies in Melbourne. These suspensions soon brought the mining shares down to their proper value, which was in many cases nothing at all, dear at the price of the paper they were printed on. The bank being closed, no money was forthcoming to pay calls, so numbers of the mines had to shut down for want of capital. In others, work had never been started, and all the funds were found expended in salaries to men with nothing to do. Other lodes pinched out, or were 'driven' for and missed, owing to 'faults' and other eccentricities of Nature. Gradually mine after mine closed down; the swarm of adventurers who had flocked to the field drifted away to other finds, those only remaining who could not get away through want of funds, or who were connected in some way with the few mines which still were kept working, generally by English capital. Twelve months since, Zeehan and Dundas were rapidly-growing towns, with every prospect of having between them in the future over one hundred thousand inhabitants. Now, most of the hotels are empty, the houses in many cases abandoned by their owners, only a few mines working with hope long deferred, and the furor has died out. All the 'bitten ones' have for consolation is probably a bundle of valueless mining scrip, which they may perhaps occasionally turn over, regretting sorrowfully that they did not sell out during the boom, which they still fondly hope may come again.

BLOOD ROYAL.*

CHAPTER XV.—A WILLING PRISONER.

AT Oxford all that day, Mr Archibald Gillespie of Durham College found himself in a very singular position indeed for an undergraduate of such unquestioned and respectable manners. For he was keeping Maud Plantagenet shut up behind a sported oak in her brother's rooms, and clandestinely supplying her with lunch, tea, and dinner!

This somewhat compromising condition of affairs in the third pair left of Back Quad New Buildings had been brought about by a pure concatenation of accidents. When Maud left Chiddingwick that morning, with nothing in her purse, she had trusted to Dick to supply her with the wherewithal for paying her way back again. But as Dick was not at home when she reached his rooms, she had been compelled to wait in for him till he returned from Chiddingwick. For the same reason, she was obviously unable to supply herself with food at an hotel or restaurant. Being a Plantagenet, indeed, she

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would have been far too proud to let Gillespie suspect these facts by overt act or word of hers: but somehow, he guessed them for himself, and soon found his suspicions confirmed by her very silence. Now, the scouts or college servants have a key of the 'oak,' and can enter men's rooms at any moment without warning beforehand. There was nothing for it, therefore, but for Gillespie to take Dick's scout frankly into his confidence; which he did accordingly. Already, he had forgotten his eleven o'clock lecture; Plato's *Republic* had gone to the wall before a pretty face: and now, he went outside the door to plot still further treason, and shouted, after the primitive Oxford fashion, for the servant.

'Look here, Robert,' he said, as the scout came up, 'there's a young lady in deep mourning in Mr Plantagenet's rooms. She's Mr Plantagenet's sister, and she's come up to see him about this dreadful affair the other day, you understand. But he's gone down home for the morning to Chiddingwick—they've crossed on the road—and he mayn't perhaps be back again till late in the evening. Now, I can see the young lady's got no money about her—she came away hurriedly—and I don't like to offer her any. So I'm going to telegraph to Mr Plantagenet to come back as soon as he can; but he can't be here for some time yet, anyhow. Of course, the young lady *must* have something to eat; and I want you to help me with it. Tell the porter who she is, and that she'll probably have to stop here till Mr Plantagenet comes back. Under the circumstances, nobody will say anything about it. At lunch-time, you must take out something quiet and nice in my name from the kitchen—chicken cutlets, and so forth—and serve it to the young lady in Mr Plantagenet's rooms. When Mr Plantagenet returns he'll see her out of college.'

As for Robert, standing by obsequious, he grinned from ear to ear at the obvious prospect of a good round tip, and undertook for his part with a very fair grace that the young lady's needs should be properly provided for. Your scout is a person of infinite resource, the most servile of his kind: he scents tips from afar, and would sell his soul to earn one. Even in this age of enlightenment, however, an Oxford college still retains many traits of the medieval monastery from which it sprang; women are banned in it; and 'twould have been as much as Mr Robert's place was worth to serve the unknown young lady in Dick Plantagenet's rooms without leave from headquarters. So he made a clean breast of it. Application to the Dean, however, resulted in his obtaining the necessary acquiescence; and Gillespie devoted himself through the rest of that day to making Maud as comfortable as was possible under the circumstances in her brother's rooms till Dick's return from Chiddingwick. So charitably was he minded, indeed, that he hardly left her at all except at meal-times. Now, in the course of a long day's *tête-à-tête*, two people get to know a wonderful deal of one another, especially if they have mutually sympathetic natures; and before Dick returned that evening to set Maud at liberty, she and Gillespie felt already like old friends together.

Dick didn't get back, as it happened, till long after Hall; and then it was too late for Maud to catch a train back that evening. The reason

for the delay was simple: Dick hadn't received Archie Gillespie's telegram till his return from the rectory. He had stopped there to lunch, at Mrs Tradescant's request, after his interview with Mary; and for Mary's sake he thought it best to accept the invitation. So the end of it all was that Dick had to find his sister a bed under the friendly roof of a married Fellow of his college; and that before he took her round there, he, she, and Gillespie had a long chat together about the prospects of the situation.

'Mr Gillespie and I have been talking it over all day, Dick,' Maud said very decidedly, 'and we're both of us of opinion—most distinctly of opinion, that you oughtn't, as a duty to mother and to us, to do anything that'll compel you to take back again the one great forward step you took in coming to Oxford. Mr Gillespie says rightly, it's easy enough to go down, but not by any means so easy, once you're there, to climb up again.'

'I ought to do whatever makes me earn an immediate income soonest, though, for all your sakes, Maud,' Dick objected stoutly.

'Not at all!' Maud answered with Plantagenet decision, and with wisdom above her years, dictated no doubt by her love and pride in her brother. 'You oughtn't to sacrifice the future to the present.' Then she turned to him quite sharply. 'Did you see Mary Tudor to-day?' she asked, regardless of Gillespie's presence, for she considered him already as an old friend of the family.

The tell-tale colour rushed up fast into Dick's cheek. 'Yes, I did,' he answered, half faltering. 'And she behaved most nobly. She behaved as you'd expect such a girl to behave, Maud. She spoke of it quite beautifully.'

Maud drew back, triumphant. If Mary had been there, she could have thrown her thin arms round her neck and kissed her. 'Well, and *she* didn't advise you to go and settle at Chiddingwick!' Maud cried with proud confidence.

'She didn't exactly *advise* me,' Dick answered with some little hesitation; 'but she acquiesced in my doing it; and she said whatever I did, she'd always love me equally. In point of fact,' Dick added, somewhat sheepishly, 'we never were engaged at all before to-day; but this morning we settled it.'

Maud showed her profound disappointment, nay, almost her contempt, in her speaking face. To say the truth, it's seldom we can any of us see anything both from our own point of view and some one else's as well. Maud could see nothing in all this but profound degradation for Dick, and indirectly for the family, if Dick went back to Chiddingwick; while Mary had only thought how noble and devoted it was of her unselfish lover to give up everything so readily for his mother and sisters.

'I think,' Dick ventured to put in, since Mary's reputation was at stake in Maud's mind, 'she was most—well, pleased that I should be willing to—to make this sacrifice—if I may call it so—because I thought it my duty.'

Maud flung herself on the floor at his side, and held his hand in hers passionately. 'Oh, Dick,' she cried, clinging to him, 'dear Dick! she oughtn't to have thought like that! She oughtn't to have thought of *us*! She ought to

have thought, as I do, of you and your future! If I, who am your sister, am so jealous for your honour, surely she, who's the girl you mean to marry, ought to be ten times more so!

'So she is,' Dick answered, manfully. 'Only, don't you see, Maud, there are different ways of looking at it. She thinks, as I do, that it's best and most imperative to do one's duty first; she would give me up for herself, almost, and wait for me indefinitely, if she thought I could do better so for you and dear mother.'

Maud clung to him passionately still. For it was not to him only she clung, but also to the incarnate honour of the family. 'Oh, Dick,' she cried once more, 'you mustn't do it; you mustn't do it; you'll kill me if you do it! We don't mind starving; that's as easy as anything; but not a second time shall we draggle in the dust of the street the honour of the Plantagenets.'

They sat up late that night, and talked it all over from every side alternately. And the more they talked it over, the more did Gillespie come round to Maud's opinion on the matter. It might be necessary for Dick to leave Oxford, indeed; though even that would be a wrench; but if he left Oxford, it would certainly be well he should take some other work—whatever work turned up—even if less well paid, that would not unclass him.

And before they separated for the night, Maud had wrung this concession at least out of her wavering brother, that he would do nothing decisive before the end of term; and that, meanwhile, he would try to find some more dignified employment in London or elsewhere. Only in the last resort, he promised her, would he return to Chiddingwick—and his father's calling. That should be treated as the final refuge against absolute want. And indeed his soul loathed it; he had only contemplated it at first, not for himself but for his kin, from a stern sense of duty.

Gillespie saw Maud off at the station next morning with Dick. He was carefully dressed, and wore, what was unusual with him, a flower in his button-hole. Maud's last words to him were: 'Now, Mr Gillespie, remember; I rely upon you to keep Dick from backsliding.'

And Gillespie answered, with a courteous bow to the slim pale little creature who sat in deep mourning on the bare wooden seat of the third-class carriage (South-eastern pattern): 'You may count upon me, Miss Plantagenet, to carry out your programme.'

As they walked back together silently up the High towards Durham, Gillespie turned with a sudden dart to his friend and broke their joint reverie. 'Is your sister engaged, Dick?' he asked with a somewhat nervous jerk.

'Why, no,' Dick answered, taken aback—'at least, not that I ever heard of.'

'I should think she would be soon,' Gillespie retorted meaningly.

'Why so?' Dick inquired in an unsuspecting voice.

'Well, she's very pretty,' Gillespie answered; 'and very clever; and very distinguished-looking.'

'She is pretty,' Dick admitted, unsuspecting as before. No man ever really remembers his own sisters are women. 'But, you see, she never

meets any young men at Chiddingwick. There's nobody to make love to her.'

'So much the better!' Gillespie replied, and then relapsed into silence.

(To be continued.)

LONG-DISTANCE RIDES.

THE recent performances of German, Austrian, and Hungarian horsemen perforce invite comparison with former feats of a similar kind; and of these, as far as authentic records allow comparison, Britain has almost the monopoly. The accomplishment, between Berlin and Vienna, of journeys which varied, according to the route chosen, from three hundred and sixty-one English miles to over four hundred, in any time less than eighty-five hours, exhibits the men who took part in the tremendous race as active and untiring riders, if not as horsemen. It is hardly necessary to observe that between a 'good rider' and a 'good horseman' there is a wide and important difference; the former term implying strong seat and light hands only, while the latter indicates in addition the rider's intimate knowledge of his mount, and ability to get out of him the last ounce without inflicting injury. In the majority of cases, the Austrian and German officers proved themselves bad horsemen; the horse ridden by Count Starhemberg, the winner, died of exhaustion the day after its arrival at Berlin; the Irish mare upon which Baron Reitzenstein won the second place, fell from sheer fatigue as soon as her rider dismounted, and could not be induced to rise for several hours; while at least five other competitors literally rode their horses to death. These disasters, repugnant to feelings of humanity, indicate the inability of the riders to measure the endurance of their mounts. Any man who can keep in the saddle can ride a horse to death. His sole requirements for the feat are a hard heart and a strong whip; but it requires a horseman in the highest sense of the word to get out of his animal in a given time the maximum quantity of work it can safely perform. The peculiar temperament and nervous system of the horse—the pluck which gives the thoroughbred his value—require careful study and attention. Other beasts of burden—the elephant, camel, mule, and bullock—are so constituted that no punishment will persuade them to go on when tired out; a well-bred horse, as every one knows, if pressed will gallop till he drops dead.

Foremost among English feats of horsemanship we have one which for generations has been represented in the circus ring. Dick Turpin's famous ride from London to York has taken its place among nursery legends; nevertheless, it was actually performed, and stands as a record of its kind. The highwayman, riding with the very best reason in the world—the safety of his neck—covered the distance of over two hundred miles in a little under twelve hours. This performance stands alone as the longest and fastest journey ever made on the same horse. Most of the long rides of which record exists have been made for wagers; such records are therefore

reliable. Squire Osbaldestone's undertaking to ride two hundred miles in ten hours, which he accomplished so successfully on the 5th of November 1831, is one of the most remarkable feats of endurance in the saddle, and has the merit of freedom from cruelty. The Squire rode his race on the Newmarket racecourse, changing his horse every fourth mile. Four miles is a safe limit for such a purpose, as that splendid horseman knew. Three-mile laps could have been covered in time relatively a little better; but a sound horse in fair training could do his four miles without distress in such time as to make that distance, with the consequent reduction in the number of changes, the most suitable for the purpose. Mr Osbaldestone used sixteen horses for his task, and rode standing in his stirrups like a jockey, while he kept his mount at best speed from start to finish of his four-mile heat, having quite a 'set-to' with his pacemaker at the end of each. The Squire was a hard man, and in good training, so suffered no bad effects from his exertions.

A most creditable performance by Australian Mounted Infantry, in April 1889, also deserves mention, as having been conceived and carried out in a truly sportsman-like spirit. The members of the Gympie Mounted Infantry having been out in camp for manoeuvres at a place called Lytton, near Brisbane, arranged to race home, a distance of one hundred and sixteen miles. With a discretion the German and Austrian executive had done well to copy, over-riding was provided against by the stipulation that no horse should win a prize if he arrived at the winning-post distressed, or in such condition that he could not do a further distance of ten miles. Eleven men, fully equipped in marching order, started from Brisbane at 2.40 P.M. on Wednesday the 23d April. The winner, Private Edwards, riding twelve stone ten pounds, arrived at Gympie at 2 P.M. next day, thus travelling the one hundred and sixteen miles in twenty-three hours and twenty minutes. The route lay over roads heavy from continuous rain, and included the crossing of a range of hills which threw out several of the competitors. The second man, Sergeant O'Neill, actually rode a better race than the winner, as his horse carried fourteen stone three pounds, and came in only a few yards behind Edwards'. The third and fourth men also arrived home within fifty yards of the winner. The horses ridden in this remarkable race were all thoroughbreds, and were in perfect training. It is hardly necessary to observe that a long course of preparation is essential to fit any horse for such a journey.

This Australian race has value as furnishing trustworthy data on which to estimate the travelling power of men and horses, for which purpose the Austro-German competition is absolutely useless. Every man who got home in the latter—and of the one hundred and nine Germans only seventy-two appear to have reached Vienna—brought in his horse in such a condition that if it did not succumb altogether, its career of utility was at an end: each unfortunate animal bore testimony that it had been taxed cruelly beyond its powers, and proved in its state not how far it could travel, but that it could not travel the distance asked of it and survive.

Our ancestors perforce made most of their

journeys on horseback until public conveyances became general, and, as might be supposed, long-distance rides against time were not uncommon. One conspicuous case has lately been unearthed by a descendant of the rider. Mr Thomas Cole, in 1614, rode from London to Shrewsbury, a distance of one hundred and fifty-four miles, in fourteen hours. He started from London at three o'clock on the morning of 4th August, and reached his destination before five o'clock the same afternoon. We are not told how often he changed horses; but the then condition of the roads, if they deserved the name at all, makes it certain that he did so with considerable frequency. As an example of sturdy endurance, this performance deserves a more prominent place in our records of horsemanship. We recall other feats of the same kind in the last century, but none quite equal to it.

Finally may be mentioned the brightest example of pluck and endurance in the saddle known to us—Captain Charles Townley's extraordinary journey on horseback from Belgrade to Constantinople in October 1849. This ride of eight hundred and twenty miles was not inspired by sporting motives; it was a race for life, not the rider's; a splendid response to the call of duty, and no more. How it came to be made is briefly told. It will be remembered that in the year mentioned the Hungarian War of Independence came to its bloody close, and the patriot Kossuth and many of his friends were compelled to seek in flight safety from the fate which threatened them as rebels against Austria. They made their way to Vidin, and there remained, trusting to the hospitality of the Turks. Austria and the Porte's hereditary enemy Russia demanded the surrender of the fugitives, threatening war if their demand were refused. The Sultan was disinclined to give up men he regarded, in a manner, as guests; but fear of Russia might have overcome his scruples, had the British ambassador, Sir Stratford Canning, not appealed to his sense of honour and dignity to stand firm. Sir Stratford Canning was a power at Pera, and the Turks had grown accustomed to look to him for guidance at critical times; hence, when the Czar pressed for a plain answer to his demand for the extradition of Kossuth and his compatriots, the answer dictated by Canning was 'No.' Russia and Austria forthwith recalled their representatives from the Turkish capital, and war seemed inevitable. Turkey, quaking with fear, turned to Canning; his advice had led her into the scrape; he should see her through it. Sir Stratford was not a man who did things by halves; the responsibility was tremendous, but he did not shrink. He took upon himself to promise that England would stand by Turkey in the struggle, and appealed to Lord Palmerston to ratify the promise without an hour's unnecessary delay.

In those pre-telegraphic days the 'Queen's Messenger' held a more responsible position in his country's service than he does now. As in this instance, the question 'Peace or War?' might be decided by his speed; and where railways did not exist, his speed often depended on his horsemanship. Thus, when Lord Palmerston looked about him for a man to convey his message of approval to Canning, he sought not

only one on whose energy and trustworthiness he could rely, but one who could turn to the very best account the means of travel available. He saw the right man in Captain Townley, a famous rider to hounds, and an intrepid soldier. Him, 'Old Pam' despatched with orders to 'spare neither yourself nor others.' On the 20th October the messenger left Belgrade, carrying the assurance of England's support. Despatches had already been sent by the Austrian Government to the Porte, and if these arrived before Captain Townley brought his, all might be undone. Everything was in favour of Austria's winning the race: three special relays of messengers were waiting at various points on the road to carry on the despatches, and if Townley meant to arrive first, his work was cut out. He proved himself equal to it in the teeth of difficulties which might well have pardoned failure. He had eight hundred and twenty miles to go, changing horses wherever and whenever he could; the roads, never of the best, were deep with mud, and he had to cross the Balkans at night in utter darkness. Twice, the horse he rode fell with him; and not half the journey had been covered when an old gunshot wound worked open and drenched him with blood. Save when he stopped to change horses, and once for six hours to sleep, he spent five days and eleven hours in the saddle, latterly almost fainting with fatigue and loss of blood. But he won his race: at half-past five on the morning of the 28th October, he reached the British Embassy at Pera, and learned that his magnificent performance had not been in vain. Sir Stratford Canning was enabled to announce that the British fleet had been ordered to the Dardanelles; and Austria and Russia, baffled, sullenly withdrew the demand they dared not attempt to enforce.

Without doubt, the horses used in this ride suffered severely. But how would it have fared with Captain Townley's mission had he been merely a bold and enduring rider, and not a horseman who knew exactly how far he might tax the powers of his mounts? He must have failed. Making 'the more haste, the less speed,' he would have ridden his first horse to death half-way through its stage, and would have found himself hopelessly 'thrown out.'

Long-distance rides in these days of universal railways are more in the nature of idle experiments than tests of equine endurance from which deductions of practical value can be drawn. Of late years, forced marches have been a somewhat prominent feature in the programme of work annually carried out by our own cavalry regiments, and these, by reason of the manner in which they are performed, are of genuine utility. To move a body of cavalry at such speed that on arrival at the point where its offensive services were required, the horses were exhausted, obviously would be the purest folly. And how far the average, not the best, horse can travel in a given time and arrive fit for further work after reasonable rest is a matter in which we cannot be too well informed. Such knowledge is gained only by experiment, and only experiments made by fairly large bodies of cavalry judiciously regulated command serious attention.

It does not come fairly under the heading of

this paper, but while dealing with the subject of horses' staying power, it may be of interest to mention that some Eastern nations who give endurance its full value, encourage its development far more practically than do we. General Sir Harry Prendergast told the writer that he was on one occasion present at a race-meeting held at Teheran at which the shortest race was eight miles and the longest twenty-four; the races he witnessed being quite the usual thing, and in no way exceptional in Persia. The bare suggestion of an eight-mile race would create a sensation at Newmarket; nevertheless, to ride it well would demand jockeyship of a higher order than our shorter races develop and to which we are accustomed in this country.

RALPH THORNLEIGH'S PICTURE.

CHAPTER IV.—CONCLUSION.

'ALTHOUGH the present Exhibition at Burlington House contains an exceptionally large number of works of unusual merit, we have no difficulty in selecting the picture of the year. Our choice falls without hesitation upon Mr Ralph Thornleigh's "Despair" (No. 357). This powerful work cannot fail to attract universal attention, and it is not easy to describe it without employing language which savours of exaggeration. It is long since such faultless technique, such mastery of colour, such ability to express emotion, have been discovered by an unknown artist. We do not recall having heard Mr Thornleigh's name before; but the painter of "Despair" will, we are confident, take his place ere long among the foremost portrait painters of the day. We shall watch Mr Thornleigh's career with interest.'

Colonel Stardale read it once; rose from the breakfast-table and read it again; then dropped the *Times* and his eyeglass together, and gave the bell a pull which brought his valet up-stairs four steps at a time.

'Hansom!' he gasped, almost before the door was opened, 'immediately!'

The man vanished; and Colonel Stardale picked up the newspaper to read 'The Royal Academy' column a third time. He had been to Burlington House once, just to say he had been there, and had read the press notices to be able to 'talk Academy' at dinner: but the season being now fairly under weigh, he had been too busy to spend more than a perfunctory half-hour at the Exhibition; and having no artistic proclivities, had spent the time talking to friends instead of studying pictures. He had not even entered the room where No. 357 hung, and had heard no mention of it until last night, when young Tripstone of the Guards asked him with a peculiar grin whether he had 'seen No. 357 at the Academy.' Mr Tripstone's remark recurred to him as he read the *Times* critique, and at the same moment it flashed upon him that Thornleigh was the name of the artist who made that fiasco of Miss Cairnswood's portrait. A horrible suspicion seized him, and he stepped into the hansom which awaited him, and drove the few hundred yards up to Piccadilly, looking very much disturbed.

He was soon standing, catalogue in hand, before

Ralph's masterpiece, which had caught his eye the moment he came into the room. The last shred of hopeful doubt was dispelled: No. 357 was the 'caricature' he had only a month since condemned to destruction in that garret off Holborn. Colonel Stardale honestly believed the picture a daub when he saw it on the easel; but now a strange feeling of awe came over him as he looked up at it. Beatrice stood, her head turned slightly to the left, wearing an expression he had never seen upon her face; her hands were clenched tightly before her, and the whole pose betrayed an agony of hopeless despair. Colonel Stardale was unable to remove his eyes from the face; he was anything but an impressionable man, but there was a something in the portrait which held him spellbound.

The voices of a party of early visitors brought him to himself, and he turned hastily away. 'What does it mean?' he wondered as he walked out through the turnstiles and down the stairs. 'This is terrible. Every one will recognise her, and she will be the talk of the town. I wish I had seen the picture destroyed at the time; but who ever would have dreamt of seeing in the Academy such a daub as it looked? Hung on the line, too! And held up to special notice by the critics! "Despair." What does it all mean? The chatter will be something awful.'

Colonel Stardale's prognostications proved correct. People who knew Beatrice—and the number of her friends had quadrupled since her engagement—saw No. 357, and exclaimed at once: 'Miss Cairnswood, by all that's mysterious; engaged to Colonel Stardale, you know; *she* can't have much to despair about!' There were a few who had known Ralph Thornleigh in his more prosperous days, and had observed the attention he was wont to pay Miss Macallan's pretty niece; and these were able to construct a neat and pathetic little story out of the materials at their command. It bore no resemblance to the true one, but that mattered nothing; it received general credence, and a fortnight after the Academy opened, the picture was the best-discussed subject in London. The striking talent of the artist was quite enough to make a sensation; and this, in conjunction with the engagement of the young lady to so well known a man as Colonel Stardale, made a dish which was served up daily in club and drawing-room and never palled.

The talk began, as usual, in whispers, increased to a murmur, and rapidly grew into a roar. People gave up pretending they did not know there was a story attached to No. 357, when the topic was broached before Colonel Stardale. He could go nowhere but before long some lady cornered him and begged him to 'explain.' In vain he would plead ignorance: in vain he declared Miss Cairnswood knew no Mr Thornleigh, and never in her life had given any artist 'sittings'; and equally in vain he tried to escape or turn the subject. Never a day passed but some new legend was brought to his unwilling ears to receive the stamp of his contradiction; he could go nowhere in comfort; he could find peace only in his chambers and at Warriston Square. Beatrice, who had been harassed even more unsparingly than himself, had given up going out altogether; and the Colonel saw ample

reason for her seclusion in the changed looks which indicated her indifferent health. The truth was Mr Macallan's difficulties were fast coming to a crisis, and his sister, resolutely closing her eyes to the physical injury she was doing her niece, worried her unceasingly to take the step which her calculations convinced her would rescue Messrs Macallan & Son from disaster. But no entreaties to name a day, a week, or even a month for the wedding, moved Beatrice; she ceased urging reasons and excuses for postponing the ceremony; and argue as she would, her aunt could wring no reply from her but that she did not wish to marry yet. The sensation her portrait caused had taken her utterly aback. She had known when she gave Ralph permission to exhibit the picture that she must be recognised; but she had lost sight of the fact that her engagement to Colonel Stardale gave her a far more prominent social place than she used to fill, and it had soon been borne in upon her that 'No. 357' had made her almost a public character: her daily walks had brought this home in a particularly distasteful form.

Nevertheless, there was a bright silver lining to the cloud. In her inmost heart Beatrice revelled in the thought that she had been the means of bringing her lover success. Hope sprang again into vigorous life, and hearkening daily as she did to numberless prophecies of name and fortune for Ralph Thornleigh, it was not wonderful that she refused to name the day for her marriage.

Her intended husband had never inquired if she could account for the curious character in which the artist had portrayed her; he shrank from alluding to the topic which had given him so much annoyance, but none the less he suspected in his fiancée's life the existence of a chapter he had not been permitted to read. He had privately questioned Miss Macallan; but that discreet woman knew nothing; she had never heard of Mr Thornleigh, and was quite sure Beatrice was equally ignorant. How could she? A poor artist who lived in an attic! The Colonel might depend that Miss Macallan's theory was right—namely, that this painter, who undoubtedly was a very clever one, had seen in the photograph the infinite possibilities offered by Beatrice's beauty, and had deliberately made a convenience of the Colonel's order to paint a sensational picture which should attract attention.

'Can you not take legal steps to force him to suppress the picture?' concluded Miss Macallan. 'I am sure you would be justified in punishing such scandalous audacity.'

But the Colonel shook his head; now the mischief was done, it would only aggravate matters to prosecute, even if the man had overstepped the law, which he thought exceedingly doubtful.

'I don't know what to say, I'm sure,' said Miss Macallan fretfully. 'I'm getting quite anxious about Beatrice, she is looking so pale and seedy. It's all worry, you know, Colonel; it's entirely owing to the scandal caused by this wretched picture.'

Colonel Stardale winced perceptibly at the word 'scandal,' but it seemed to convince him of the necessity for taking definite steps.

'We cannot allow it to go on,' he said decisively.

'You must take her away from town, beyond the reach of prating tongues, as soon as possible. Say to Brighton.'

Miss Macallan rose to the occasion instantly. 'I will tell Beatrice what you say, Colonel Stardale, and I'm sure when she learns it is your wish, she will go to-morrow.'

Beatrice, as her aunt well knew, would be the last to urge objections to such an arrangement; but her motives for desiring to leave town differed widely from those ascribed on her behalf. Temporary residence at Brighton, or at any spot distant from town, meant a definite reprieve for so long as that absence might last; and she embraced the proposal eagerly.

The Colonel breathed more freely when she had gone, for he had not enjoyed being seen with her latterly; to be mixed up in a scandal of this description with an obscure artist was intensely odious to him, and Miss Cairnwood's absence gave him a sense of greater independence and freedom. But he soon realised that her departure had done nothing to save him from the incessant questioning, whatever it had accomplished for her, and ere long that came to pass which he dreaded above all things. The Society papers took the matter up, and vied with one another in the publication of stories mendaciously sensational. The Colonel chafed miserably under it, but realising that he could do nothing to stem the flood, waited with what patience he might for it to subside.

But meantime the 'picture scandal,' as it had come to be called, flourished with a vitality that seemed indestructible, and at length the *Mayfair Gazette* brought forward a new story which roused the Colonel to action, unaware though he was that it trod heavily upon the heels of truth.

'We learn upon the best authority,' said the *Mayfair*, 'that Mr Thornleigh's now famous picture was painted under most romantic circumstances. The original of the portrait—who, as all the world knows, is Miss Cairnwood—was at one time engaged to be married to the artist. Misfortune threatening the relative upon whom Miss Cairnwood is dependent, the match was broken off; and it is more than whispered that the marriage since arranged for her with a gentleman well known in society is not wholly unconnected with that misfortune.'

This suggestive paragraph was scarcely in print before some considerate but anonymous friend brought it under Ralph Thornleigh's notice: theretofore he had ignored the various inventions with which the weekly papers regaled their readers, but now he also felt that the time had come to try to put a stop to them. Accordingly he called at the office of the *Mayfair* and requested an interview with the editor. He had some trouble in gaining admission to the sacred precincts of the editor's room; but once within its portals he lost no time in coming to the point.

'I have called,' he said, 'to ask you to favour me with the name of the person who furnished that story about my picture, published in your last number.'

The editor smiled pityingly. 'Quite impossible, Mr Thornleigh; absolutely against our rule to disclose the name of a correspondent.'

'But surely you acknowledge my right to demand the name,' returned Ralph warmly.

Again the editor smiled an aggravating smile. 'Absolutely impossible, sir,' he repeated blandly. '—But,' he continued, scenting useful 'copy,' 'no one is better qualified to deny the story—if it be untrue—than yourself, Mr Thornleigh. If you will deny it, I shall be most happy to publish anything you may wish to say.'

'I didn't come here to confirm or deny anything,' answered Ralph, with no little irritation; 'I want the name of the busybody who sent you the story.'

The editor's smile gave place to a look of lofty indignation. 'I must bid you good-day, Mr Thornleigh,' he said, rising from his chair and ringing the bell.

Ralph swept out of the office in a rage, and when he reached the street, pulled out the paper to read that paragraph again. 'I would have burned the thing ten times over rather than have brought this upon her,' he muttered. 'I only trust she may never see it.' Success whose fruits she would never share was scarcely worth achieving at any price, but purchased at the cost of annoyance to her it was worse than ignominious failure.

The editor of the *Mayfair* had another visitor that morning in the person of Colonel Stardale. The Colonel, more deliberate in his movements, but not less firm in his purpose, felt that justice to himself demanded inquiry. He had no difficulty in obtaining access to the editorial sanctum. The editorial doors flew open at the mention of his name; but the editorial breast refused to impart its secrets even to Colonel Stardale, for the simple truth was the editorial imagination had inspired the 'par.' in question. Colonel Stardale would not stoop to press for the information; but the editor was kind enough to volunteer a statement for which he was scarcely prepared—namely, that Mr Ralph Thornleigh had called a few hours ago on the same errand, and when the editor offered to publish a denial of the story, Mr Thornleigh had refused to deny it. On learning this, Colonel Stardale took up his hat and bowed himself out, leaving the editor to spend an unhappy afternoon in the pages of 'Barkin's Law of Libel.'

The Colonel left the office and walked back to St James's Street at once. He had a distinct purpose in mind, and acted upon it as soon as he reached his chambers. He sat down and wrote Beatrice a carefully-worded account of the *Mayfair's* story and his visit to that journal's office; he asked her to tell him frankly whether or no there were any truth in it. If she did indeed love another man, he would at once release her from her promise to marry himself, and never ask what had incited her to give that promise. He concluded by requesting her to regard his letter as confidential, and to deal openly with him; she would do him grave wrong to give him her hand without her heart.

It must be admitted that it cost the Colonel no great effort to write this letter. His nice sense of propriety had been cruelly lacerated; and his pride had been severely wounded by the *Mayfair's* thinly-veiled imputation that he owed his seeming conquest of Beatrice to the machinations of needy relatives with designs upon his wealth. His love was sincere so far as it went; but it was by no

means so deeply rooted that he could not tear it up if necessity arose; and as he closed and addressed the missive, he told himself that he was already a free man.

Nevertheless, the prompt reply he received from Beatrice was not altogether palatable to him. She said that since he had asked a straightforward question she would give an honest answer. She did love another man, and that man was no other than Ralph Thornleigh. She explained that her permission had been asked and given to exhibit the picture, though at the time she had no suspicion of the attention it would command. She sincerely regretted having thus been the innocent means of causing pain to so kind a friend, and was sure Mr Thornleigh would share the feeling. Finally—and this was the pill the Colonel found so nauseous—she thanked him for his offer to release her from her promise to marry him, and most gratefully accepted it.

'Most gratefully accepts it!' The Colonel did not care about the phrase at all. He could not blame her, however; so he crushed down his resentment, and wrote her a kindly letter of farewell.

Then he countermanded certain articles of jewellery he had ordered; directed his man to pack up immediately; placed two or three friends under vows of eternal secrecy, and confided to them that his engagement was at an end; and left for Switzerland, serenely confident that all London would hear of it within the week. He was not mistaken. During the first fortnight of his stay in the Engadine he received no fewer than ninety letters condoling with him on the shameful treatment accorded him at Miss Cairns-wood's hands. The Colonel answered all with his customary punctuality, and told himself that he might show in town next season with a perfectly 'clean slate.'

We may pass over the scene enacted at the hotel at Brighton when Miss Macallan learned of her niece's dismissal of Colonel Stardale; it was not edifying. We will turn rather to Mr Thornleigh, who received from Beatrice on the day the Colonel's farewell reached her, an urgent summons, which he obeyed in the promptest fashion. He called upon Mr Macallan, told him he was now in a position to offer Beatrice a comfortable home, and requested leave to 'speak to her.' Uncle Angus, who at the moment his visitor arrived was poring over a long letter from his niece, had very little to say. If Mr Thornleigh felt that his future was quite assured, and that he was prepared to take care of Beatrice, Mr Macallan had no objections to urge: quite the contrary; he would wish him God speed and bid him hasten to her at once. Ralph gave the required assurance, and went off to Brighton by the next train. Beatrice met him at the station; and has not lost sight of him since.

The long-delayed crash came soon after Colonel Stardale's departure, and the news, gleaned from the *Times*, drew from him a frank and generous offer of help, which, however, much to his sister's chagrin, Angus Macallan declined. Eventually, however, some friends combined to start him again in business, and he is getting on very well. He now lives at Hackney, which suits him, but which Miss Macallan calls 'an impossible place.' Ralph

and Beatrice are settled at Twickenham. He is fast making a reputation, and says Beatrice helps him; this may or may not be true, but they are very happy. So is Colonel Stardale, who is still a bachelor.

JEWISH DOCTORS.

THROUGHOUT the middle ages in both Europe and the East the science of the physician was in the hands of the Jews. We find at Bagdad and at Paris, at Vienna, and even in the Vatican, beside Prince and Pope, a Jew installed to be the court physician. Not only so, but the faculties of Medicine in the universities sprang out of Jewish schools. Many of the Jewish Doctors were held in the highest esteem, were the authors of works still extant, and contributed by no means a little to the emancipation of the science from superstitious methods.

At a very early age medicine was practised among the Jews, and the words of the author of the book *Ecclesiasticus*, 'Honour a physician with the honour due unto him for the uses which ye may have of him: for the Lord hath created him,' show in what esteem he was held. Moreover, the words that follow let us see that even in the days of the son of Sirach—the second century before Christ—the Jewish doctor had assumed a recognised position in the Oriental courts. The author goes on to say: 'He shall receive honour of the king. The skill of the physician shall lift up his head: and in the sight of great men he shall be in admiration.'

It is remarkable that the son of Sirach in the account of the physician confines his commendation to legitimate practice, as we should now term it, and gives no countenance to the astrological quackery which was so largely imported into the art of healing. He says: 'The Lord hath created medicines out of the earth; and he that is wise will not abhor them'—by these medicines herbs as well as minerals are to be understood. 'Of such doth the apothecary make a confection.'

That wrong-doing and sickness were intimately connected seems to have been a notion from an early age. When the blind man was healed by Christ, the question was asked whether he had sinned or his parents, that he had been born blind; and in the book of *Ecclesiasticus* the instruction given to the sick is, first to 'leave off sin, and order thine hands aright, and cleanse thy heart from all wickedness;' and after that, 'Give place to the physician, for the Lord hath created him: let him not go from thee, for thou hast need of him. There is a time when in their hands there is good success.'

In later times, a sect among the Jews made the practice of medicine one of its main objects; this was the sect of the Essenes and Therapeutæ, of whom Josephus and Philo give such curious accounts. Josephus relates how he saw a possessed man healed in the presence of Vespasian by one of this sect, named Eleazar. The practice seems to have been superstitious. He introduced a certain root into the nose of the afflicted man, and pronounced the name of Solomon, together with some magical formulæ.

Akiba was a physician of repute, after the fall of Jerusalem, as was also his friend Ishmael. The

two doctors were walking together in Jerusalem one day, when they were consulted by a sick man, and gave him a prescription. A gardener standing by at once questioned them. 'Who,' asked he, 'afflicted this man?'

'God,' was their reply.

The gardener at once posed them with, 'Then how dare you men interfere with the work of God?'

After a moment's pause, Akiba said: 'You are a gardener?'

'Yes—that is my trade.'

'Who produces fruits out of the earth?'

'God,' answered the gardener.

'Then,' said Akiba, 'how dare you meddle with His work?'

As the man was confounded, Akiba explained that as in a field grew weeds with the good seed, so were the elements of disease in the body of man along with the principle of health, and that as God gave the tiller of the soil the work of clearing the ground of weeds, and nourishing the good seeds, so did He send the physician to eradicate the evil from man's body, and encourage the growth in him of vigour and vital force.

The Talmud gives us an insight into the medical practices of the Jewish physicians, and we see that although there was much that was absurd and superstitious, there was nevertheless some sound principle, and real research into the origin of disease. What is very remarkable is that the physician Samuel, who died 243 A.D., devoted himself to dissection, and at his death left a sum of money to be spent in the purchase of corpses for anatomical research. Such studies could not be prosecuted without great danger, as the vulgar were certain to be alarmed, and were likely to fall upon a Jew who explored the construction of a dead body.

Abba Oumna was an illustrious physician of the fourth century, and a man of great nobility of character. He would not receive a fee in his hands, because he feared discouraging poor sick people from visiting him, as they might think he would not care to attend to them if unable to richly reward him. He had, accordingly, a box put in his anteroom with a slit in it, and every patient put in just what he liked, whether he were rich or poor. But perhaps the most striking story told of him is this. One day two students of medicine visited him from a distance and asked to be lodged with him overnight. He gave them up a room in which was a handsome carpet. Next morning they ran off with the carpet, went to the bazaar, and there offered it for sale. Oumna came by, and seeing the carpet, but not recognising the men, asked its price. They bade him offer a sum. He named what he would give for the carpet, but they replied it was too little. 'Not at all,' said he; 'that is what I paid for a carpet precisely similar to this one.' Then the two students told him it was his carpet which they had carried off, and asked him whether he had not formed an opinion that they were great rascals, when he found how his hospitality had been abused.

'Not at all,' answered the physician. 'A child of Israel never judges any from a first offence. Come—I will buy back my carpet, and do you give the money to the poor.'

When Oumna was consulted by very poor

persons, after he had recovered them from their disease, he was wont to give them money and say: 'Now go—get you bread and meat; those be the best doctors to attend on you henceforth.' The remedies scattered here and there in the Talmud have been collected in a curious work by Günzburger, published at Göttingen in 1743. As already intimated, many of them are of no real value. We will pass from the Talmudic period of medicine with one quotation which does not breathe the spirit of gallantry: 'There is a cure for all sicknesses if the stomach be clear; for all aches and pains if the heart be not affected; for all troubles if the head be not attacked; but there is no relief from a bad woman.'

An immense destruction of medical books as well as of others took place when the Saracens conquered Persia. Saad, son of Abu-Wakkas, wrote to Omar to know what was to be done with all the books that had come into his possession. 'Throw them into the river,' answered Omar. 'If they are good for anything, Allah can and will direct us without them; if good for naught, the sooner got rid of the better.'

Bassorah became a great school of medicine among the Jews, and Omar himself thought it advisable to call to his aid the famous Jewish physician Abu-Hafsa. The Calif Moawiyah I. encouraged the translation into Arabic of Hebrew tracts on the science of healing. The Bassorah school was moved to Bagdad, and from this school issued Isaac-ben-Amram, a native of Damascus. He was called in to attend the Emir of Cairouan, and found that a Christian physician was also in attendance, who opposed all that he prescribed. Then Isaac withdrew, saying: 'Disagreement among doctors is worse than tertian fever.'

Isaac-ben-Solomon, or Abu Jakub as he was called, was a disciple of the former Isaac, and was born about 832 A.D. He died at the age of a hundred, unmarried. Some one said to him in his old age: 'Are you not sorry that you leave behind you no children?' 'Not at all,' answered the physician. 'I leave what is better than children—my treatise on Fevers.' Another version of the story is that he valued his eighteen volumes—one a treatise on Philosophy, others on Religion—higher than a family of children.

At Salerno was a famous school of medicine, and many eminent Jewish physicians issued from it. The school was founded by the Greeks and Saracens, and at one time in it Pontus taught in Greek, Abdallah in Arabic, and Eliseus in Hebrew. It was through the Jews that the knowledge of medicine penetrated among the Arabs; and it was from the Saracens in Spain that the knowledge of medicine came to the Christians in Europe, where Montpellier became the rival medical school to Salerno. But unhappily the physicians of the ninth and tenth centuries had departed from the wise teaching of Samuel, who encouraged dissection. They came to regard the examination of the human body with the knife as a sort of sacrilege, and despised surgery as an ignoble profession. However, in the eleventh century medicine made great strides. 'The Oriental tongues,' says Cabanis, who has written on the *Revolutions of Medicine*, 'were familiar to the Jews, and from the time when Galenus and Hippocrates and the other masters of medicine were known only through Arabic and

Syriac translations, the Jews alone knew how to treat the sick with some sort of method, and to make a practical use of the labours of antiquity.' In fact, the profession of medicine became a specialty of the Jews. Every prince and every prelate had his Hebrew physician, who was thus at times drawn into controversy involuntarily. Anselm of Treves, who wrote in 1050, says that the Emperor Henry III. had a Jewish physician, and that this man and Wazo, Bishop of Liège, had often arguments with one another about certain passages in the Bible. One day the Jew bet his finger that he could defeat the bishop in argument. According to Anselm, he lost his bet, and then held out his finger to the bishop to have it amputated. Bishop Wazo laughingly bade him keep it in trust for him till he claimed it.

Ibn-Zohar was born at Penafior, in Spain, about 1070 A.D. and began to study medicine when he was ten years old. His father made him solemnly swear never to allow himself to be persuaded to employ poisons, for at that time Jewish physicians were in repute not solely for healing purposes, but also as being able to remove persons who were obnoxious. He was named house-physician to Ali, king of Seville; and had the bad fortune to recover the brother of the king, whom Ali had caused to be poisoned. In revenge for this, he was thrown into prison, and languished there till Jusuf, Prince of Morocco, drove Ali from his throne. Then he recovered his liberty, and entered into the service of his deliverer.

The most illustrious Jewish physician of the twelfth century was Moses-ben-Maimon, or Maimonides, as he is usually called. He was born in 1135, and became a magistrate of Cordova. He was forced in 1160 to embrace Islam, but fled at the first opportunity, and took refuge in Egypt, where he became physician to several of the Sultans. In one of his letters he complains how hard were his duties, for if one of the children, wives, or servants of the Sultan was ill, he was detained in the palace till this member of the household was recovered. He had to visit the palace every day, and as he lived at three-quarters of a league from Cairo, his time was by this means greatly taken up. On his way, crowds of Jews and Mohammedans lined the road, and he had to attend to and prescribe for all. His consultations continued till late at night, and till sometimes he had lost the power of speech and fell asleep standing. Among the numerous works left by Maimonides is one on Bronchitis.

In Bagdad there lived in the same century a famous Arabic physician who lectured to Arabs. No Jew and no Christian was permitted to attend his lectures. However, a young Jew, Ebat-Allah, was most desirous of instruction; he persuaded a servant to conceal him in the lecture-room, and thus he attended the course for a whole year. One day the Professor was asked a question on medicine by a pupil, which he could not answer off hand, whereupon Ebat-Allah shouted forth the reply from his hiding-place. He recollected having heard it in one of the former lectures. He was brought forth from his place of concealment, and the physician on questioning him was astounded to find that he had learned more than

all the rest of his pupils. He afterwards became famous, became physician to the Calif, and acquired the title of 'The Unique.' He deserted the faith of his fathers for Mohammedanism, and was bitterly reproached for becoming a renegade by a fellow-physician at court who was a Christian. He died in 1164, blind, deaf, and in abject poverty.

Abu Bekr Mohammed Ibn-Zohar was a Jewish doctor at the court of Jusuf, Prince of Morocco. One day, the Prince, hastily entering his physician's cabinet, did not find him there, but on the table were some Arabic verses from his hand, blotted with his tears, in which he bewailed his loneliness, separated from wife and children, who were at Seville. The Prince went away, and without a word to Ibn-Zohar, wrote to the Governor of Seville to send over to Morocco the family of the Jewish doctor. When they had arrived, Jusuf lodged them in a handsome house, and then sent his physician there, saying that he would find in that house certain persons who had long suffered from heartache, whom he desired him to cure.

In 1246 the Council of Béziers forbade Christians having recourse to Israelite physicians; and the Council of Alby in 1254 condemned the employment of medicines made after Jewish prescriptions.

The faculty of Paris was unquestionably jealous of the favour in which Jewish doctors were held, for in 1301 it issued a decree forbidding men and women of the religion of Moses from exercising the medical profession towards any person of the Catholic religion. In Spain, also, several decrees of Councils were launched against the Jewish doctors, and against Christians employing them. The same was done by Councils at Avignon in 1326 and 1337; but these canons seem to have been ignored. The sick insisted on calling to their aid the men who were esteemed best able to treat their several maladies, regardless of their nationality and the faith they professed. At Montpellier, several fanatical priests excommunicated their parishioners who turned a deaf ear to their injunctions to abstain from recourse to Hebrew doctors, who, they said, were unqualified to act, not having received degrees at the university. James, king of Majorca and Count of Roussillon, by letters-patent forbade the Israelites practising medicine without having been examined and been granted faculties; and these letters were confirmed by Philip VI. in 1331.

At the beginning of the fourteenth century a furious controversy raged among the Jewish physicians relative to the advantage of an amulet with a figure of a lion on it which was in use and had been prescribed by Isaac de Lattes. It was interrupted by the expulsion of the Jews from France in 1306, when all the Jewish doctors of the school of Montpellier went into exile. Many were received into favour by Charles II., king of Naples, but great numbers were dispersed and died of want. In 1368 the Council of Lavaur, in Languedoc, renewed the canons against the practice of medicine by the Jews; but King John took them under his protection, and, by a decree in 1362, empowered them to exercise surgery and medicine if they had passed a qualifying examination. Under this decree the Jews held their own to the end of the century.

We have not space to mention the names of the most famous even of the numerous Israelite medical men of the succeeding centuries, but we must not omit to notice the successful operation for cataract on Don John II. of Aragon by Abiabar, Jewish surgeon of Lerida, in 1468. In 1492, Ferdinand and Isabella banished all Jews from Spain. The popes Eugenius IV. and Nicolas V. his successor forbade Christians from calling to their aid Hebrew doctors, surgeons, and apothecaries. Their successors, however, did not share their intolerance. Paul II. tolerated Jewish physicians, and exempted them from wearing the red gabardine which marked those of their race and religion. Julius II. had a private physician who was a Hebrew; so had Leo X. the famous Bonnet de Lattes; so had Paul III. and Julius III. Some of the Italian Jew physicians, Balmez, Manteno, and Alatino translated Arabic treatises into Latin, and materially assisted in the diffusion of medical knowledge. In 1555 the imperious Paul IV. forbade the practice of medicine by Jews; and as this papal bull was disregarded generally, it was renewed by Pius IV., then by Gregory XIII., in 1562 and 1581. However, Sixtus V. reversed these decisions by a bull in 1586, in which he accorded full permission to Israelite doctors to minister to Christian patients.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE *Kew Bulletin* publishes the results of inquiries which have been made with reference to a plant yielding 'Meing,' a preparation which is much used for chewing by the Laos, a people inhabiting a district of Siam. The plant used in the preparation of this delicacy is the Assam tea-plant of commerce, which is not employed for making an infused beverage, as in other lands, but is made up into Meing. This is prepared by steaming the leaves, tying them up in bundles, and burying them in the ground for a period of about fifteen days, after which the compound will keep for two years or more. The chewing of Meing is almost universal among the Laos, and is especially esteemed by those who are engaged in severe bodily labour.

It is generally believed that in Britain and in other European countries tea is used only in the form of the 'cup that cheers;' but it would seem that this is not the case. It is reported on good authority that tea eaten dry is supposed, among certain classes, especially domestic servants, to be good for the complexion, and that when the taste is once acquired, the desire for the leaf assumes all the importance of a craze like opium-smoking or dram-drinking, and is as pernicious as either. It is supposed that the erroneous notion that tea can have any influence in beautifying the complexion arises from the circumstance that the Chinese used to treat the tea-leaves with arsenic, a drug which is known to have a peculiar clearing influence upon the skin of those who take it habitually.

Legislation for the protection of the eggs of

wild-birds has long been urgently called for, and the question is discussed anew by Mr E. P. Knubley in a recent number of the *Annals of Scottish Natural History*. It is there suggested that County Councils should acquire powers from Parliament from time to time and as necessity arises to protect mountains, commons, and waste places, lakes, portions of cliff and foreshore, for certain months of the year. In the meantime, landlords and occupiers having control over such places would do good by protecting as far as possible birds breeding on their lands.

In view of the danger of explosion if a naked light be used on board a tank oil-steamer, Custom-house officers are directed in future to use in 'rummaging' such vessels electric lights of special pattern. Another recent Customs' order directs that packages said to contain photographic preparations sensitive to white light shall be examined only by ruby-coloured lanterns. Both these regulations were much needed, and the latter will be particularly appreciated by tourist photographers, who have often had to deplore the loss of valuable plates, negatives in embryo, through the conscientious persistence of a Custom-house officer.

A curious light is thrown on the perfection to which natural wine is imitated by modern chemical methods in a story that is related by our consul at Cadiz. This gentleman relates that he and a friend, visiting one of the native sherry cellars there, partook of two samples of wine which seemed to them to be almost identical in flavour and quality. To their surprise, they were told that one of these wines was a natural product, the market price of which was fifty pounds a butt, while the other sample was a manufactured article, which costs fourpence-halfpenny per bottle, and is probably retailed at four shillings per bottle. This imitation of the natural juice of the grape can hardly come under the head of adulteration or sophistication, but must rather be looked upon as a triumph of modern chemistry. The natural product is first analysed, and the chemist, ascertaining the exact nature of its constituent parts, is able to combine those constituents, and thus reproduce as nearly as possible the original compound.

The *North-eastern Daily Gazette* announces the discovery of a new and simple process of producing caustic soda, chlorine, and other chemical products, direct from the brine, by electricity. The most careful tests show an economy of over fifty per cent. in favour of the new process, as compared with former methods. It is described as the simplest of all the known processes of soda-making, the caustic soda being produced direct from the brine in one operation instead of two. At present carbonate of soda is first produced, and from that the caustic soda is made. 'The valuable chlorine is also saved and utilised for the production of bleaching powder and other bye-products.' Eminent chemists and electricians have already pronounced the new method a complete success from a chemical point of view; and it is said that there is every prospect of its being worked as a commercial success.

Mr Van der Weyde, the well-known London photographer, has invented a method of causing or curing distortion in photographic pictures by an appliance which he names the Photo-corrector.

For instance, if in a photograph the head of the subject be rendered too large—as it must be if the face be thrown at all forward—its size can be reduced by this new agent; hands and feet of large proportions, whether their size be due to the fault of the photograph or to Nature herself, can be reduced in either width or length, or both, at the will of the operator. These changes are brought about, not by any stretching or shrinkage of the photographic film, but by purely optical means. As the method adopted forms the subject of a patent, its details are not yet made public.

The art of ballooning for military purposes continues to excite the attention of the authorities, and experiments are becoming common in all countries. In Russia, this subject forms an important part of military training, and a balloon floating at an altitude of two thousand feet, and carrying a powerful electric search-light, has been used there experimentally as a means of throwing a powerful beam of light upon the earth beneath. In Germany, such experiments have been encouraged by the Emperor William, who has promised an annual donation of twenty thousand marks to the Association founded in that country to promote the art of *aërostation*.

It is not generally known that no one has a right to use even the simple glass still commonly employed for chemical work unless he holds a license from the Board of Inland Revenue. The subject has recently assumed prominence from the fact of an analytical chemist being called upon to pay license duty for using such a still. It is satisfactory to note that on the receipt of a protest against payment of this duty it has been officially declared that the Board have no desire to extend the obligation to take out a license for stills used solely for distilling water, and that if any analytical chemist will submit his case to the Board, it will receive careful consideration.

The cheap production of the beautiful metal, aluminium, continues to lead to various new applications of the material, which, on account of its extreme lightness as well as its fine appearance, causes it to find favour in many employments. It is presently to be used in a totally new service in the city of Chicago, where a house of sixteen storeys, at the corner of State and Madison Streets, is to be erected, which will be entirely fronted on both sides with aluminium, in lieu of brick or terra-cotta. This new departure in house-building will be regarded with great interest. Opticians are also using aluminium largely for all kinds of fittings for instruments, such as mounts of lenses, tubes for telescopes, cases for opera glasses, and even tripod legs for cameras. It is also coming into use for such ornamental things as were formerly made of silver or ormolu; and many shops where such things are sold are now displaying a variety of articles made of the pretty white metal.

While aluminium was daily becoming cheaper, the price of platinum recently rose nearly to that of gold, a result brought about, it is said, by a combination between English merchants and brokers in St Petersburg, who controlled the output from the Uralian mines. The increase in price had, however, one good effect in causing new sources of supply to be discovered, and the price of the metal quickly went down to its old level. There are now in the Urals forty mines

along the course of a single river, the grains of ore being obtained from the sand by the very primitive process of washing in cradles. Were it not for the extraordinary weight of the metallic grains, much of the metal would under this treatment be washed away. The metal as found requires careful purification, for with it are commonly associated gold, iron, osmium, iridium, and other rare metals.

It will be remembered that last session a resolution of the House of Commons was passed, at the instance of Sir E. Birkbeck, relative to the establishment of a complete system of electrical communication on our coasts. Many of our coastguard stations, lifeboat houses, and post-offices are now in electrical communication, and in more than one instance the new departure has already led to the saving of lives. It is stated that the Royal Commission which has been dealing with telegraphic communication between lightships and the shore will recommend that the four lightships which guard the terrible Goodwin Sands shall forthwith be placed in electrical communication with the coast. Those who dwell in the neighbourhood of the Downs know how often lives might have been saved if communication with these lightships had been more prompt.

The Excise authorities in London have lately been doing their best to stop the sale of cigar stumps. In cases which they have brought before the courts it has been distinctly proved that stewards of clubs, and those having the charge of public resorts where large numbers of cigars are consumed, make a practice of selling the stubs, or ends, at the rate of about one shilling per pound to certain factories at the east end of London, where they are chopped up and rolled in fresh tobacco leaves, and ultimately sold once more as 'cigars.' The authorities have stopped this traffic on the ground of fraud against the revenue, but at the same time they are doing good work in making difficult the manufacture of so-called cigars which, saturated with nicotine, must be most pernicious to the consumer.

A German paper asserts that the camels which were introduced into German South-west Africa last year have proved most valuable as a means of keeping up communication between distant places as well as for long journeys into the interior of the country; the power of these remarkable animals of being able to travel for an entire week without food or water has been put to the test again and again. They are said to stand the climate well, and are not subject to many fatal diseases which attack both horses and cattle in this part of South Africa.

Mr F. E. Ives of Philadelphia, whose method of combining three photographic pictures taken under special conditions with three coloured glasses of selected tints, and combining their images on a screen by optical means so as to form a veritable picture in colours, was brought by him before our Royal Society some months back, has now produced commercially a modified form of the instrument, which he calls the *Heliochromoscope*. This is a table appliance in which is placed a special triple photograph, and which is said to reproduce the lights and shades and colours of Nature as readily as the phonograph

reproduces sounds. Mr Ives' instrument has certainly the advantage over Edison's phonograph in the fact that it has not only achieved success but is a marketable article. The phonograph, on the other hand, about which so many wonders have been recorded, seems, for some reason or other, to hang fire; so far as we can learn it is neither advertised nor sold.

Saccharin, that wonderful product of coal-tar, which is said to be three hundred times sweeter than sugar, and is now known as a valuable therapeutic agent, has recently found a new application as a substitute for sugar in the preservation of fruits. This industry has hitherto found an obstacle to its operations in the circumstance that certain fruits have associated with their skins micro-organisms which in the presence of cane-sugar set up fermentation. This action can be stayed by the employment of excess of sugar, or by heating the fruit to a high temperature in order to kill the germs which cause the mischief; but both expedients are prejudicial to the flavour of the fruit. By the employment of saccharin in the proportion of one and a quarter ounces to four gallons of water the difficulty vanishes, and the bottled fruit need not be exposed to a temperature higher than one hundred and eighty degrees Fahrenheit.

The San Francisco and San Mateo Electric Railway has a novel device for overcoming the difficulties connected with a steep incline. The road has a double track, the up-track as it reaches the difficult place—a grade of fourteen in one hundred—making a detour, so as to climb the hill by a longer route having an easier ascent. The down-track comes direct down the hill; but to avoid a too swift descent, a counter-weight is drawn up as the train descends. The track has beneath it a conduit, in which runs a carriage carrying this weight; and by means of a half-inch wire-rope the weighted carriage is attached to the car before it begins its descent. The rope passes several times round a drum on the car, so that the rate of speed can be controlled by the man in charge of the train.

At a recent meeting of the Iron and Steel Institute, a paper by Mr Hadfield on 'Alloys of Iron and Chromium' met with much attention. In America, chrome-steel has been produced for some years; but there are difficulties in making the alloys, especially when large masses have to be dealt with, which have not been yet overcome. That chrome steel is a valuable metal for many purposes was vouched for by Mr Webb of Crewe, who asserted that springs made from it were so superior to those made of any other material that the springs on the North-western Railway had been replaced by those made of the new material. He stated also that a better-wearing tire was producible from chrome steel than from ordinary metal, and that it was valuable in the making of various tools.

Some time ago, Mr John Aitken pointed out that dust particles in the air would, under certain conditions, attract moisture, and thus form cloud or fog. Based upon this observation, he has now invented an instrument for ascertaining the degree of impurity which may exist in the air of a room or other enclosed space. The air to be tested is held in a tube while a jet of steam is passed through it, when coloured fog is pro-

duced varying in tint from delicate green to deep blue. The colour indicates in a very accurate manner the degree to which the air is impregnated with dust particles.

A correspondent of the *Spectator* has been making some curious experiments at the London Zoological Gardens with reference to the effect of musical instruments upon the animals confined there. At the sound of the violin, the six-months'-old chimpanzee 'Jack,' which may be regarded as the most highly organised animal in the Gardens, evinced at first every symptom of fear, its hair standing erect, and the creature hiding itself in its blanket. But fear soon gave way to a more pleasurable feeling, and the little creature listened intently, and with evident satisfaction, to the music. His joy seemed to know no bounds when the violin reproduced the sounds of the bagpipes, for he turned head over heels, and threw his straw about in handfuls in the excess of his delight.

From the Berlin Royal Observatory comes a request, or perhaps we should say invitation, to observers all over the world to make records concerning a very remarkable meteorological phenomenon which since the year 1885 has been more or less prevalent. This phenomenon takes the form of luminous clouds which appear bright on the twilight sky, and differ in this respect from ordinary cirrus clouds, which appear dark under the same conditions. These luminous clouds have been repeatedly and simultaneously photographed from various points in the neighbourhood of Berlin, and their altitude has thus been ascertained to be exceedingly great—over five miles.

In a recent speech at Colchester, the new President of the Board of Agriculture encouraged farmers to take a less cheerless view of things, and ventured to assert that when accurate and official opinions could be formed, agricultural matters might not be so bad as they seemed. He pointed out that there were branches of industry which did not receive due attention at the hands of our farmers, and as a proof stated that in 1890 we paid to foreigners £10,398,843 for butter; £3,428,806 for eggs; £4,975,134 for cheese; £497,857 for poultry and game; and £4,804,750 for vegetables and fruit—in all nearly twenty-five millions of money for produce, a good deal of which could be raised at home.

CURIOUS AND AMUSING CORRESPONDENCE.

PEOPLE are generally very particular when writing to royalty, and take special care to make their correspondence as acceptable as possible. Dr Schmidt, however, of the Cathedral of Berlin once wrote a letter to the king of Prussia of a very formal character, and one which showed that he thought more of business than of flattery. The letter was couched in these terms:

SIRE—I acquaint Your Majesty, first, that there are wanting Books of Psalms for the royal family. I acquaint Your Majesty, second, that there wants wood to warm the royal seats. I acquaint Your Majesty, third, that the balus-

trade next the river, behind the church, is become ruinous.

SCHMIDT,
Sacrist of the Cathedral.

The king was very much amused by this epistle, and, adopting Dr Schmidt's style, replied as follows :

I acquaint you, M. Sacrist Schmidt, first, that those who want to sing may buy books. Second, I acquaint M. Sacrist Schmidt that those who want to be warm must buy wood. Third, I acquaint M. Sacrist Schmidt that I shall not trust any longer to the balustrade next the river. And I acquaint M. Sacrist Schmidt, fourth, that I will not have any more correspondence with him.

FREDERICK.

Like the newspapers, the king thought it advisable to inform his correspondent, in his own way, that 'the correspondence must now cease.'

The placing of letters in wrong envelopes has been responsible for much curious correspondence, and brought about many awkward situations. A French Bishop once made a ludicrous mistake in this way, and his experience would probably induce him to exercise more care on future occasions. He was writing to his Cardinal and a certain Duchess at the same time, and when the letters were delivered, the Cardinal read : 'I have just now wrote to his old Eminence, my charming queen, to entreat his leave to return to Paris. I make no doubt but he will grant it. As for the rest, the air is so pure here that I have acquired a good state of health, as you will perceive when I come to have the happiness of seeing you.'

Of course the Bishop was in blissful ignorance of what he had done ; so we can easily understand his feelings at the answer evoked by his love-letter. This is what was sent him : 'His old Eminence advises you to extinguish your passion. His Majesty orders you to remain in your diocese till further orders ; and requires that your life and conversation may be as pure as the air you breathe ; and that you make no other use of your good state of health but to discharge the duties of your function.'

In view of these orders, his 'charming queen' would stand a very poor chance of seeing how the pure air had improved the health of her ardent admirer.

Ignorance of the rules of orthography is also a common cause of curious letters. Here is a case in point, the epistle being one received by a gentleman from his gardener : 'HONRED SIR—My wif an I have taken the Ian from Windsor. Jenny Cedar has lost her head, the rest of the scrubs are all well. The Oxen are come down to prase the Goods.' One would hardly imagine, from reading the above, that the intelligence he sought to convey was as follows : 'HONOURED SIR—My wife and I have taken the influenza. The Virginia cedar has lost its head ; the rest of the shrubs are all well. The auctioneer came down to appraise the goods.'

The doctor, too, who received the annexed note from one of his patients must have been somewhat puzzled as to the nature of the complaint, and if he consulted his pharmacopœia he would not find it mentioned there, at anyrate not as

described by the sufferer : 'SUR—I weesh yew wood koom an see me—I av got a bad kould-eel in my Bowhills—an av lost my Happy tide.—Sur Yer umbel Sarvent.'

Some curious letters passed between Garrick and a man named Stone. The latter was employed to get recruits for the low parts of the drama, and one night he wrote to Garrick : 'SIR—The Bishop of Winchester is getting drunk at the *Bear*, and swears he will not play to-night.' At first sight, this seems peculiar conduct for a Bishop ; but it should be explained that the communication only refers to the man engaged to take that character in the play of *Henry VIII.*

On another occasion, Garrick wrote to Stone : 'If you can get me two good *murderers*, I will pay you handsomely, particularly the spouting fellow who keeps the apple stall on Tower Hill ; the cut in his face is just the thing. Pick me up an *alderman* or two for *Richard*, if you can ; and I have no objection to treat with you for a comely *mayor*.'

Things do not seem to have gone on smoothly, however, for in one letter Stone complains : 'Mr Lacy turned me out of the lobby yesterday. I only *ax'd* for my two guineas for the last Bishop, and he said I should not have a farthing. I cannot live upon air. I have a few *Cupids* you may have cheap, as they belong to a poor journeyman shoemaker I drink with now and then.' This seems to have pleased Garrick, for he replied : 'Stone, you are the best fellow in the world ; bring the *Cupids* to the theatre to-morrow : if they are under six, and well made, you shall have a guinea apiece for them.'

Some people say that self-praise is no recommendation. Liston, the comic actor, does not appear to have entertained this opinion, judging from a letter which he sent to the newspapers in June 1817. It is an admirable 'puff,' and no doubt would prove a splendid advertisement. It was couched in the following terms :

Mr Liston to the Editor.—SIR—My benefit takes place this evening, at Covent Garden Theatre, and I doubt not will be splendidly attended. Several parties in the first circle of fashion were made the moment it was announced. I shall perform Fogrum in *The Slave* and Leperello in *The Libertine* ; and in the delineations of those *arduous* characters I shall display much feeling and discrimination, together with great taste in my dresses and elegance in my manner. The audience will be delighted with my exertions, and testify by rapturous applause their most decided approbation. When we consider, in addition to my professional merits, the loveliness of my person and fascinations of my face, which are only equalled by the amiability of my private character, having never pinched my children nor kicked my wife out of bed, there is no doubt but this *Puff* will not be inserted in vain.

J. LISTON.

While dealing with theatrical items, it may not be out of place to give a copy of a letter which Goldsmith sent to George Colman the Elder with reference to the subsequently successful comedy of *She Stoops to Conquer* :

DEAR SIR—I entreat you'll relieve me from

that state of suspense in which I have been kept for a long time. Whatever objections you have made, or shall make, to my play I will endeavour to remove, and not argue about them. To bring in any new judges either of its merits or faults I can never submit to. Upon a former occasion, when my other play was before Mr Garrick, he offered to bring me before Mr Whitehead's tribunal, but I refused the proposal with indignation. I hope I shall not experience as hard treatment from you as from him. I have, as you know, a large sum of money to make up shortly; by accepting my play, I can readily satisfy my creditor that way; at anyrate, I must look about to some certainty to be prepared. For God sake, take the play, and let us make the best of it; and let me have the same measure at least which you have given as bad plays as mine.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

'Love's young dream' is responsible for a number of amusing letters, but these are generally very loving and very long. After the knot has been tied, shorter ones may do; but it will be difficult to find a letter more concise and to the point than that sent by Dr Donne to his wife's parents. He had married a lady belonging to a rich family without the consent of her parents, and in consequence was treated with great asperity, in fact he was told by his father-in-law that he was not to expect any money from him. The Doctor went home and penned the pithy note: 'John Donne, Anne Donne, *undone*,' which he sent to the gentleman in question, and this had the effect of restoring them to favour.

An advertiser for a wife received the following reply, but it is scarcely probable that it would lead to business. Would-be advertisers should take warning. 'SIR—Seeing Advertisement In the *Independent* that you are in want of a partner for life so I offer myself as a Candidate. But Before there is much more correspondence, I should like an intewrew with you. Notes the adres.'

Some correspondents are very brief, and do not waste words when they can possibly avoid it. The schoolmaster who received the note consisting of the home-made word 'Cepatomtogoataturing' as an excuse for the non-attendance of one of his scholars, would think that his correspondent had a desire to economise as much as possible. It was meant to convey the intelligence that the boy was 'kept at home to go a-taturing.' It is said that a gentleman who suddenly decided to go to America informed his wife to that effect in the following manner: 'DEAR WIFE—I am going to America.—Yours truly.' The lady's reply was equally laconic: 'DEAR HUSBAND—A pleasant voyage.—Yours, &c.' These letters are certainly brief enough, and there does not seem to be much love lost between the parties.

Official letters are also sometimes rather quaint. For instance, the letter sent by Lord North to Charles James Fox informing him that he had been turned out of the Government is rather curious: 'His Gracious Majesty [George III.] has been pleased to issue a new Commission, in which your name does not appear.'

The majority of people would prefer the style of writing adopted on one occasion by Lord Dorset, when several gentlemen submitted their

writings to Dryden for his decision as to whose was the best. Dryden, in giving the award to Lord Dorset, stated that he was charmed with the style and subject, and that that kind of writing exceeded any other, whether ancient or modern. We venture to think that most people would agree with him, for this is what he read: 'I promise to pay John Dryden, Esq., or order, on demand, the sum of five hundred pounds.—DORSET.'

TENNYSON.

YE winds that sweep round Britain's shore,
Ye waves that through her channels roar,
Together chant a solemn dirge
For the great Seer who breathes no more.

The preacher of a noble creed,
The sower of a noble seed,
He sought his Country's heart to purge,
And wrote that he who runs might read.

A man of God-inspired mind,
He saw where other eyes were blind,
And taught the world with wise command
In all God's works His Love to find:

He sang of Faith and Chivalry,
Of Truth and old-world Courtesy,
And touched with tender, loving hand
The failings of Humanity:

He ever sought to stem the tide
Of sin and sorrow, stern to chide
The oppressor's misbegotten scorn,
And prune the barren tree of Pride:

He knew the Spirit of his Age,
And guided it with counsel sage
To choose the golden ears of corn,
But spurn the chaff with righteous rage.

Then chant, ye winds, a song of praise,
And you, ye waves, a Pean raise,
Though he, who oft your shores has trod,
Sleeps in the Autumn of his days.

For our great Prophet is not dead,
But, risen to higher realms instead,
Learns the deep mysteries of God,
Where beams of perfect Light are shed.

GERALD CAMPBELL.

* * * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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DESTRUCTION OF THE IRON GATES OF THE DANUBE.

ON the 15th of September 1890 a work was inaugurated calculated to be of the greatest importance to Austro-Hungary—the opening up of the Iron Gates of the Danube. In presence of the Hungarian Minister, the Austrian Minister of Commerce, and the official representatives of Servia, a portion of the rock Greben, which towers out midway into the river, was blasted, and thus the long-wished-for work of clearing formally begun; and the Iron Gate, freed from its hitherto dangerous obstructions, is to be made navigable to ships of every size at all seasons of the year.

The district of the Lower Danube is but little known to the modern tourist; yet the Iron Gate is not only the most important, but the most magnificent portion of the grand and picturesque Danube, as also the most stupendous gorge in all Europe, unequalled in that quarter of the globe. Under the appellation of Iron Gate is broadly comprised the fifty-five miles' stretch from Alibeg, somewhat below the Hungarian Baziás, to the Servian town Sip, below Orsóva, where the powerful stream, penned in between lofty mountain banks, rushes through and over the enormous masses of rock lying in its bed, dashing headlong over reefs, breaking against sunken rocks, and forcing its way down stream in a wild series of rapids and whirlpools, which finally separate into (1) The Lesser Iron Gate with its six fathomless pools; (2) The deep water near Jutz; (3) The mountain gorge Kazan; and (4) The Great Iron Gate.

In its course, the river often changes its direction, flowing first eastwards, then south-east, north-east, and after a short distance, due east again, and back to south-east. The V-shaped centre pointing south is known as the Klissura. At this part of the Iron Gate a series of striking pictures glide before our eyes. Decked with a wealth of flora, the lofty passes, with their caver-

nous precipices, tower upwards, enclosing the river flowing at their feet, now glistening smooth as a silver mirror, now with its surface ruffled by curling ripples, again tossed, as if in anger, into huge waves, casting showers of spray around them. In truth, it is a very picture of loveliness.

It is generally thought that the Iron Gate proper is the breach between the Upper and Lower Danube; this is erroneous; the gorge rather lies above the Iron Gate between Alibeg and Orsova. At the last-named place the Danube has accomplished its course over the high-lying ground stretching north to south, which forms the junction of the Transylvanian Alps and Banater Mountains, and the point of union between the Carpathians and Balkans.

The first obstacle to navigation is presented by the reef Sztenka, near Golubacz, below Moldavia, eight hundred and thirty-one yards in length, which, when the river is low, renders it impassable for large vessels. The stream is here ten hundred and thirty-nine yards broad, with a moderate fall. At Drenkowa, some distance lower down, are the quartz-mica-schist banks, Kozla and Dojke. The river-bed, sometimes narrowing to three hundred and seventy yards, is quite filled with this schist. Here, too, we have the Gospodjin Vir (Maiden's Whirlpool), where, affixed to the rocks, we still find votive tablets recording that in the year 34 A.D. the fourth and fifth Legions excavated the Roman road on the right bank, of which there are many traces still visible. Where the rock was so precipitous that it was impossible to continue the road, the Romans constructed a kind of gallery, resting on beams let into the rock.

Opposite, on the left bank, there now runs the whole length of the gorge the new road made by Count Stephen Széchenyi in 1834-39, and named after him. Some few miles past the bank Dojke, we come upon two rocks, Izlás and Tachtalia. Navigation is here extremely difficult, at places only possible by means of a canal about four yards wide. A short distance farther on the right bank we come to the projecting rock

Greben, which narrows the river to two hundred and thirty yards, and marking the site of the blasting operations of September 1890.

Here ends the so-called Lesser Iron Gate. The Danube, hitherto flowing from south-east to south, now enters the lake-like basin of Milanovacz, through which it pursues an even course. Upon the first rocky defile of the Lesser Iron Gate, below the basin of Milanovacz, follows the second defile, extending a length of four miles to Old Orsova, and generically known as Kazan. Running north-east, it forms the east side of the Klissura. Here the dangerous rapid of Jutz forms the first obstacle to shipping; upon that follows the entrance to the Kazan Pass, a romantically picturesque gorge, which at its narrowest is but one hundred and sixty-four yards wide, and some forty-five to eighty-two yards deep. In flood, the current is so strong that steamers are only able to surmount it by working at full pressure. Here, again, we find on the right bank a tablet of Trajan, partly destroyed, and blackened by the fire of Servian fishermen, bearing witness to Roman skill in road-making. Its inscription tells that it was begun by Tiberius and finished by Trajan.

Below the Kazan Pass we come to the smaller basin of Old Orsova, formed by the slight recession of the mountains on the right bank. We pass the Cserna estuary, and the island fortress of New Orsova, or Ada Kaleh, surrendered to Austro-Hungary by the Porte in 1878.

Just where the Danube passes out of Austrian dominions, it enters upon the last but greatest and most dangerous rock defile, the Great Iron Gate. The current representation of this is incorrect. Here we have no narrow rocky gorge to do with. On the contrary, the shores, though precipitous, lie far asunder, and the river has assumed an imposing width; its whole bed studded with enormous masses of rock, rising more or less above the surface of the waters, according to the state of the river. In autumn these predominate to such a degree that it is matter of wonder what has become of the immense body of water one has seen rushing through the Klissura gorge. It seems almost probable that a portion of the water burrows underground to reappear in the defile. The masses of rock divide into two distinct cataracts. In the first division they form a comparatively long even ridge, so little under water that, when the river is low, navigation is utterly impossible. The other division, in the left half of the river, exhibits numerous small reefs above the level of the water, which rise higher towards the middle of the stream, until they present one broad connected mass of rock running obliquely across it, almost reaching to the opposite shore. The river is thus converted into a series of whirlpools and cross-currents, which, on account of its great fall, are so violent that sailing and rowing boats are barely able to force a passage; it is even dangerous for steamers. The whole gorge comes to an end with the Great Iron Gate. Below it, the Danube enters its wide lower basin, through which it flows without further hindrance.

The cataracts of the Danube having been held as impassable by the ancients, it is easy to understand how the Danubius—the upper and middle portions of the river—and the Ister, its lower

portion, came to be regarded by them as two distinct rivers. The Romans first discovered them to be one and the same in the year 287 B.C. It is known how they succeeded in making the Danube gorge passable by means of their skilfully-constructed road; while the remains of great stone dams on the Servian shore prove that they also attempted the actual navigation of the cataracts. That work, however, remained incomplete. Since the Roman era to the later part of the last century there had been no attempt to facilitate the passage of the Iron Gate. In 1778, Captain Lauterer, an Austrian, first raised the question; but it was some fifty years later that Count Stephen Széchenyi, 'the great Hungarian,' took the matter practically in hand; and from his letters and diaries we find that he prosecuted the work unremittingly. Széchenyi found a beneficent patron in Palatine Joseph; gained Milos Obrenvics, Prince of Servia, over to the cause, and endeavoured to rouse the interest of the Porte in it by making known his plan to Omar Pasha, Commandant of Orsova. The technical working of it he entrusted to Paul Vášarhelyi, already known as an eminent hydraulic engineer. Vášarhelyi made a thorough investigation of the nature and extent of the falls on the Lower Danube, and established precise data, upon which he drew up a plan for the regulation of the cataracts, so carefully elaborated and thought out, that it has formed the basis of all subsequent undertakings and projects, and is even the groundwork of that now in progress. Under Vášarhelyi's direction, in the winter of 1834-35, a ship canal one hundred and twenty-four yards long by thirty-two and four-fifths broad was blasted in the rock-reef Dojke, thus inseparably connecting his name, as well as that of Széchenyi, with forcing a passage through the Iron Gate.

In 1847 to 1849 some lesser blasting operations, on the same lines, were effected by the Danube Steam-ship Company; but political events at that time hindered the further execution of Széchenyi's project. No sooner did the political horizon clear, than the question came again to the fore; the Government as well as technical men taking up a matter fraught with considerations of national interest. When, on the breaking out of the Crimean War, Austrian troops marched into Wallachia, public interest once more turned upon the Iron Gate. In 1854, the Austrian Government despatched two engineers, Mensburger and Wex, to the Lower Danube, to study the cataracts and work out various plans. Some minor blasting-work begun by the Government in 1854 was continued until 1866. Energetic measures could not, however, be adopted on account of the steady opposition maintained by the Porte. At the close of the Crimean War, the Paris Congress, in an Act bearing date March 30, 1856, Article 15, declared the navigation of the Danube free. The London Congress, assembled to settle the Pontus question, also took into consideration the navigation of the Danube. The London Convention of March 13, 1871, ensured to those States on its banks the right to levy toll on ships' freights, to cover the cost of making the cataracts navigable. In that same year the Danube Steam-ship Company commissioned the American engineer, MacAlpin,

to report upon the cataracts and draw up schemes; which, however, came to nothing. It was not until 1874 that an understanding was arrived at between Austro-Hungary and Turkey, by which both States agreed to send a mixed Commission to the Lower Danube to work out a scheme for the whole extent. This plan it is which is now for the most part being carried out.

Even then, some years were suffered to elapse without any active steps having been taken: until, fresh international complications arising, attention was once more attracted to the obstructions to navigation in the Danube, that important highway of commerce. The Congress of Berlin, which followed upon the Russo-Turkish War, also took up the advisability of making the Danube navigable. Servia having bound herself in the form of a Convention, July 8, 1878, to offer all possible facilities to the furtherance of the work, the Berlin Congress, in Article 57 of July 13, 1878, states: 'The carrying out of the work intended to remove the obstacles to navigation caused by the Iron Gate and the cataracts is entrusted to Austro-Hungary. The States on the banks of this portion of the river offer every facility in the interests of the work. The decision arrived at in Article 6 of the London Convention of March 13, 1871, anent the right to levy a temporary toll for the purpose of covering the expenses of the said work, remains in force.' An agreement was subsequently arrived at between the two Governments, by which the Austro-Hungarian monarchy yielded up her rights and handed over her obligations to Hungary. The Hungarian Government, which had called in a number of foreign experts to examine into and report upon the improvement of their home waterways, entrusted them in 1879 also to study and make Reports upon the cataracts of the Danube. This done, no further move was made until at length, in 1883, the Minister of Traffic, Kemény, charged Ernst Wallandt, the then Commissioner of Works, to make a series of investigations and experiments on the spot, taking as his basis the Reports of the foreign experts and of the International Commission of 1874. Thus ensued the plan now in course of execution, the fruit of long and searching study.

However, the financial position of Hungary being at that time anything but good, a fresh hindrance arose. This was eventually overcome by the strenuous exertions of Gabriel von Baross, made Minister of Commerce in 1887, who did not rest until he had got things into working order. The Hungarian Government and Legislative Assemblies granted the necessary funds, in accordance with Code 27, which states that the carrying out of the work is to be defrayed by the Hungarian State Treasury; and of Code 12, 1889, authorising that these costs be drawn from the State Exchequer. Thereupon, Herr Baross at once organised a Committee of Management, at the head of which was placed the Councillor of Department, Herr Wallandt. Official authority was conceded on June 16, 1890; and the work was begun in September 1890, to be completed, according to contract, by 1895. The need is great. Traffic is rapidly increasing on the Lower Danube. The Danube Steamship Company has started some shallow boats for passenger and

express goods-traffic, and iron lighters for freight; and when the water is low, passengers are sent on by road. But the cargo service is interrupted for months at a time, often from July to the following March; thus at the very time that the harvest in the Banater, Roumanian, and Bulgarian lowlands might be turned to account.

It has been resolved, according to the project of the International Commission of 1874, to do away with the whole of the obstructions to water-traffic by the construction of an open canal along the right bank of the Danube, which shall have a ground width of some eighty-eight yards, and be some two thousand five hundred yards long. For this purpose it will be necessary to remove 8734 cubic feet of rock; and to erect the intermediate dams which are to separate this canal from the river, a deposition of 20,411 cubic feet of material is necessary. The whole volume of rockwork, roughly estimated, amounts to four million cubic feet.

The contractor binds himself to accomplish at least ten per cent. of the work in 1890; from 1890 to 1894, twenty per cent. per annum; and to complete all the outstanding work in 1895. The entire cost is estimated at nine million guildens (about seven hundred thousand pounds), to be covered during that period by the shipping dues to be levied by Hungary. Commercially, the free navigation of the Danube is of the utmost importance to Austro-Hungary, which thus obtains a market for its natural industrial products in the south-east.

One further benefit from this great work must not be overlooked. Once control the rapids through the whole length of the gorge, the floods will find a speedier egress, and dangers of inundation, not alone on the Lower Theiss, but also for Budapest, will be lessened. The surplus waters of the Theiss, now unable to flow quickly enough through the gorge, causes the Danube to rise so high that it overflows its banks at Budapest.

Who, moreover, can fail to see the political significance of the work? The influence of Austro-Hungary in the Balkan Peninsula is only to be maintained by the Danube. It can only fulfil its mission of peace and protection in that quarter by utilising it to the utmost on behalf of economical, industrial, and agricultural interests.

At the opening ceremony, the official representative of Servia referred in his speech to the hopes connected with the undertaking—how that Servia awaits from it an increase of commerce on the Danube and the development of Belgrade into an important commercial centre. By the destruction of the Iron Gate, sailing-vessels of large draught will be enabled to reach Belgrade; as now many ocean steamers call at the Servian port of Badujevat, below the Iron Gate, to ship Negotin wine, and convey it thence by sea to France. And thus the neighbourly relations between Servia and Austro-Hungary will go on increasing.

Brave Bulgaria is also brought considerably nearer to that empire by the opening up of the Iron Gate, and will, presumably, be desirous to bind the friendly monarchy yet closer to it. Roumania, too, still at variance with Austro-Hungary on the subject of customs, will, it is to be hoped, even if reluctantly, become disposed to

pursue a more amicable policy towards it. Thus we have every reason to greet the work now going on as a work of peace, and to wish it an uninterrupted and speedy completion.

BLOOD ROYAL.*

By GRANT ALLEN,

Author of *In All Shades, This Mortal Coil, &c.*

CHAPTER XVI.—LOOKING ABOUT HIM.

DURING the rest of that broken term, Dick did little work at history: he had lost heart for Oxford, and was occupied mainly in looking out for employment, scholastic or otherwise. Employment, however, wasn't so easy to get. It never is nowadays. And Dick's case was peculiar. A certain vague suspicion always attaches to a man who has left the university, or proposes to leave it, without taking his degree. Dick found this disqualification told heavily against him. Everybody at Durham, to be sure, quite understood that Plantagenet was only going down from stress of private circumstances, the father having left his family wholly unprovided for; but elsewhere people looked askance at an applicant for work who could but give his possession of a college Scholarship as his sole credential. The dons, of course, were more anxious that Plantagenet should stop up to do credit to the college—he was a safe First in History, and hot favourite for the Lothian—than that he should go away and get paying work elsewhere; and in the end poor Dick began almost to despair of finding any other employment to bring in prompt cash than the hateful one at Chiddingwick which Maud had so determinedly set her face against.

Nor was it Maud only with whom he had now to contend in that matter of the Assembly Rooms. Mary, too, was against him. As soon as Maud returned to Chiddingwick, she had made it a duty to go straight to Mary and tell her how she felt about Dick's horrid proposal. Now, Mary at the first blush of it had been so full of admiration for Dick's heroic resolve—'for it was heroic, you know, Maud,' she said simply, calling her future sister-in-law for the first time by her Christian name—that she forgot at the moment the bare possibility of trying to advise Dick otherwise. But now that Maud suggested the opposite point of view to her, she saw quite clearly that Maud was right; while she herself, less accustomed to facing the facts of life, had been carried away at first sight by a specious piece of unnecessary self-sacrifice. She admired Dick all the same for it, but she recognised none the less that the heroic course was not necessarily the wisest one.

So she wrote to Dick, urging him strongly, not only for his own sake, but for hers and his family's, to keep away from Chiddingwick save in the last extremity. She was quite ready, she declared, if he did come, to stand by every word she had said on the point when he first came to see her; but still, Maud had convinced her that it was neither to his own interest nor his mother's and sisters' that he should turn

back again now upon the upward step he had taken in going up to Oxford. She showed the letter to Maud before sending it off; and as soon as Maud had read it, the two girls, united in their love and devotion for Dick, fell on one another's necks, and kissed, and cried, and sobbed with all their hearts till they were perfectly happy.

All this, however, though very wise in its way, didn't make poor Dick's path any the smoother to travel. He was at his wits' end what to do: no door seemed to open for him. But fortunately Maud had commended her cause to Archie Gillespie at parting. Now, Gillespie was a practical man, with more knowledge of the world than Dick or his sweetheart; being, indeed, the son of a well-to-do Glasgow lawyer, whose business he was to join on leaving Oxford. He had discovered, therefore, the importance in this world of the eternal backstairs, as contrasted with the difficulty of effecting an entrance anywhere by the big front door or other recognised channels. So, when Sir Bernard Gillingham, that mighty man at the Foreign Office, came up on his promised visit to his son at Durham, Gillespie took good care to make the best of the occasion by getting an introduction to him from the Born Poet; and being a person of pleasant manners and graceful address, he soon succeeded in producing a most favourable impression on the mind of the diplomatist. Diplomats are always immensely struck by a man who can speak the truth and yet be courteous. The last they exact as a *sine qua non* in life; but the first is a novelty to them. After a while, Gillespie mentioned to his new friend the painful case of an undergraduate of this college, Plantagenet by name, whose father had lately died under peculiar circumstances, leaving a large family totally unprovided for, and who was consequently obliged to go down without a degree and take what paying work he could find elsewhere immediately.

'Plantagenet! Let me see. That's the fellow that beat Trev. for the History Scholarship, isn't it?' Sir Bernard said, musing. 'Can't be one of the Sheffield Plantagenets? No, no, for they left a round sum of money, which has never been claimed, and is still in Chancery. Extinct, I believe; extinct. Yet the name's uncommon.'

'This Plantagenet of ours claims to be something much more exalted than that,' the Born Poet answered, trying to seem unconcerned; for ever since that little affair of the recitation from Barry Neville's Collected Works, his conscience or its substitute had sorely smitten him. 'I believe he wouldn't take the other Plantagenets' money if it came to him by right; he's so firmly convinced he's a son and heir of the genuine blood royal. He never says so, of course; he's much too 'cute for such folly; but he lets it be seen through a veil of profound reserve he's the real Simon Pure of Plantagenets, for all that; and I fancy he considers the Queen herself a mere new-fangled Stuart, whom he probably regards as Queen of Scots only.'

'Plantagenet!' Sir Bernard went on, still in the same musing voice, hardly heeding his son. 'And a specialist in history! One would say the man was cut out for the Pipe-roll or the Record Office.'

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'He knows more about the history of the Plantagenet period than any man I ever met,' Gillespie put in, striking while the iron was hot. 'If you should happen to hear of any chance at the Record Office, now, or any department like that, a recommendation from you'—

Sir Bernard snapped his fingers. 'Too late by fifty years!' he cried, with a pout of discontent—'too late by fifty years, at the very least, Mr Gillespie! The competitive examination system has been the ruin of the country! Why, look at the sort of young men that scrape in somehow nowadays, even into the diplomatic service—some of them, I assure you, with acquired *Hs*, which to my mind are almost worse than no *Hs* at all, they're so painfully obtrusive. I mean Trev. for the diplomatic service; and in the good old days, before this nonsense cropped up, I should have said to the fellow at the head of the F. O. for the time being: "Look here, I say, Smith or Jones, can't you find my eldest boy a good thing off the reel in our line somewhere?" And, by Jove, sir, before the week was out, as safe as houses, I'd have seen that boy gazetted outright to a paid attachéship at Rio or Copenhagen. But what's the case nowadays? Why, ever since this wretched examination fad has come up to spoil all, my boy'll have to go in and try his luck, helter-skelter, against all the tinkers and tailors, and soldiers and sailors, and butchers and bakers, and candlestick-makers, in the United Kingdom. That's what examinations have done for us! It's simply atrocious.'

Gillespie, with native tact, poured oil on the troubled waters. 'There are departments of the public service,' he said with politic vagueness, 'where birth and position no doubt enable a man to serve the State better than most of us others can serve it; and diplomacy is one of them. But even judged by that standard, the name of Plantagenet is surely one which has done solid work in its time for the country; for the monarch, as Joseph the Second so profoundly said, is the chief of the civil service. As to examinations'—and he looked at Sir Bernard with a quiet smile—'men of the world like yourself know perfectly well there are still many posts of a reserved character which the head of a department holds, and must hold, in his own gift personally.'

Sir Bernard gazed hard at him and smiled a mollified smile. 'Oh, you've found that out already, have you?' he murmured dryly. 'Well, you're a very intelligent and well-informed young man; I wouldn't object to you at all for a Secretary of Legation. A Secretary, as a rule, is another name for a born fool; they're put there by the F. O. on purpose to annoy one.' And he smiled a bland smile and nodded sagely at Gillespie. But no more was said for the moment about a post for Dick Plantagenet.

As father and son sat together at lunch, however, that morning in Edward Street, the Born Poet recurred somewhat tentatively to the intermitted subject. 'I wish, pater,' he said with assumed carelessness, 'you could manage to do something or other for that fellow Plantagenet. He's not a bad sort, though he's eccentric: and he's a real dab at history. He's been a *protégé* of mine in a way since he came to Durham; and though he gives himself mysterious airs on the

strength of his name, and is a bit of a smug at times, still, there are really points about him. He's wonderful, simply, on Henry the Second!'

Sir Bernard hummed and hawed—and helped himself reflectively to another deviled anchovy. 'This cook does savouries remarkably well,' he replied, with oblique regard. 'I never tasted anything better than these and his stuffed Greek olives.—Such places exist, of course, but they're precious hard to get. Special aptitude for the work—and very close relationship to a cabinet minister—are indispensable qualifications.—However, I'll bear it in mind—I'll bear it in mind for you, Trevor. I shall be dining with Sir Everard on Tuesday week, and I'll mention the matter to him.'

Whether Sir Bernard mentioned the matter to the famous minister or not, history fails to record for us. That sort of history goes always unwritten. But it happened at anyrate that by the end of the next week the Dean called up Gillespie after lecture one morning and informed him privately that a letter had arrived that day from a Distinguished Person inquiring particularly after Mr Richard Plantagenet's qualifications for the post of Assistant Decipherer to the Pipe-roll and Tally Office, with special reference to his acquaintance with legal Norman-French and medieval Latin. 'And I was able,' the Dean added, 'to enclose in my reply a most satisfactory testimonial to your friend's knowledge of both, from our two chief history lecturers.'

Gillespie thanked him warmly, but said nothing to Dick about it.

Three days later, a big official envelope, inscribed in large print, 'On Her Majesty's Service,' arrived at the door of Third Pair left, Back Quad, addressed to Richard Plantagenet, Esq., Durham College, Oxford. Dick opened it with great trepidation; this was surely a bad moment to come down upon his poor purse with a demand for income tax. But he read the contents with breathless astonishment. It was to the effect that the Right Honourable the Director of Pipe-rolls having heard of Mr Plantagenet as possessing a unique acquaintance with Norman-French documents, and an efficient knowledge of medieval Latin, desired to offer him the post of Assistant Registrar and Chief Clerk in his office, an appointment directly in the Right Honourable's own gift, and carrying with it a salary commencing at two hundred and fifty pounds a year, and rising by annual increments of ten pounds at a time to a maximum of four hundred.

To the family at Chiddingwick such an income as that was unimagined wealth beyond the dreams of avarice. Dick rushed off with the letter in hot haste to Gillespie, who received him with the quiet smile of a consummate confederate. 'The only thing about it that makes me hesitate,' Dick cried, with a strange moisture in his clear blue eyes, 'is just this, Gillespie—oughtn't the post by rights to have been put up to public competition? Mayn't I perhaps be keeping some better man out of it?'

Gillespie smiled again; he had been fully prepared beforehand for that quail of the sensitive Plantagenet conscience. 'My dear fellow,' he said, pressing Dick's arm, 'that's not a question for you, don't you see, at all, but for the Government and the legislature. If they choose to

decide that this particular post is best filled up by private nomination, I don't think it's for the nominee to raise the first objection—especially when he's a man who must feel himself capable of doing the particular work in question at least as well as any other fellow in England is likely to do it. I'm no great believer myself in the immaculate wisdom of kings or governments, which seem to me to consist, like any other committee, of human beings; but there *are* some posts, I really think and believe, that can best be filled up by careful individual choice, and not by competition; and this post you're now offered seems to me just one of them. If governments always blundered on as good a man to do the work that then and there wants doing—why, I for one would be a deal better satisfied with them.'

So, that very afternoon, Dick went down to Chiddingwick to bear news to Maud and his mother of this piece of good fortune that had dropped as it seemed from the clouds upon them. For he never knew, either then or afterwards, what part that wily diplomat, Sir Bernard Gillingham, had borne in procuring the offer of the post for him. If he *had* known, it is probable he would have declined to accept any favour at all from the father of the man who, as he firmly believed, had helped to kill his father. Maud's triumph and delight, however, were unclouded and unbounded; this event served to show the wisdom of her pet policy; but she seemed hardly so much astonished at the news, Dick thought, as he himself had expected. This was the less to be wondered at, because, in point of fact, it was not quite so novel to her as it had been to Dick; for at that very moment Maud carried in her bosom a small square note, beginning, 'Dear Miss Plantagenet,' and signed, 'Ever yours most sincerely, Archibald Gillespie,' in which the probability of just such an offer being made before long was not obscurely hinted at. However, Maud kept that letter entirely to herself; it was not the first—or the last—she received from the same quarter.

This change of front affected all their movements. As soon as term was ended, Dick went up to London to take up the duties and emoluments of his office. But that was not all. By Gillespie's advice—Gillespie seemed to take an almost fraternal interest now in the affairs of the family—Mrs Plantagenet and the children moved to London, too, to be with Dick in his lodgings. Gillespie thought Miss Plantagenet's musical taste so remarkable, he said, that she ought to be in town, where sound instruction could be got in singing; and he was so full of this point, that Maud consented to give up her own work at Chiddingwick and take a place as daily governess in London instead, going out in the afternoon to a famous vocalist. Gillespie believed they ought all to be removed as far as possible from the blighting memory of their father's degradation; and he attached so much importance to this matter that he came down once or twice to Chiddingwick himself during the Christmas vacation, in order to see them all safely removed to Pimlico. It was wonderful, Dick thought, what a brotherly interest that good fellow always took in all that concerned them; yet when he said so to Maud, that unconscionable young woman only blushed

and looked down with a self-conscious air that was very unusual to her. But there!—girls are so queer: though Gillespie had been so kind, Maud never once said a word, as one might naturally have expected, about how nice he had been to them. For his part, Dick thought her almost positively ungrateful.

THE SALT MANUFACTURE IN THE WEAVER.

THERE is a district of Cheshire, the Weaver Valley, that lies above a great basin of salt rock some twelve square miles in extent. The salt was deposited in the Tertiary period, and resulted from the evaporation of some salt lakes which communicated with the sea somewhere about where now stands the town of Liverpool. There are two main strata of rock-salt: the upper one lies one hundred and twenty feet below the surface, and is sixty-three feet thick; below that is a bed of impermeable marl, of an average thickness of thirty feet; and below that, again, another bed of rock of superior purity to that above, and measuring in depth about eighty-eight feet. The lowest rock-salt is alone mined; it is dry; but the peculiarity of the upper deposit is that on its surface are 'brine-runs'—that is to say, the rain and river-water soak through the gravel and gypsum deposits that lie above it, and reaching the salt, take up from it as much as they can hold in solution—that is to say, about twenty-five per cent. of salt.

These brine-runs are not all in connection; they lie as underground lakes above the salt rock. There are, however, places where the upper salt rock is dry, and where it was formerly mined. It is not so now. In the upper strata there are thin and inconsiderable salt beds, which were known to the Romans, and perhaps to the Britons; but the salt rock was not discovered till 1670, and the lower deposit not till 1770. In medieval times there were 'wyches' or salt-houses in the Weaver Valley, in which brine brought up in leather buckets on men's shoulders from brine-wells was evaporated over wood-fires in lead pans. Several noblemen had their salt-making houses at Northwich, Middlewich, and Sandbach; but salt does not seem to have been manufactured largely till the present century. At first, much rock-salt was mined where the upper rock was dry; and these old mines when the water got into them were deserted, and have become a source of great danger and mischief; for the water rapidly decomposes the salt rock, and as it is pumped out in the form of brine, fresh water enters and continues the decomposition. By this means the salt bed is being rapidly removed, and the natural consequence is that the country above it is subsiding.

At present, a million tons of salt are carried away down the Weaver Canal alone, and the amount that departs in salt trucks by rail cannot be much less than half that quantity. Consequently, the whole of one stratum that underlies the Weaver Valley and its towns Winsford, Middlewich, Northwich, and Sandbach, is being withdrawn, and the surface of the land is being let down below sea-level. It was given in evi-

dence, in May 1890, before a Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Widnes Brine Supply Bill, that in the Northwich district alone six locks on the river had been rendered useless through the subsidence of the land. A bridge was continually sinking, which had cost seven thousand pounds to build. In 1881 and 1882 it had gone down eighteen inches, and cost a further sum of two thousand one hundred and fifty-seven pounds to raise it. In 1887 it had again sunk.

But we will not consider the sinking of the land, but the method of manufacture of salt from brine.

The sole mines for rock-salt are now in the lowest and purest bed. The rock-salt is exported, much of it to the Netherlands and Australia, and its chief use is for mixing with food for cattle. The upper deposit is worked for table salt, and it is worked by water—that is to say, no mining in it is done by the hand of man; the agent for removing the salt rock is water. Fully-saturated brine contains twenty-seven pounds of salt in one hundred pounds of water. The best Cheshire brine is extraordinarily strong: it contains twenty-six pounds of salt in one hundred; whereas seawater contains only three and a half per cent. The Friedrichshall brine contains twenty per cent., and that of Château-Salines only fourteen per cent. Accordingly, the Cheshire manufacturers have a great advantage in the strength of their brine; and a second in the nearness of the great coal-fields of Yorkshire, Derbyshire, and Durham. They have the most strongly impregnated natural brine known where it is most inexpensive to evaporate the water.

If we visit a salt factory in the Weaver Valley, the first point to be noticed is the boring into the reservoir of brine. A shaft is driven down through the red marl and gravel, through beds of gypsum like masses of alum, till the reservoir is tapped; whereupon the brine rushes up the shaft. Then a pump is let down and hung in the boring. The iron pipe has nothing to rest upon below; it depends from its collar at the top. In the present autumn (1892), one such pump broke from its bearings and sank, never to be recovered. The brine pumped up is discharged into a large bricked tank, from which pipes of communication lead to the several pans in which the solution is to be boiled or scalded.

There are pans of two sorts, according to whether the salt is to be fine or coarse grained. In the former case, it is boiled; in the latter, scalded. Moreover, the size of the pans differs: those in which fine crystallised salt is to be made are not over thirty feet long by twenty-four feet wide; whereas the others are often double the length. The pans are eighteen inches deep. Under a pan for fine salt at one end is the furnace, and the fire and smoke from it are conveyed the whole length of the pan, and also under a chamber beyond in which the salt has to be 'stoved.' When the brine is in ebullition at the end immediately over the fire, it sends ripples to the farther end, and of course parts with its water by degrees in steam. As the steam forms above the pans, so do salt crystals form on the surface of the brine, as a sort of scum, at the end away from the fire. If this be not removed, in a short while it sinks; accordingly, men, locally termed 'wallers,' are engaged with

paddles raking the salt as it forms to the sides, where it is put into 'tubs'—that is to say, wooden forms of various sizes—80, 120, and 160 to the ton. The wallers are paid 2s. 1^{d.} to 2s. 3^{d.} per ton for making this salt. As soon as each tub is filled, it is left to drain; then, when drained, the salt block is turned out; with a wooden paddle it is shaped where bruised, and is then carried into the hot room to be 'stoved'—that is, thoroughly dried. Though in the pan-room it becomes sufficiently consistent to be handled, yet such is the amount of vapour in the air there that it still holds a considerable portion of water. Round the pans are hollow troughs eighteen inches deep, in which the men stand to fill the tubs. Each tub when filled is put on the 'hurdle'—the platform that acts as a terrace round the entire chamber and the pan.

It is in this part of the salt factory that accidents occur. The air is so full of steam that one cannot see where one is going. A small rib, two inches high, divides the hurdle from the 'stand inside,' and a trip on this rib may precipitate into the boiling brine. But sometimes a death may ensue through sudden giddiness, caused by the density of the vapour or the heat. Shortly before the visit of the writer of this article to one of the factories, a boy was sitting on the edge talking, when suddenly, from no explicable reason, he lost his balance, and fell over into the brine, and was scalded to death. Another case that had recently happened was that of a man. He had been a very bad character, going to night-work—the boiling is carried on night and day—and possibly with a drop too much in his head, he staggered and fell into the pan. He picked himself up, and, confused by pain or steam, he struggled forward into the middle of the pan instead of seeking the edge, and stood there in the boiling brine too stupefied to understand where he had got. He had to be drawn to the side with rakes. He lived for a couple of hours. When the surgeon told him to prepare for death—'Oh,' said he, 'while there is breath there is hope;' and these were his last words.

A question which has often arisen in the writer's mind has been relative to the agony of death by burning or scalding. Is it continuous to the last? He believes not. In one or two cases that have come under his notice, he has convinced himself that after the first spasm of anguish the pain is not felt in the same intensity. He asked this question of the foreman, who had witnessed several deaths by scalding, and he was of the same opinion.

Every ton of salt takes about thirteen hundred-weight of 'burgey' or good slack to make, and costs, all included, from 8s. 6d. to 9s. per ton. The tub salt formed as described is that which is seen in shapes in shops. When sufficiently dried in the stove, this is ascertained by a ringing sound they give out when struck.

Fine salt that is unstoved is called 'butter salt.' This is not put in moulds at all, but is tossed out to drain on the hurdles. The butter salt is sent away in vans or by boat, and shipped largely to the East Indies. The thoroughly dry salt would settle as hard as rock were that taken a long voyage. In the hot-houses for drying the squares, the spaces between the flues, that run

under the floor like a Roman hypocaust, are left uncovered, and are called 'ditches.' The men who throw the blocks out of these hot-houses and stack them in the rooms above are called 'ditchers.'

Owing to the intense heat of the works, the men go almost completely naked, wearing breeches or trousers only. They stream with perspiration, and will run out the barrows with butter salt to lade a van on the rails in this condition, and stand talking to each other in a freezing east wind. One would suppose that pulmonary complaints were frequent. This is not the case; the men enjoy excellent health, and almost entire exemption from influenza, cholera, and all fevers.

The next process is to make the fine table salt. For this purpose the conical blocks are run on barrows to the mill to be ground. A man with a pick tosses each moulded block on to a revolving band or elevator with catches on it to receive the blocks, which are carried up and thrown into the mill, where the salt is passed between smooth revolving plates of iron, crushed to the fineness required, then passed through sieves. Much of the table salt produced is as fine in the grain as the finest wheat flour. It is never touched by the hand. As soon as reduced to salt-dust, it is placed in jars, or waterproof bags, or parchment receptacles.

Ordinary common salt is not boiled at all, and is formed at a temperature of one hundred and seventy to one hundred and eighty degrees Fahrenheit. It remains about two days in the pan. It is the rule, the slower the evaporation the larger the crystals formed. This salt is never put into tubs, but is drained on the hurdles.

Fishing salt is made at a temperature of one hundred to one hundred and twenty degrees Fahrenheit, and remains about five days in the pans, sometimes as long as three weeks. It is a much coarser-grained salt, and is employed for pickling. Bay salt is coarser still, and is allowed some six weeks to form. It is made at a temperature of ninety degrees Fahrenheit; owing to the time it takes making, it is the most expensive of all. After the crystals have been drained, they are washed again in hot brine and then stoved.

Brine as it comes from the shafts is never pure; there is with the salt (chloride of sodium) as well some gypsum (chloride of lime), and this settles at the bottom of the pans. In order to purify the brine, there is always a little soft soap or gelatine introduced. A piece of soft soap the size of a walnut, or a piece of butter of the same size, will suffice to purify twenty tons of salt.

On account of the settling of the gypsum to the bottom of the pans, these pans have to be picked every three weeks; very generally, they are picked weekly. The scale is beautifully white, like snow, and hard as marble. It forms to the thickness of from two to three inches over the bottom, except immediately above the fires. Every salt-boiler has to pick his own pan without extra wages. A pan is spoken of as being 'fresh on pick' or 'old on pick,' according to the length of time since the scale was removed. The salt is conveyed from the factories by canal in 'flats' or in trucks by line, covered and uncovered. The trucks are costly articles, those covered being £102, 10s. each, and hold from six to seven tons. They are built at Chorley.

Table salt in bags is worth forty shillings a ton. There has been great fluctuation in the price of salt. Between 1845 and 1860, common salt fetched 7s. 6d. a ton. In 1865 it dropped to 6s.; but in 1872 went up to 20s. In 1873 it fluctuated between 15s. and 12s. During the American War it reached its lowest price, 3s. 9d. In 1881 it was 4s. 9d.; in 1891 it was 11s. 6d.; in March 1892 it had fallen to 9s.

The price of table salt is, of course, higher than that of common salt. In March 1891, 'handed squares,' eighty to the ton, were at 27s. 6d. and 23s. 6d. In March 1892 the price had fallen to 15s., and then to 13s.

In the reign of William III. a duty of five shillings a bushel, or about a penny a pound, was for the first time imposed on the salt in this country; in 1795 it was increased to 10s.; and in 1805 it was further increased to 15s., which gave rise to a good deal of smuggling. The mischievous effects of the high duty having been strongly represented to the House of Commons, the duty was in 1823 reduced to 2s.; and on the 5th January 1825 it was wholly repealed.

In 1852 in Cheshire there were 29 salt mines and 97 salt works, employing 8000 persons. And 200,000 tons were disposed of for manure, 300,000 tons for consumption in the United Kingdom, and 500,000 tons were exported. In 1858 the total produce had risen to 1,000,000 tons annually, of which about one-half was exported; and in 1881 the production was further increased to 1,854,000 tons. In 1890 the salt rock mined in Cheshire amounted to 159,000 tons, whilst the salt obtained from brine was as much as 1,958,000 tons.

The great bulk of brine-pumping stations of Cheshire, and indeed of the whole country, have been bought up, and are invested in the Salt Union Company, making enormous profits. Salt which in 1881 was selling at 5s. per ton ran up to 15s. The price has declined since, happily for the public. When the ring was formed, borings were made at Middlesbrough, in Durham, and salt was found at 2000 feet below the surface. Two shafts were sunk; into one, sweet water was pumped, and it was drawn forth as brine from the other. This station has since been acquired by the company.

Brine is employed not only for the formation of salt as a condiment, but it is likewise largely employed in chemical works for the production of alkali by the ammonia-soda process. Messrs Brunner, Mond, & Co. have large works of this description at Northwich.

Brine is also employed in the manufacture of bleaching-powder, chloride of potash, and muriatic acid, of which there is a factory at Widnes. This company purchased a piece of land in the salt district, and endeavoured to carry a Bill to enable it to lay pipes from the shaft they bored on their estate to Widnes, so as to convey thence the brine to their works. The Bill was strongly opposed, and was defeated in 1890, as it was contended that the exhaustion of the salt rock would cause serious subsidences without benefit to the inhabitants of the district.

The main Cheshire salt district is in the neighbourhood of Northwich, Winsford, and Lawton. At Middlewich and Nantwich, although brine springs are present and salt has been manu-

factured for centuries, yet hitherto no salt rock has been reached in borings carried to the depth of four hundred feet.

As already said, the upper salt rock was discovered in 1670; but in Doomsday Book there is mention of the wyches or salt-houses in Northwich. With the discovery of the rock, the importance of the district grew; and the Weaver, an insignificant river, within the basin of the salt district, was taken in hand, and in 1721 an Act of Parliament was obtained to deepen the river so as to make it navigable. Before the discovery of the rock, when the brine was got up out of wells, Michael Drayton, in his *Polyolbion*, written well nigh three centuries ago, commemorated in verse the connection of salt with the Weaver. He says:

To Weaver let us go,
His fountain and his fall, both Chester's rightly
born,
The county in his course, that clean through doth
divide,
Cut into equal shares upon his either side.
And what the famous flood far more than that
enriches,
The brackly fountains are these two renowned
Wyches,
The Nantwich and the North, whose either briny
well
For store and sorts of salts made Weaver to excel.

THE IRONY OF FATE.

By T. E. SOUTHEE, Author of *A Haunted Memory*, &c.

CHAPTER I.—AFTER THE BALL.

THE ball was over, the guests had departed, and Arabella Alsworth was alone in her dressing-room. It was a handsome and luxuriously-furnished apartment, and the bright fire that burned in the grate made it look cosy and comfortable. She was standing with her elbow resting on the mantel-piece, looking in anything but a pleasant humour. She was surrounded by all the comforts and luxuries which wealth could purchase or the heart wish for; and these, and the floods of adulation and flattery which had been poured upon her that night, ought to have made her happy; but it did not, and there was a shade on her fair face which told a very different tale.

She was tall and graceful, with a splendid contour of both face and figure. She stood there with her masses of golden brown hair drawn back from her broad white forehead; her calm blue eyes, so deep and clear, fixed vacantly on the bright coals in the grate, while her tender mouth seemed to tremble with strong emotion.

The poor girl was looking back into the past, to another night and another ball, when she and Frank Wallis, a young naval Lieutenant, had left the heated room and strolled into the conservatory. How well she remembered the calm beauties of that never to be forgotten scene! The blue heaven above, with its myriads of stars; the hushed murmur of the soft west wind as it rustled among the leaves; the musical plash of the fountain, and the soft harmony of the music from the ballroom. It all came back to her like a dream.

Up to that time she had known nothing of the joys and miseries of love. She was happy.

The present was all in all. It was only when the time had come for Frank to join his ship that the light broke in upon their hearts, and the warm tide of passion swept the veil from their eyes. There, in the soft morning twilight, under those bright stars, which had so often listened to lovers' vows, they plighted their troth, and the hearts which Nature had linked together were bound the one to the other by the most solemn promises of love and loyalty.

Like an honest man, the young Lieutenant had immediately gone to Mr Alsworth and laid the case before him. But he only laughed and pooh-pooled the idea. They were children, and, as he was only a penniless Lieutenant, if they got married how were they to live? This was a question the gallant young gentleman was not prepared to answer, and, as the old gentleman imagined, went away with a flea in his ear. But Arabella was of opinion that she ought to have a voice in the matter; and when she was told by her father, with a considerable amount of glee, how he had posed the Lieutenant with the financial question, she astonished him by exclaiming: 'Oh! you mean old pappy, how could you be so cruel? Just as if you had not got enough for all of us!'

It was while she was recalling all this, lost in a deep but not altogether unpleasant reverie, that the door opened, and Miss Mortimer, Arabella's aunt, a maiden lady who, since the death of the late Mrs Alsworth, had presided over the domestic arrangements of Netley Lodge, entered the room. 'What! not undressed, Bella!' she exclaimed.

'No,' was the reply; 'I was thinking and meditating.'

'And what was the subject of your meditations?'

'I was thinking what a nuisance it is to be rich!'

'Gracious, child! you must be mad!'

'No. If I were not supposed to be a rich heiress, I should not be pestered, as I am now, with offers of marriage by men I don't care a fig for. It would be more bearable if I could fancy it was I who am the attraction, and not papa's money.'

'My dear Bella!' exclaimed Miss Mortimer, 'you make a great mistake. How is it possible that any one should fail to love you for yourself? Are you not young, beautiful, and clever?'

'But how am I to know that? You see, papa is rich—that is the cause of all my trouble!'

'Foolish child! How can riches be productive of unhappiness?'

'In my case it is easily explained. Papa wants me to marry men without my loving them, and I want to marry the man I love. If papa were poor, I should be allowed to choose for myself.'

'Perhaps,' said Miss Mortimer, in a slightly sarcastic tone, 'if you were really the daughter of a poor man, you might not get married at all; people cannot live on love!'

'No, I suppose not,' replied Arabella; 'but in that case there could be no base motive to inspire love. If I were poor, I should not be less handsome or less clever; and yet, as you very well know, I should not have half the lovers I now have. Perhaps, like that poor Miss

Pilkington, the governess, who is certainly as good-looking and clever as I am, none at all.'

'Well, my dear, I'm sure I don't know what is to be done for you, unless, indeed, your papa were to speculate in railways or something of that sort and lose all his money.'

'I'm not quite sure that I should like *that*,' said Arabella musingly; 'but it has given me an idea. What I should like would be to pretend that papa had lost all his money, then we should soon see who were our real friends, and who were the worshippers of mammon.'

'My dear Bella! I'm surprised at you—you who pretend to be such a lover of truth. Don't you see that that would be deceiving people? It would be untrue.'

'Now, aunty,' cried Arabella, 'that's unkind! Why, when I remonstrated with you because you told James to tell the Miss Scudamores you were not at home, when you were, you said that it was only a white lie, and that white lies were permissible in polite society.'

'But I did not tell the lie myself; I only instructed James. It's a sort of polite fiction we all understand.'

'Just so. You don't like to tell lies yourself; but you compel your servant to do so. How funny you would look if the next time you instructed James to say you were not at home, he were to turn round and say, "Beg pardon, ma'am, but that's a lie, and I can't tell it."'

'Dear, dear child, what a fuss you are making about nothing!'

'Nay, nay, aunty; the boot is on the other foot. I merely suggested that it would be good fun to pretend I was afraid that papa had been speculating, and so forth. For instance, if I were to give the smallest hint to the Miss Scudamores, you would soon see how they'd set the ball rolling, and how, like the snowball, it would gain in size and force as it circulated.'

Miss Mortimer shook her head. 'Suppose it came to papa's ears, what would he say?'

'Oh! if it did, I could soon put that right.'

'Dear, dear child, I wish you had not told me. The very idea of such a thing!'

'Yes, the idea's a splendid one. I'll hint that we shall be obliged to retrench; and I'll persuade papa to take us to Paris, and then I can be ill, or something, and we'll go to the south of France. That's it; that will do beautifully!'

'Bless me! bless me!' cried Miss Mortimer, 'what a girl you are!'

'Yes, that's lovely!—And now, aunty, go to bed and sleep on it.'

Miss Mortimer did as Arabella bade her; most people did. The thought even of pretending to be poor was distasteful to her; but Paris and the south of France made a deep impression on her; and in the end, as far as she was concerned, there seemed a fair chance of Arabella's having her way, that is, provided she was in the same mind when she awoke the next morning.

With such a grand scheme in her head, it will not be any matter of surprise that she did not sleep well, and that when she did, she dreamed that she had sent all her lovers to the rightabout, and a number of other strange and wonderful things.

Of course it was very late when the two awoke, and consequently it was past twelve before they

had finished their breakfast. At this point the two Miss Scudamores were seen coming along the drive; and a few minutes afterwards the door-bell rang and they were ushered into the drawing-room.

'There now, aunty,' exclaimed Arabella, 'you see everything seems to favour us. Papa is gone off to London, and here are our advertising mediums ready to publish anything we may supply them with.' And with this she started off to the drawing-room.

'My dearest creature!' exclaimed the elder visitor, rushing forward and kissing Arabella, 'what has made you so late? It's nearly one o'clock. We called about eleven, but you were not up.'

'I'm really very sorry,' replied Arabella; 'but it was late when we got to bed, and I did not get a wink of sleep till after daylight.'

'Poor darling!' cried both ladies in a breath; and then Aunt Betsy made her appearance. 'Have you heard the news?' cried both sisters at once.

'No; what is it?' exclaimed Miss Mortimer, who was not at all averse to a bit of scandal.

'And you really have not heard of it? You who know the family so well!' replied Miss Scudamore, who delighted to play with her auditors. 'Can't you guess?'

'No; how can I!' exclaimed Arabella.

'Well, then, as I see you are wild to know, I'll tell you! There's a full account of it in the newspaper. Blankhorn's Bank has gone all to smash!'

'Dear, dear! I'm so sorry. Blankhorn's Bank failed! Surely the world must be coming to an end!' moaned Miss Mortimer.

'I hope you will not be a—be a loser?' queried Miss Scudamore.

'Not to a great extent. I'm exceedingly sorry, more for the family than for myself.'

'So am I,' answered Arabella gravely. 'I do hope papa is not compromised in their affairs!'

'Well, I hope things will not turn out so badly as you seem to think,' remarked Miss Mortimer. 'It does not do to make light of other people's misfortunes, for one never can make sure of not getting into a mess one's self. I remember once having some shares in a concern, only five twenties, producing about fourteen or fifteen pounds a year, clear of income tax; and do you know that for the sake of that paltry sum I was liable to have lost my whole fortune, every penny! Lucky for me, the shares got up to a big premium, and Mr Alsworth advised me to sell out. Three or four months afterwards, the concern burst up, and the directors were sent to prison.'

'It's really very serious,' said the younger Miss Scudamore. 'I read the leader in the *Times* yesterday, and it said the trade of the country was under a cloud.'

'Yes,' chimed in Arabella; 'and when it bursts, it will deal ruin and destruction on all sides.'

'Bless me!' cried the elder visitor, 'I did not see that! Do you think it can be true?'

'Certainly,' exclaimed Arabella, in surprise. 'Why, it's printed in the newspaper!'

'But all is not true that is printed in the newspaper,' observed Miss Scudamore.

'Not in the penny newspaper,' said Miss Mortimer; 'but in the *Times* it is different. I've often heard Mr Alsworth say that he would pin his faith on what the *Times* says.'

'I suppose,' put in Arabella, 'you would not believe it if you saw my father's name in the list of bankrupts?'

'Your papa! Certainly not! Impossible!' cried both ladies in a breath. 'But of course, dear Miss Alsworth, you are only joking?' concluded Miss Scudamore.

'No; I'm not,' returned Arabella. 'I assure you I am very uneasy about papa. I know he has been speculating a good deal lately, and in these days fortunes are soon lost!'

'But, my dear, your papa is so immensely rich!' said little Miss Prudence; 'it would take a lot to break him.'

'Ah!' sighed the young hostess, 'I see you do not believe me; but when you see a great black board erected on the lawn, announcing that this elegant mansion and grounds are to be let furnished for a term of years, you will understand that what I am now saying is no joke.'

By this time the two visitors were getting very uneasy. They were anxious to be off to propagate the astounding facts they had just been made acquainted with; so they said good-bye and hurried off.

'I think you've done it now,' said Miss Mortimer, when the two visitors had departed; 'but if it should get to papa's ears, what will he say?'

'I'm sure I don't care,' replied Arabella. 'I said nothing of a positive character. It's as good as a play.'

CHAPTER II.—BLACK FRIDAY.

The cloud which had hung over the commercial world had burst, and, as Arabella had unconsciously prophesied, had dealt ruin and destruction on all sides. The great firm of Overend, Gurney, and Company had collapsed, with liabilities amounting to more than ten millions. The day following 'Black Friday,' the crisis became more intense, and failures and stoppages of payment were announced on all sides.

Mr Alsworth, who had been reading the *Times*, suddenly put it down and rang the bell. 'Bring me my overcoat and hat, James,' he said to the footman who had entered the room. 'I want to catch the ten-twenty train.' When the man had brushed his hat and helped him on with his coat, he said: 'Tell Miss Mortimer I shall be back to dinner;' and he hurried off.

'Do you know where your master is going?' asked Arabella, who had seen her father hurrying down the drive.

'No, miss; but I suppose he's off to London,' the man replied.

'Aunt,' said she, when she had returned to the morning-room, 'papa's gone to London again. What can he want to be always going there for?'

'Impossible to say, dear; about this horrible money business. I wish he'd done as I did, and invested all his capital in consols; you get less interest, but then you have no worry as to its safety.'

'I'm sure I wish this dreadful crisis would

come to an end. Papa looks quite ill with all this excitement and anxiety.'

'Dear me! What can it be? Such a crowd!' cried Miss Prudence, who was standing at the window.

Miss Scudamore rushed to see what it was. 'It's an accident or something,' she suggested. 'And there! That's a body on the stretcher. Who can it be?' Then she rang the bell, and a smart little servant-maid made her appearance. 'What is the matter, Jane?' she asked.

'Nothing as I knows of, ma'am,' she answered. 'There's a body just been taken past. Go and ask some one who it is.'

Jane went to the door; and when she came back she was as white as a sheet. 'Oh! ma'am, it's dreadful! Why, I saw him go past this morning, and he looked as well as ever!'

'But who is it, girl? Can't you tell us?' cried Miss Prudence angrily.

'Mr Alsworth, ma'am!' replied Jane with a gasp.

'Mr Alsworth!' iterated Miss Scudamore in mingled tones of astonishment and incredulity.

'Yes, ma'am. They say he's had a fit.'

'Good gracious! how dreadful!' said Miss Prudence, as the two sisters stood staring at one another in blank astonishment.

'I can't believe it! It can't be true!' at length exclaimed Miss Scudamore. 'It seems impossible!'

If, in the midst of a bright summer day, a thunderbolt had fallen at the feet of Arabella Alsworth and her aunt, or a volcano had suddenly sprung up in the middle of the lawn and belched forth fire and lava, they could not have been more startled and alarmed than when they saw the policemen open the gate and slowly approach the hall door, bearing a body on a stretcher. They stood at the window, apparently spellbound. The men put down their burden, and one of them ascended the steps and rang the bell. The hall door was opened, and the body on the stretcher was admitted.

'What can it mean, aunty?' asked Arabella.

'Death, my dear,' she replied.

'But who can it be? Not papa, surely?' she said in tones of horror.

'Who else can they be bringing here?' asked the aunt.

The girl's cheeks blanched with horror, and she threw herself into her aunt's arms and burst into a flood of tears.

At this moment, Mr Fitch, the family doctor, came bustling up the drive, and was about to be taken up-stairs, when Arabella darted into the hall and accosted him. 'Oh, doctor! what does it all mean? Is he dead?' she asked tremulously.

'Dead! Oh dear, no; I hope not,' he replied.

'How did it happen?'

'I don't know any more than you do. All I know is that your father was found in a railway carriage in a state of insensibility;' and so saying, he sprang up-stairs to attend to his patient. He found him much worse than he had anticipated. He bled him, and applied all the remedies usual in such cases; and for the

present they seemed to remove the more alarming symptoms; but he freely confessed that he thought the case a bad one, and suggested that a London physician should be sent for.

'I can give no positive opinion,' he went on to say; 'one can never tell what turn these disorders may take; but I think, or rather I hope, he will pull through.'

The London physician came the next morning, and the opinion he gave only confirmed that given by Mr Fitch. The delirium had considerably increased, and was of the worst and most alarming kind, which, the doctors said, too often, if it did not issue in death, left the brain so much disordered and weakened as to impair its functions for the rest of life. The most undivided attention was required to keep the patient quiet, and to apply the remedies necessary for cooling and tranquillising the brain.

It was at this point that the cause of Mr Alsworth's sudden attack was discovered. He had as usual been reading the *Times*, and had come across a paragraph headed 'ABSCONDING OF A WELL-KNOWN STOCKBROKER—ENORMOUS DEFALCATIONS.' It stated that 'much excitement and consternation had been experienced on 'Change in consequence of its being reported that several large cheques drawn by Mr Archibald Sinclair, the well-known stockbroker, had been returned marked "No effects." It was at the same time ascertained that his offices were closed, and he himself had disappeared.'

This was the man who had sold Mr Alsworth's bank shares; and when he had read this, as we have already seen, he rang for his hat and coat and made his way at once to the railway station, caught the ten-twenty train, and proceeded at once to London. He went straight to his bankers, but only to find that Mr Sinclair's cheque for twenty-seven thousand pounds had been dishonoured, and that the drawer had decamped with the money.

The whole thing had been a great shock to Mr Alsworth; and this, and the excitement in consequence of his loss, brought on a fit of apoplexy, which it seemed would probably result in his death.

When Arabella discovered, from a letter written by her father's lawyer, the loss of this large sum, she was dismayed beyond measure. It seemed to her utter ruin. She had no idea of the amount of her father's fortune; but twenty-seven thousand pounds, besides other losses, which he had previously spoken of, must, she thought, reduce them to the verge of poverty. It was true there was no immediate want of money, for in her father's *escritoire* she found a matter of two hundred pounds or more in notes and gold. It was the future she thought most of.

There was one idea which would protrude itself into her mind—it was, that this was a judgment sent to punish her for her levity in setting on foot a false report of her father's losses. But, amid all her crosses and trials, there was one thought that was to her a consolation and a joy—it was that she had one, true and loving, on whom she could depend, and in whom she could trust. Come what might, she knew that her sailor-lover would not desert her; but he was away in a far-off African station, and could be

of no assistance to her in her present strait. Her aunt was no woman of business, and, except in the household arrangements, was quite useless.

She had no friend to whom she could apply for advice or assistance but her uncle, and he lived in Devonshire, just the opposite extreme of the kingdom; so that though she had written to him the day following her father's attack, she did not expect to see him for a couple of days at least.

It was the third day after her father's attack, and Mr Fitch's report that morning had been anything but favourable. She was sitting by the window indulging in a tender reverie, when the footman entered the room and said: 'Oh miss, Mrs Simson thinks master's worse.'

'I will come to him directly,' cried Arabella, much alarmed; 'and, James, you may as well go and see if you can find Mr Fitch and bring him here at once.' She hastened to her father's room, and went to his bedside, and sat down to await the arrival of the surgeon, who was not long in making his appearance.

Mr Alsworth was totally oblivious of all around him—talking wildly and incoherently, and insisting that he must start for London at once, as, without his aid, they would never catch that rascal Sinclair. All attempts to soothe and pacify him were vain. His delirium was such, that it was plain all real communication between his mind and that of any other person was at an end. Now and again he opened his eyes and stared about him in a vacant manner. It was a dreadful spectacle, for it was evident that he recognised no one, not even his daughter.

Mr Fitch shook his head. He directed that all that could possibly be done to tranquillise the pain should be done, but he gave no opinion. All that he said was: 'He has a very strong constitution, and he's under sixty, so that there is a chance for him yet.'

So the day passed, and night wore on. It was rough and stormy; the wind howled in the chimney, and the rain pattered against the window.

The delirious ravings had ceased, and the patient lay still and quiet; occasionally the eyes opened with a vacant stare, and then closed again. From this comatose state he never awakened; and so the spirit passed away.

THE SIGN-MANUAL.

To all legal documents the formula appended runs, 'As witness my hand,' a form of attestation which in the present day means that the document has been duly signed in the presence of witnesses, but which probably dates back to a time when writing was unknown, and when the real hand of the witness was stamped upon the document by means of paint, generally red ochre, to testify to all who looked upon it that such and such an act had been performed.

The documents of those days did not consist of paper and parchment, but generally of rocks and stones, although sometimes sheets of bark or buffalo hides were employed for the purpose. Hundreds of these attesting hands are found in

various parts of the world; sometimes placed high up on apparently inaccessible rocks, and surrounded by numerous hieroglyphic devices, which are doubtless historical records, now lost to the world for lack of a key to their interpretation. There are also hands in various positions, sculptured among the Egyptian, Hamath, and Mexican hieroglyphics, the meaning of which may perhaps be discovered through a knowledge of sign-language, for the language of the hand is as eloquent as that of the eye, and more easily transferred to pictographs.

Perhaps the most interesting notice of the use of the sign-manual among uncivilised peoples is that given by Catlin in his account of the burial of the Red Indian chief Blackbird. When this famous chieftain died, he was dressed in all his warlike paraphernalia, placed upon his favourite white steed, and, accompanied by all the chief men of his tribe, was led to the top of a hill, where, after various ceremonies, each headman present covered his hand with red paint and stamped it upon the white horse; then they brought earth and stones, and piled them round the living horse and his dead rider till both were buried deep in a great mound of earth; and so the chief was sent to the spirit world fully accounted for war or hunting, with his good steed beneath him, and the red hands of his lieges to testify that they had been witnesses of his solemn obsequies, and had done their duty by him in thus providing for his wants in another world.

Sir Edwin Arnold in his *India Revisited* speaks of the use of the sign-manual both painted and engraved in India. He says: 'The tank at Amedabad covers seventy-two acres, and is one of the largest in India. On a temple near its farther extremity was stamped the impress of a hand in red ochre, which marks where a Suti had perished in the flames. The gates of cities and the walls of burning ghats often bear the same token.' And again he writes: 'Half-way up the ascent to the holy hill [Poona] is seen a stone memorial of a Suti with the usual hand, arm, and footmark engraved, which show that a Hindu widow here immolated herself.'

The hand in the instances given above signifies or is associated with death; but Squier, writing of painted rocks in Nicaragua, says: 'The red hand is frequently repeated, as in Yucatan, representing there Kab-ul, the author of Life, and god of the working hand.' But whether denoting life or death, it is undoubtedly always employed as a witness, whether of creation or destruction, denoting that the owners of these painted or engraved symbols were present at such an event, and leave to posterity their hands as a token thereof.

Strange it is that this ancient prehistoric use of the hand should have descended to this nineteenth century to be now used as a scientific register of identity; yet so it is. Mr Francis Galton has for a long time been engaged in studying the markings of the finger-tips when transferred to paper, and has given to many learned Societies the results of his investigations. He finds that the markings of the fingers are never

alike in two persons, that they retain from infancy to age the same markings, varied only by the growth of the individual; so that the impression of the two thumbs of man, woman, or child may be more confidently relied upon as a witness of identity than any handwriting or other testimony; and he declares that had Roger Tichborne left the impression of his thumbs behind him, the Tichborne trial would have been impossible. Mr Galton, however, is not the only worker in this scientific inquiry into finger-marks, for Dr D'Abundo has been studying the subject as of great importance in determining mental capacity. He finds that generally the finger-tips of idiots, instead of varying as those of sane people do, show almost the same markings on all the fingers, and are remarkably smooth, making it difficult to obtain a clear impression. He also found that the thumb-marks of one idiot reproduced almost exactly those of his mother. These researches, trivial as they may seem to the unscientific, will probably lead to great results in the detection and identification of criminals; and perhaps, also, as foreshadowed in Dr D'Abundo's memoir, in the determination of the doubtful sanity of suspected individuals.

This method of identification by thumb-marks is, however, far from being new, for it has been in use for many years in India, where native criminals before their discharge from prison are made to impress their thumbs on the prison register, and can thus be readily recognised if recommitment. In China, also, probably from time immemorial, a similar mode of identification has been and still is in use; and a writer in the *Illustrated London News* last year described the signature to a Chinese passport as consisting of the impression of the hand of the bearer covered with oil-paint, transferred to damp paper, or sometimes of two thumbs only. This is one proof among many of the superior observation of that singularly ingenious race.

There is also but a step between this new science and that very ancient gypsy form of divination known as Chiromancy, or in modern parlance Palmistry. It is evident that if the finger-tips can be relied upon as a witness of identity, the whole hand must be still more reliable as a register of individuality; and if the slight convolutions of the thumbs and fingers denote sanity or imbecility, the deeper markings of the palm of the hand may, and probably do, register the mental and moral calibre of their owner. Whether they can also be made to prophesy of future events, or record the past, must remain doubtful. That they should do so seems most improbable, for if the markings remain the same during life, a record of events thus born with the individual, and as regards marriage, for instance, intermingling intimately with the lives of others, would savour too much of predestination to be accepted by any one who regards man as in any way a free agent. The subject, however, is a curious one, and likely to become much more prominent in the near future, since it has been lifted out of the darkness of superstition into the light of scientific inquiry; and it seems within the bounds of probability that the prehistoric sign-manual may be reverted to, and that at least the impression of the two thumbs may be required to be attached to all

legal documents; instead of or in addition to the usual signature, a duplicate impression being kept as a family register, thus entirely doing away with the risk of forgery.

THE VISION OF CHARLES XI.

'It is not probable,' said Dr Johnson, 'that two people will be wrong the same way.' But although we cannot accept the above as an axiom—for in that case we should have to accept a great many things beside ghosts and sea-serpents as not improbable—still the saying is not without weight. Wrong we may be—wrong we are, but not wrong in the same way exactly. 'Presentiments are strange things, and so are dreams,' says Currer Bell. 'I never laughed at one in my life.' It is chiefly other people's presentiments, perhaps, which we try to laugh away. Our own, we are usually more tender over. It is an old superstition that 'the arrow seen beforehand slacks its flight'; so we are willing to keep a sharp lookout for any that fortune may be aiming at us unawares. The shadow which a coming event casts on our path is commonly believed to be not so prophetic of immediate imminent danger, or death, as that unaccountable elevation of spirit which has been known, time out of mind, to fore-run a catastrophe. 'My bosom's lord sits lightly on his throne' is now a warning rather than a gratulation; for Shakespeare himself tells us 'that against ill chances men are ever merry.'

But to return to Dr Johnson's saying, that it is not probable two people will be wrong the same way. In the instance of 'a coming event' which we are about to relate, it was not two people that were 'wrong the same way'—that is, if they were wrong at all—but four, and one of them was credited with having as little imagination as a Dutch alewife or an English beef-eater. The father of the heroic Charles XII. of Sweden is known in history as one of the most despotic monarchs that ever ruled that country. His temperament was cool and inflexible; his mind enlightened, brave, and essentially practical; and he was firmly attached to the Protestant religion.

On an autumn evening, shortly after the death of his wife Ulrica—a Princess, by the way, whose days were said to have been shortened by his harshness—Charles XI. was sitting before a large fire in the library of his palace at Stockholm. Day by day since his bereavement he had grown more gloomy and taciturn, devoting himself to affairs of State with an industry that bespoke a mind ill at ease. On the evening in question his companions, or attendants, were but two—his favourite Chamberlain, Count Brahé, and his Doctor, Baumgarten. The latter had the reputation of being a sceptic in everything except his own art. The evening wore on; yet the king, who usually retired early, made no sign to his attendants to leave him. With his head sunk deep on his chest and his eyes fixed on the glowing embers, he maintained a profound silence. The Chamberlain had hinted more than once that His Majesty needed repose. Charles signified dissent by a gesture only. Baumgarten ventured at last to speak of the harm vigils bring even to the robust.

'Stay where you are; I am not sleepy,'

muttered the monarch through his clenched teeth.

Several attempts to get up a conversation between the pair of attendants followed, each a more dismal failure than its predecessor. The king was evidently in one of his blackest moods, and the courtiers' task both delicate and difficult.

Brahé, thinking he had fathomed the cause of his sovereign's gloom, gazed fixedly at a portrait of Queen Ulrica that hung above the mantel-piece. Heaving a deep sigh, he said: 'What a splendid likeness!—the mingled dignity and sweetness'—

'Bah!' interrupted the king rudely; 'it is much too flattering. The queen was plain.' Then, as if vexed with himself, he rose and walked about the room, endeavouring to hide feelings of which he was ashamed.

The present palace of the kings of Sweden was not in existence in those days. Charles XI. lived in the old palace at the end of the Ritterholm, facing Lake Mælar. This huge edifice was built in the shape of a horse-shoe; the king's library—from the window of which Charles was now looking—was at one end of the curved wing; the Hall in which the Swedish Estates assembled to receive a message from the Crown was at the other. To the king's surprise, he perceived this Hall to be illuminated. The light might proceed from a servant's flambeau; but what could a servant be about at such an hour in such a place? The Hall had not been opened for months; moreover, the light was too brilliant to come from a single flambeau, and too steady and without smoke for a conflagration. The king gazed at the spectacle some moments in silence, then he summoned his companions by a word to his side. 'What—who is yonder?' he said, pointing to the illuminated windows opposite.

Each declared himself wholly unable to explain or understand the sight; and the Chamberlain would have rung for a page to go and learn its cause, had not the king stopped him.

'I prefer to learn it for myself,' he said; and though his cheek was pale and his face troubled, his step was firm as he left the library, preceded, at his command, by his two attendants, each bearing a light. The warder, an old man, had retired to rest some hours; and his surprise was great when Count Brahé roused him to desire that he would open for the king the door of the Council-chamber immediately.

With a bunch of keys he was soon in readiness, and, at the king's bidding, opened without delay the door of a long gallery leading to the Hall. As they entered it, all stood still: the walls from floor to ceiling were draped in black.

'Who ordered this?' demanded Charles in an angry voice.

'No one, sire,' stammered the warder in amazement. 'All was as usual a week ago, when I swept the gallery; and those hangings'—he turned from them to gaze on the king steadfastly—'they never were in Your Majesty's Store Chamber.'

Charles walked rapidly forward without speaking, closely followed by his three attendants. As they neared the Hall, a brilliant shaft of light shot beneath the double leaves of the great oaken door.

'In God's name, sire,' cried the warder, holding back, 'go no farther! Here is sorcery!'

'Stop, sire!' urged the Count at the same moment. 'Who knows what danger you are braving!'

'Permit me, at least,' added Baumgarten in tremulous tones, 'to fetch hither a company of Your Majesty's grenadiers!'

'Silence!' said Charles sternly.—'Open this door, warder, at once!'

The old man endeavoured to obey, but his fingers shook so that he could not—or perhaps would not—fit the key into the lock.

'An old soldier, and afraid!' said Charles with scorn.—'Come, Count, undo this door for me!'

'Sire, bid me march to the mouth of a German cannon, and I will not hesitate,' protested Brahé; 'but to defy the powers of hell!'

The king snatched the key from the warder's shaking fingers. 'I see,' he said, 'I must be my own seneschal.'

In a moment he had fitted the key, turned it, and thrown wide open both leaves of the ponderous oak portal.

The Hall was ablaze with countless lights; and here, as in the gallery, the old figured tapestry was replaced from roof to floor with hangings of the deepest black. Flags and ensigns hung round the Hall, the trophies of the victories of the great Gustavus—Danish, Russian, and German; but wherever a Swedish flag appeared it was draped in funeral crape. The Hall was filled by a vast assembly, the four Estates sitting in due order of precedence on their accustomed benches, as it appeared, and every person was in deepest mourning. Yet, brilliant as was the light, their pallid faces shone so bewilderingly against the sombre background, that neither of the four witnesses of the scene was able to distinguish a single countenance. Seated on the throne was a blood-stained corpse, arrayed in the robes and decked with the insignia of royalty. At its right hand stood a child, crowned, and bearing an orb and sceptre in his hand. At its left, and leaning for support against the throne, was the phantom of an aged man. Seated at a table beneath the throne were men like judges, robed in black; and between them and the first row of benches stood a block, covered with crape; an axe lay beside it. As the king and his attendants gazed in speechless amazement at the spectacle, the oldest of the judges rose and smote the volume on the table before him three times with his shadowy hand. A side-door opened, and youths richly appressed and of noble carriage entered. All had their hands bound behind their backs. A thick-set man in a leathern jerkin followed, holding in his hands the ends of the ropes that bound them. As the youth who entered first halted in front of the block—which he seemed to regard with a proud disdain—the corpse on the throne was seen to tremble convulsively. The young man knelt and stretched out his head—the axe flashed—the head fell, rebounded and rolled to the feet of Charles. Hitherto he had stood motionless; but at this fearful sight, the king, gathering his energies, pronounced in a loud voice the formula: 'If ye are of heaven, speak! If of hell, depart, and leave us in peace!'

At the sound of his voice the figures before

him waned and faded, taking the appearance of coloured shadows ere they vanished altogether. Then a voice was heard crying: 'Woe! woe! woe to the House of Vasa!' As it ceased, the mysterious lights disappeared, and those still carried by the Doctor and the Chamberlain fell upon nothing but the empty Council-chamber, its ancient tapestry lightly shaken by the night-wind. A faint sound—resembling, according to one of the witnesses, the vibration of a harp-string broken in the tuning; according to another, the sighing of a breeze among pine-trees—still lingered a short time in the apartment. All agreed as to the length of time the apparition had, lasted—that, from beginning to end, it could not have been sustained less than ten minutes.

When the king and his companions regained the library, Charles remained some time lost in thought; then he dictated a precise account of what had been presented to him; his attendants signed it, he also.

Although every precaution was taken to prevent the contents of this document getting abroad, yet even in the king's lifetime they became known. The document itself is said to be still in existence, nor, so far as we are aware, has its authenticity ever been doubted. It ends in the following solemn words: 'If what I have here set down is not the exact truth, I renounce all hopes of that better life which perhaps may be vouchsafed to me for some good actions, and above all for my zeal in working for the happiness of the people entrusted to my care, and in defence of the religion of my forefathers.'

If the circumstances of the death of Gustavus III. and the execution of his assassin, Ankerstroem, be compared with the prophetic vision, they will be seen to correspond closely. The child standing by the royal corpse would be his son and successor, Gustavus Adolphus IV.; while the old man supporting himself by the throne would be the Duke of Sudermania, Regent, and, after the deposition of his nephew, the king of Sweden.

FOOTBALL IN MAORILAND.

ON the door of the Public Library of the little town of Ohinemutu, the capital of the Hot Lake District of New Zealand, were posted up two notices, one of a match that afternoon between the Rotorua Football Club and the Jubilee Team. I had often heard of the prowess of the Maori footballers since their visit to this country, and resolved to be present. The other notice was somewhat curious. It requested all to take note that the steam launch was forbidden to land passengers at any place on the Lake of Rotorua, 'because it ignores and tramples upon the chief and tribes and the Native Committee of Rotorua.' It was signed by a chairman with a long name, unpronounceable until slowly dissected, on behalf of the 'Great' Native Committee of Rotorua. To add to the formality, there was a small attempt at a seal. It was just the old story of fleecing the tourist, so common to the European districts where that class abounds. This little agitation, however, ended in smoke, the Maoris being brought to a proper comprehension of the fable of the fowl and its golden produce.

The first indication of something unusual was the riding through the town of some half-dozen Maoris, their jackets flying open, displaying their football jerseys, with bands of blue ribbon across like to what may be seen at footraces in this country. They were all well-dressed and handsome men, most of them with more than a touch of white in their colour. Leaving the *Lake Hotel*, I wended my way past the Maori Curiosity Shop and a few Maori huts, out on to the open plain on the road to Oxford. After passing the hotel, a large cloud of steam arises from a patch of tall manuka scrub, betokening the presence of the pools of boiling water for which the district is famous. Paths lead through the scrub and between the pools; but it is a veritable pilgrim's progress to go through it, so many are the traps for the unwary. It is singular how seldom the natives fall into the boiling water. They may be averse to speak of it; but I only heard of one instance, a poor woman, who fell in at Whakarewarewa, and was scalded to death. I was once in the Yellowstone Park, in Wyoming, when a similar accident occurred. A lady tourist slipped into a large pool of boiling water, and was rescued by one of the soldiers who are always hanging about the stations, and who jumped in after her. Both were severely scalded; and I was glad to hear subsequently that the gallant fellow had been very handsomely rewarded. A little stream of hot water flows along the side of the road for some distance, and in it a Maori boy is holding a horse for the cure of a sprained ankle—a pleasant kind of cure both for man and beast. In a little pool of boiling water there is a Maori kettle preparing for afternoon tea; and farther on, on the other side of the stream, a miniature geyser is spurting forth drops of the same fashionable fluid—the boiling water, not the tea. A wooden box or sink with open spars in the bottom, inserted in a pool or steam-hole, serves as a potato pot.

Out along the plain the road runs, passing here and there a cultivated field, but more often the original bracken or manuka scrub, until a little knot of people a short distance off the road, a few horses going loose, and the football posts, indicate the scene of the contest. The football ground, while slightly better than that surrounding, owing either to the treading or cutting down of the bracken, is still very rough, and rather resembles a level bit of moor than the trim football fields at home.

The Rugby game appears to have obtained a firm hold in New Zealand, and I think will always be preferred by the Maoris. They would have a difficulty in acquiring the restraint on the hands which is the peculiarity of the Association game, and which, of all the acquirements of civilisation, appears to be about the last to be learned by savage nations. On the game being started, I find that there are two white young men playing, and to them has been relegated the important post of full back on each side. The others are either pure Maoris or with a more or less Maori ancestry. I was somewhat surprised to see one or two of the natives playing without shoes or stockings; but a continual stripping went on throughout the game, and before the end many of them had nothing on but their knickerbockers, and, as may be imagined, were rather

difficult to hold. The game was perhaps a little rough, but fast and excellently played. It was truly wonderful to see a Maori scudding along with his bare feet on the rough ground, full of broken or cut bracken, and finishing up with a good drop at goal with his bare toes. The only ones who did not go in for stripping were the two whites, and two of the Maoris who had been in the team which had visited England.

The Jubilee Team was a scratch one, got up among old players in the district, and although their individual play was perhaps superior, the combination of the regular Club enabled them to score more points. One of the latter Club—a man conspicuous by a brilliant band of ribbon and a very black beard—in his excitement and in derision, danced about and yelled, 'Oh! the Jubilee, the Jubilee!'—if I mistake not, the burden of a song of the '87. The spectators were few, mostly natives, and all more or less dressed in European costume. A prominent exception, however, was an old Maori with hideously-tattooed face, who is known to strangers as the poet of the village. With the exception of his head-dress, his costume appeared to consist of two shawls or blankets, one worn round his loins and hanging down like a kilt; the other wrapped round his shoulders. His head-dress was a Balmoral bonnet, a relic probably of the war. Giving the usual salutation, 'Tenakoe,' he squatted down beside me, and favoured me with a running commentary in Maori on the game.

Far out on the lake, the island of Mokoia—to which the Maori girl Hinemoa, reversing the order of the old Greek legend, swam to meet her lover—is turning black in the silvery gray water, and conjures up the many romantic stories which cling to it. But football is a hungry thing, especially to the onlooker. The romantic gives way to the practical; and our next thoughts are of a special Maori supper of wild pig and kumara which our host has promised us.

FORBEARANCE.

Nay! let it pass!
'Twas but a hasty word,
Unthinking uttered as unwilling heard—
Although upon my ear it strangely jarred,
A lifelong friendship shall not thus be marred;
Nay! let it pass!

Nay! let it pass!
I will not answer so,
Lest words on words to greater difference grow;
Unguarded moments come to all—to me
Oft needs the trust of loving charity;
Then let it pass!

Then let it pass,
And not a thought remain
To pain my heart or give another's pain;
Let hearts be true, and let the friendship end
That bears not with the failings of a friend.
Yes! let it pass!

JAMES ROCK.

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MANNER AND MANNERS.

A MAN'S Manner—like the voice of Jacob—is his own; his Manners are often assumed—like Jacob's coat of skins—to deceive, or at least to pretend to some other character than his own. More insight may be gained into a man's character by observing his manner, even than by noting his actions. For he may do a kind action without being kind, a brave one without being courageous, a charitable one without being benevolent, since Pride, Prudence, Expediency, or Vanity may have dictated them all. But his manner—the manner that clings to him in his dressing-gown and slippers with a pipe between his lips; his manner of helping his family and himself when he carves the joint; his manner at cards, when, his hand being good, he is perceptibly triumphant—and bad, he is visibly cast down and irritable; his manner, when he alters it into 'company manners' on the advent of guests. His manner is the man himself; his manners are probably founded on those of some one he admires or has admired. For seldom do men take the trouble, or have minds original or self-confident enough, to form their own manners. Whatsoever a man's manner may be, then, is of prime importance to himself; while his manners are more important socially. With a kindly, polite, affectionate manner a man may half ruin his family and yet not forfeit their regard. It is the old story: this one, with frank, amiable, hearty manners, may not only enter the field, but remove the horse from it unchallenged; while that one with scowling face, rough voice, and ill-manners—why, his neighbours naturally object to his looking over their hedge.

Though a man have talent, virtue, and good-conduct, if they are coupled with disagreeable manners, he may be respected, feared, obeyed, and—hated. He shows a want of sympathy with the pursuits, the trials, the difficulties, the temptations of those about him, perhaps, and it is wonderful how nearly allied this want of sympathy is to a desire to quarrel, and how quickly

a quarrel spreads beyond the original disputants into factions. Much greater efforts are bestowed nowadays on making young men and women learned and accomplished than on cultivating in them either sympathy in the pursuits of others, or good-temper or geniality; yet neither learning be it ever so profound, nor accomplishments be they ever so brilliant, will bring them or those about them half the happiness that kindly, sympathetic, good-natured manners will diffuse. Nay, so unfitted are many persons for family life or social intercourse, that they will turn their very advantages into means of annoyance to those with whom they live. And this for the want of training in good-manners, the which, if they possessed, they would neither be sour, pedantic, disputatious, over-accurate on the one hand, nor fussy and overwhelmingly gushing on the other.

Wilkes knew the value of good-manners when he avowed that, ugly as he was, he was only half an hour behind the handsomest man in England. Within that space of time, experience had taught him that by his manners he could make up the leeway his appearance and reputation had together lost him. That he made no idle vaunt was proved on one memorable occasion, when his untiring courtesy and insinuating address procured him not only toleration, but answering politeness from one who not only differed from him politically, but, socially, sincerely despised him. This is the more surprising, since it is certain that not only do 'all manners take a tincture from our own,' but that we read the manners of others by our conception of their characters. Thus, the very same words and phrases may give us pleasure or offence according to our estimate of the speaker. That the manners which are admirable in one place appear ridiculous in another, all who know both town and country will easily admit; because, while courtesy is everywhere alike, ceremonies differ infinitely. It is just these surface ceremonies which a well-bred man will be quick to seize and adapt himself to. Swift tells us that it is a principal point of good-

breeding to suit our behaviour to the three several degrees of men—our superiors, our equals, and our inferiors; it may be added, that as the sword of best-tempered metal is the most flexible, so the truly generous are most pliant and courteous in their behaviour to inferiors.

The chief sources of ill-manners—beside the want of sympathy with other people's pursuits, referred to above, and the *gaucherie* arising from want of early training or from shyness—are pride, ignorance, and ill-nature. If a man arrogantly considers himself the superior of his company, or of some portion of it, he is pretty sure to show that he so considers himself. Or, say, he is ignorant—not of the customs and ceremonies of what a foolish few choose to call 'society,' but ignorant of the measure of deference due to age, sex, sickness, or any other infirmity, he is pretty certain to betray this ignorance by ill-manners. If he be ill-natured, and nourishes a grudge, be sure he will find an opportunity of making the object of his dislike uncomfortably aware of his displeasure. As clever, perhaps, as he is courageous, even the subject of his attack will sometimes yield him a reluctant admiration, while he roars down all opposition, affirming that he cannot furnish his opponents with brains as well as arguments. In fact, like some preachers who will not scruple to assert 'that all right-minded and thoughtful people must agree with them,' he will assure his opponent that, if unconvinced, it is entirely his own infirmity.

But if a man be free of these three defects—pride, ignorance, and ill-nature—let him be placed wherever fortune will, there is no fear but that he will comport himself with the courtesy which is the result at once of good-nature and good-sense; and without which he will be a clown, though he had been a master of ceremonies all his days. In the presence of these two—good-sense and good-nature combined—there is ease and security that not only will our opinions be respected, but even our prejudices and prepossessions will be gently dealt with. Yet, to attain to a generous courtesy, more even than good-sense and good-nature is necessary; some self-denial must be practised, not with a view of obtaining services in return, as some cynics would have us believe, but because a handsome courtesy surely is twice blessed, breeding in return that reciprocal kindness which we conceive of as governing the behaviour of the angels themselves.

Some manners there are, which, like some colours, are not offensive in and by themselves, in their own sphere, or at a distance, but which, placed in juxtaposition with others that neither agree with nor are complementary to them, become glaringly incongruous. Thus, a broad boisterous humour—not without merit in itself, perhaps—obliterates, overpowers, by its native strength and vividness, the tenderer hues of a gentler fancy, just as a brilliant French-blue drawing-room suite, harmless and even handsome in an upholsterer's warehouse, becomes obnoxiously obtrusive in the presence of living and moving figures and colours more subdued. Yet it must be confessed that to the ordinary eye good-breeding is often invisible: like the woman who is too well dressed to attract attention.

Good-manners, no more than wit, genius, learning, or sprightliness, are welcome everywhere. There are innumerable coterie where an affectation of superior refinement, an air of doing and saying, not so much what is right and kind, but the 'correct thing,' what is fancied to be said and done by their superiors in rank or fashion—is much more impressive to the meagre worshippers of the idol caste than the beauty of courtesy itself would be. Indeed, so little do they understand it, that the extra politeness assumed sometimes to keep presumptuous folks at a distance will be put down by them to their own exceeding merits, and a cool reserve is met with a ridiculous assumption of condescension, as though to set us at our ease.

While good-nature is like bread—the staff of everyday life—manners that are superficial and exaggerated are like the paint and powder on the face of a handsome woman, not merely needless, but impairing what they are supposed foolishly to improve. The idea of their own importance is strongest in the weakest frames: they will think themselves great because they think little of their associates, valuing themselves principally on little niceties, affectations, and fantastical mannerisms, laborious frivolities. For a man to be satisfied with the approval of his coterie, even though accompanied by his own secret dissatisfaction, is the mark of a small mind; while for him to be satisfied with his own behaviour, even though it be condemned by his little circle, argues a soul of no common stamp.

BLOOD ROYAL.*

CHAPTER XVII.—IN SEARCH OF AN ANCESTOR.

DICK'S first year at the Pipe-roll was anything but a lazy one. Opulence in the shape of two hundred and fifty a year came to him with the encumbrance of plenty to do for it. He had the office routine to learn, and rolls and tallies to decipher, and endless household difficulties of his own to meet, and all the children's schooling and other arrangements to look after. It was still a struggle. But by dint of hard work and pinching, with Maud's able assistance, things came straight in the end somehow. Dick got a pupil or two in his spare time—happier men than himself, who were going up under luckier auspices to Oxford; for, though Dick put the best face upon it, still, it was a pull leaving that beloved university without a degree. However, the year wore on, as most years wear on, good, bad, or indifferent; and Mary Tudor, too, left her place at Chiddingwick rectory, and got another one, better paid, with nice people in Westminster. She was a constant Sunday visitor at the Plantagenets' rooms; and so, in vacation, was Archie Gillespie, whose unflinching devotion to his college friend struck Dick every day as something truly remarkable. Brothers are so dense. Maud smiled at him often. If he had paid a quarter the attention to any other girl that Archie paid *her*, how instantly *she* would have perceived it! But Dick, dear Dick, never seemed to suspect that Archie could come for

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anything else on earth except to talk over the affairs of the family with him. And yet, men consider women the inferior creatures!

Much of Dick's spare time, however—for, being a very busy man, of course he had often spare time on his hands, amounting frequently to as much as half an hour together—was spent in a curious yet congenial occupation—the laborious hunting-up of the Plantagenet pedigree. A certain insane desire to connect his family with the old royal House of England pursued Dick through life, and made him look upon this purely useless and ornamental object as though it were a matter of the gravest practical importance. Maud felt its gravity, too, quite as much as her brother; it was an almost inevitable result, indeed, of their peculiar up-bringing. Every man has necessarily what the French call, well, 'the defects of his qualities'—faults which are either the correlatives or the excess of his particular virtues. Now, the Plantagenets had preserved their strong sense of self-respect and many other valuable personal characteristics under trying circumstances, by dint of this self-same family pride; it was almost necessary, therefore, that when Dick found himself in a position to prove, as he thought, the goodness of his claim to represent in our day the old Plantagenet stock, he should prosecute the research after the missing links with all the innate energy of his active nature. Mary Tudor, indeed, whose practical common sense was of a different order, sometimes regretted that Dick should waste so much valuable time on so unimportant an object; to her, it seemed a pity that a man whose days were mainly spent in poring over dusty documents in the public service should devote a large part of his evenings as well to poring over other equally dusty documents for a personal and purely sentimental purpose. 'What good will it do you, Dick, even if you do find out you're the rightful heir to the throne of England?' she asked him more than once. 'Parliament won't repeal the Acts of Union with Scotland and Ireland, and get rid of the Settlement, to make you king, and Maud and Nellie princesses of the blood royal.' Dick admitted that was so; but still, her frivolity shocked him. 'It's a noble inheritance!' he said, with a touch of romance in his voice. 'Surely, Mary, you wouldn't wish me to remain insensible like a log to the proud distinction of so unique an ancestry! They were such *men*, those old Plantagenets! Look at Henry II., for example, who founded our House for most practical purposes; there was a wonderful organiser for you! And Edward I., what a statesman! so far before his age! and the Black Prince—and Edward III.—and Henry V., what strategists! It isn't merely that they were kings, mind you: I don't care about that; since I came to know what really makes a man great, I haven't attached so much importance to the mere fact of their position. But just see what workers the old Plantagenets were in themselves, and how much they did for the building-up of England—and, indeed, of all Britain, if it comes to that, for wasn't Scottish independence itself a direct result of the national opposition to Edward Plantagenet's premature policy of unification? When I think of all those things, I feel a glow of pride: I realise

to myself what a grand heritage it is to be the descendant and representative of such early giants; for there were giants in those days, and no man could then be king unless he had at least a strenuous personality—oftenest, too, unless he were also a real live statesman. Our ancestors themselves knew all that very well; and when one of our line fell short of his ancestral standard, like Edward II. and Richard II., he went soon to the wall, and made way for a stronger. It's not about them I care, nor about mere puling devotees like poor Henry III.: it's my descent from men like those great early organisers, and thinkers, and rulers, who built up the administrative and judicial system we all still live under.'

When he talked like that, Maud thought it was really beautiful! She wondered how Mary could ever be insensible to the romantic charms of such old descent! But there! Mary wasn't a Plantagenet, only a mere Welsh Tudor; and though she was a dear good girl, and as sweet as they're made, how could you expect her to enter fully into the feelings of the real old family? As for Archie Gillespie, he said to Mary more than once: 'Let Dick go his own way, Miss Tudor: it gives him pleasure. He thinks some mysterious good is going to come out of it all for him and his, if he can fill in the missing links in the Plantagenet pedigree. Of course, that's pure moonshine. Still, we must always remember it was the Plantagenet pedigree that gave our Dick his first interest in English history, and so made him what he is; and anything deserves respect which could keep Edmund Plantagenet's children from degenerating, as they would have degenerated, from their father's example, without this inspiring idea of *noblesse oblige*: an idea which has made Dick and Maud—I mean, Miss Plantagenet—hold their heads high through life in spite of their poverty. It can do Dick no harm now to pursue a little further this innocent hobby; it will give him a better insight into the byways and alleys of early English history; and if he can really establish the Plantagenet pedigree throughout, it may serve to call attention to him as a sound historical researcher. Fortunately, he knows what evidence is; and he won't go wrong, therefore, by making heedless assumptions and incredible skips and jumps, like half our genealogists.'

So Dick persevered for fully twelve months in his eager attempt, by hook and by crook, to trace his own family up to Lionel of Clarence, upon whom Mr Plantagenet himself had early fixed—at pure haphazard—as the special transmitter of the Plantagenet blood to the later branches of the House, himself included. The longer Dick worked at it, too, the more confident he became of ultimate success. Step by step turned out right. He had brought the thing down, he told Mary, to a moral certainty; only one link now remained to complete the entire pedigree. That's always the way, it may be mentioned parenthetically, with your doubtful genealogy; there's only one link missing—but unfortunately, that's the link on proof of which the whole chain is dependent. And very naturally, too: for this is how the thing works out. You track your own genealogy, let us say, back to a person named Plantagenet, who

lived some time in the sixteenth century, and with whom you are really and undoubtedly connected by an unbroken and traceable ancestral series. Then you track the family tree of Lionel of Clarence forward, in the opposite direction, to a real and historical Plantagenet who 'flourished,' as the books say, near the end of the fifteenth century. After that you say: 'If my ancestor, the sixteenth-century Plantagenet, turns out to be the son of Lionel's descendant in the fifteenth century—as is extremely probable—why, then, it's all made out—I'm descended direct from Lionel of Clarence; and in any case, don't you see, there's only one link missing!' Wise genealogists usually abstain on purpose from the attempt to hunt up that fatal missing link; they know right well that the safest plan is to assume identity, while efforts at proving it are frequently disastrous. But Dick was still young, and not perhaps overwise; so once he had brought down the matter to a question of a solitary missing link, he couldn't rest night or day till he had finally settled it.

One evening, he returned home from the office to Maud, overflowing with a new and most important discovery. 'Well, the thing's all but proved, at last,' he cried in a triumphant voice, as he kissed her warmly: 'at least, that is to say, I've found a valuable clue that will decide the matter finally one way or the other. I've discovered a conveyance of the sixteenth century, dated 1533—here's a verbatim copy of it—which describes Thomas Plantagenet, our great-great-grandfather's grandfather, as being really the son of Giles Plantagenet, the missing-link man, who is said in it to have owned a house—and this, you will see, is the new and important point—at Framlingham, in Suffolk. He seems to have been some sort of a petty tradesman. Where Giles first came from, we had till now no means of knowing. But after this clue, all we've got to do next is just to hunt up the local records at Framlingham and find out that this Giles Plantagenet, already known to us, was the son of that Geoffrey Plantagenet of Richmond, in Yorkshire, whom I showed long ago to have been the last traceable descendant of Lionel of Clarence, and concerning whom Lysons says, without a shadow of authority, *decessit sine prole*, he died without issue.'

'It seems rather a leap, though, for those days, doesn't it,' Mary put in timidly, for she dreaded the effect of a disappointment upon Dick's nervous nature, 'from Richmond to Framlingham? I thought people rarely went then much beyond their own county.'

'That was true, no doubt, for the middle and lower classes,' Dick answered with a faint tinge of Plantagenet pride in his voice; 'but hardly even then, I should say, for people of such distinction as Geoffrey Plantagenet. Gentlemen of high rank, and members of the peerage and the royal family, had manors, you know, in many different counties, and moved on from one to another from time to time, or left them about by will to various sons and daughters. We mustn't judge such great folk by the common analogies of ordinary people.'

'Still, Dick,' Maud interposed, a little startled herself, 'even if Mary's objection doesn't hold good, it *does* seem a little odd, doesn't it, that Giles Plantagenet should be a petty tradesman

at Framlingham, if he was really the son of such a man as Geoffrey, whom we know to have been a county gentleman of distinction in Yorkshire?'

'I don't think so at all,' Dick answered with a little surprise. 'In those days, you see, Maud, when there was no middle class, people went up and down easily. Attainder was so common, and loss of estates such an every-day occurrence, that the vicissitudes of families must often have been much more rapid and startling than nowadays. However, it's no use arguing beforehand about a plain question of fact. It was so, or it wasn't. I shall soon find out which. The records are almost sure to be preserved at Framlingham, because it was the seat of the Howards; and I shall go down there next Bank Holiday and settle the question. After that, I'll publish the result of my search; and then nobody will ever be able to say in future we made a false pretence of being real royal Plantagenets.'

He spoke so confidently that he really frightened poor Mary. She couldn't help thinking what a terrible shock it would be to him if by any chance he should turn out after all to be mistaken, and if Giles Plantagenet should prove to be other than the son of Geoffrey.

So real did this danger appear to her, indeed, that as Bank Holiday approached, and Dick talked more and more certainly of his visit to Framlingham, she spoke quite seriously on the matter to Maud. 'Do you know, dear,' she said, taking her friend's hand, 'if I could have got away for the day, I'd go right down to Framlingham with him, though it seems to me a dreadful waste of money for so useless a purpose.'—At that, Maud's eyes flashed; poor dear Mary! she never would understand the feelings of a Plantagenet. 'What I feel is this,' Mary went on, all unheeding. 'I'm obliged to stop at home that day with the children; but I wish I could go: for if by any chance it should happen to turn out that Dick was mistaken after all, and Giles Plantagenet *wasn't* the son of Geoffrey, I'm afraid the shock would quite unman him for the moment, and I hardly know what he might be tempted to do in the first keen sense of intense disappointment.'

Maud's lip curled slightly. Nursery governess as she was, the old dancing-master's daughter had all the pride of a duchess—and why not, indeed, since she was a princess of the blood royal? 'Oh, that wouldn't make any difference, dear,' she answered confidently. 'We *are* Plantagenets, don't you see? and if we don't happen to be descended from that particular man Geoffrey, we must be descended through some other member of the Plantagenet family. My poor father was sure of it; and it's always been known in Yorkshire for many generations.'

However, Mary was so urgent, and so afraid of the consequences of a sudden disappointment—for she knew Dick's nature, and loved him dearly—that at last Maud consented to accompany her brother on his projected trip, and guard him against the results of an impossible failure.

Bank Holiday came, in due time—a lovely summer day; and Dick and Maud went down together by cheap train to Framlingham. The banks by the side of the rail were thick with flowers. They reached there early in the day,

and Dick called upon the rector at once, sending in his card with name and address at the Pipe-rolls. As he expected, that introduction amply sufficed him. Nor was he disappointed about the preservation of the Framlingham records. The church possessed a singularly perfect collection of baptismal and marriage entries from the beginning of the fifteenth century onward. In less than half an hour, Dick was thick in their midst, turning over the dusty leaves of those worn old books with all the eagerness and enthusiasm of a born genealogist.

Maud sat with him for a while in the gloom of that dimly-lighted chancel; but after half an hour or more of hunting page by page, her patience began to give out, and she proposed to stroll away towards the castle ruins, and return a little later to see how Dick progressed with his quest after ancestors. Dick acquiesced readily enough, and Maud went off by herself down the leafy lane that leads straight to the castle.

For some time she amused herself in the deep hollow of the moat, and walked round the great circuit of the frowning rampart. It was a splendid ruin, she thought, the finest she had seen. Then she mounted the broken wall, and looked out upon the wide plain, and admired the beautiful view of the church and village. A flag floated from the tower, as if in honour of Dick's presence. At last, as lunch-time approached, she lounged back lazily to Dick. They had brought their own bread and cheese and a few sandwiches with them, and she had picked out mentally a cool spot under the spreading chestnuts which seemed to her the very place in which to make their impromptu picnic. So she opened the church door in very good spirits, for the fresh country air had exhilarated her like champagne after so long a spell of that dusty London; and she went straight to the chancel where she had left poor Dick an hour before among his tattered registers.

As she drew near, a sudden terror rushed over her unexpectedly. What on earth could this mean? Dick was gazing at the books with an ashen-white face, and with eyes that fairly started out of their sockets for staring. He raised his head and looked at her. He couldn't speak for horror. With one hand he beckoned his sister mysteriously to his side; then he moistened his lips at last and pointed with one accusing finger to the entries. 'Look there, Maud,' he faltered with a painful effort; and Maud looked where he bid her.

It was a mongrel entry, half Latin, half English: 'Die 14 Junii, anno 1498, Giles, the son of Richard Plantagenet, cobbler, and of Joan, uxoris eius, huius parochiæ.'

Maud glanced at the words herself with a certain vague sense of terror. 'But perhaps,' she cried, 'after all, this Richard Plantagenet himself was of royal ancestry.'

Dick shook his head with a terrible, a despondent shake. He knew when he was beaten. 'Oh no,' he answered aloud, though he could hardly frame the words. 'I know what I say. I've found out all about this Richard Plantagenet, Maud. He was the ancestor of the other people—the false Plantagenets, don't you know, the Sheffield family who left the money. He never was a true Plantagenet in any way at all.

It was only a nickname. He acted the parts of the Plantagenet kings, one after the other, in a masque or pageant, and was known from that time by pure fun as Richard Plantagenet. But that was in London; and we didn't know till now he was ever settled at Framlingham.'

'And *must* we be descended from him, Dick?' She asked it piteously, pleadingly.

'Oh, Maud, yes, we must. There's no other way out of it. I've worked up the whole thing so thoroughly now—to my own destruction. I know all about him. His real name was Muggins; and that's *our* real name too; and this book—this horrid book gives all the facts necessary to prove our descent from him; and the Sheffield people's too, who are really our cousins.'

He said it with utter despondency. The truth was wrenched out of him. Maud clasped her white hands and looked hard at poor Dick. This disillusion was just as terrible for her as for him. 'You're quite, quite sure?' she murmured once more in a voice of pure agony.

'Yes, quite, quite sure,' Dick answered with a tremor, but with manful persistence. 'There can't be a doubt of it. I knew everything about this wretched creature before, except that he was a Framlingham man: and there are entries here in the book—you can see them for yourself—that leave no shadow of doubt anywhere about the fellow's identity.—Maud, Maud, it's been all a foolish, foolish dream. We are not—we never were—real royal Plantagenets!'

Maud looked down at the ground and burst into hot tears. 'Then I'll never marry Archie,' she cried. 'Never, never, never! I'll never ask him to take a mere nobody from Chiddingwick. My pride wouldn't allow it—my pride would stand in the way: for I'm as proud as before, Dick, though I'm *not* a Plantagenet!'

THE STAGE 'DRESSER' OF LAST CENTURY.

THE poverty of theatrical 'properties' and scenery in the early part of last century is ridiculed in the *Tatler* of 16th July 1709, which professes to give an inventory of the 'movables of Christopher Rich, Esq.,' who is described as 'breaking up housekeeping, and has many curious pieces of furniture to dispose of, which may be seen between the hours of six and ten in the evening'—the theatrical hours of the period. Among them we find—'spirits of right Nantz brandy, for lambent flames and apparitions; one shower of snow in the whitest French paper; a sea, consisting of a dozen large waves, the tenth bigger than ordinary and a little damaged; a new moon something decayed; an imperial mantle made for Cyrus the Great, and worn by Julius Cæsar, Bajazet, King Harry the Eighth, and Signor Valentini; a serpent to sting Cleopatra; the complexion of a murderer in a bandbox, consisting of a large piece of burnt cork and a coal-black peruke; a suit of clothes for a ghost, viz., a bloody shirt, a doublet curiously pinked, and a coat with three great eyelet holes upon the breast.'

To John Philip Kemble belongs the credit of being the first theatrical manager who laid the

foundation of that improvement in scenery and scenic effect which we have seen brought to such perfection in our own day. Boaden the dramatist, one of Kemble's biographers, tells us there were persons still living in his time who could remember the miserable 'pairs of flats which used to clap together on even the stage trodden by Mr Garrick; architecture without selection or propriety; a hall, a castle, or a chamber, or a cut wood of which all the verdure seemed to have been washed away.' This brings him to the improvements in costume, scenery, and scenic effect wrought by John Philip, on the subject of which Boaden, who is not always as clear as he might be, concludes his observations with a very strange remark: 'Unquestionably, all the youth, all the uniformity, all the splendour, and the costume of the stage came in, but did not die with Mr Kemble.' This was written in 1825. Boaden's meaning appears to be that, great as were the improvements introduced by Kemble, they were, after all, the mere commencement of a new era. We who live in 1892 and have seen the perfection to which stage costume, scenery, and machinery have been brought during the last quarter of a century, can unhesitatingly endorse the truth of that opinion.

It was not until Kemble's time that attention began to be given to the correct costume of theatrical characters. Our great-great-grandfathers did not trouble themselves to inquire whether David Garrick was dressed in accordance with the times in which the characters he represented were supposed to live, or in harmony with their probable surroundings: all they went to see and hear was David Garrick. This should be borne in mind when considering the ability of a man like Garrick; for the power which, in spite of the disadvantages of wretched scenery, 'properties,' and incorrect costume, could rivet the attention, must have been of necessity very great. The 'dressing' of Shakespearean characters in the eighteenth century would make us laugh in these days. Garrick in the character of Macbeth was accustomed to wear a court suit of scarlet and gold lace, with—in the later scenes of the tragedy—'a wig as large as any now worn'—I am here quoting Lee Lewis—'by the gravest of our Barons of the Exchequer.' This was the costume adopted and followed by other Macbeths of the time. A picture by Dawes represents Garrick in the fighting scenes of the play wearing a sort of Spanish dress, slashed trunks, a breast-plate, and—Heaven save the mark!—a high-crowned hat. To dress Macbeth after this fashion would be at least as absurd as if we were to put a pair of top-boots on the sturdy legs, and a 'stove-pipe' hat on the grizzled locks of Oliver the Protector.

It is not improbable that Garrick himself saw the absurdity of this method of 'dressing' a semi-barbaric warrior, and his reason for continuing to do so has been given by more than one authority. A friend is said to have remonstrated with him on the absurdity of the costume, and suggested the almost equally incongruous alternative of a Highland dress. 'It is only thirty years ago,' said David, 'that the Pretender was in England. Party spirit runs so high that if I were to put on tartan I should be hissed off the stage, and perhaps the house would be pulled

down.' To those who know anything of the strong party feeling of the period and the rough-and-ready audiences of the last century, this reported answer seems to carry on the face of it the stamp of truth.

It is noteworthy, however, that when Kemble played Macbeth at Edinburgh, on the occasion of his farewell benefit, he wore a Highland dress. Sir Walter Scott tells us: 'We divested his bonnet of sundry huge bunches of black feathers which made it look like an undertaker's cushion; in other words, the classical John Philip had 'dressed' the hero of Shakespeare's tragedy in the well-known habiliments of the Highlander of the snuff-shop. Sir Walter knew this perfectly well; and by his advice and by his hands the feathers were replaced 'with a single broad feather of an eagle sloping across' the actor's 'noble brow. He told us afterwards,' says the novelist, 'that the change to him was worth three distinct rounds of applause as he came forward in this improved and *more genuine headgear*.' The italics are ours. Even Sir Walter does not seem to have been struck with the absurdity of an 'improvement' which was merely a mistake in another direction. As a matter of fact, Macbeth was never dressed to the taste of antiquarian critics until the revival of the tragedy by Mr Phelps at Sadler's Wells in 1847, and by Mr Charles Kean at the Princess's some few years later. The date of Macbeth's death is fixed at the year 1057, and the costumes selected on these occasions were those of the eleventh century.

Grotesque as was his 'dressing' of Macbeth, the costume in which David Garrick and his successors were accustomed to array Othello was certainly not less remarkable. Before Kemble's time, Othello usually presented himself in 'a stiff skirted coat, white breeches, waistcoat, white full-bottomed wig, and three-cornered cocked-hat.' If to this remarkable costume, which the reader should perhaps be told was the uniform of a British general officer of the period, you add Othello's blackened face, you have a result which in these days could only be realised by a Moore and Burgess Minstrel. Occasionally, however, Othello was habited in a semi-eastern costume—a Moorish jacket and trousers—which, if not so absolutely preposterous as the other, must strike any one only slightly acquainted with European or Venetian history as ridiculous and absurd. 'The general of an Italian state,' says James Boaden, with something approaching to historical accuracy, 'would wear its uniform; he would never be indulged with the privilege of strutting about like "a malignant and a turban'd Turk" at the head of a Christian army.' Kemble was the first to knock over these ridiculous and absurd stage notions. 'He searched,' says Donaldson, 'the surroundings and paintings of former ages, and had the historical drama dressed in the proper costume of its period.' The statement is a little too wide and comprehensive to be strictly accurate, a fact which in no way detracts from the merit due to John Philip as an earnest and intelligent stage reformer.

The stage is made up of contrast—tragedy, comedy; melodrama and burlesque: to change to a lighter subject is strictly within the area of my theme, because it serves to illustrate in

another direction some of the changes which have taken place in theatrical costume. Joseph Grimaldi was the inventor of the present clown's dress. Before Joey's time, the clown—in costume, but in nothing else—was a sort of English Pierrot, an impossible combination, and a necessary failure. Joey seems to have recognised the fact that English low humour was unsuited to a Frenchman's dress, and that between the Pierrot—a 'personnage de carnaval'—and an English clown there was, and could be, very little in common. He broke up, therefore, the blank white of Pierrot's dress with the variegated spots, stars, and patches to which we are now accustomed. But Grimaldi in his own particular line, narrow as it was, was a man of inventive resource—to some extent a genius. Nearly all the so-called 'comic business' is of his invention. The Harlequin—probably without knowing it—continued to dress himself à la Watteau until the year one of the present century, when James Byrne, father of the late Oscar Byrne, introduced a change. In the pantomime of 'Harlequin Amulet, or the Magic of Mona,' produced at Drury Lane, he appeared as Harlequin, in a tightly-fitting white silk shape, into which the well-known coloured silk patches were woven, the whole being profusely covered with spangles, and presenting an unusually sparkling appearance. This is the costume worn by all the Harlequins of the present day.

THE IRONY OF FATE.

CHAPTER III.—MAJOR BOWYER.

It was the day following her father's death. Arabella and her aunt were sitting in the drawing-room, waiting the arrival of her uncle. Presently the hall bell rang; there was a bustle on the stairs, and then the door was flung open and the footman announced 'Major Bowyer!'

Most people thought the Major a genial, kind-hearted man. He was of commanding presence, tall, and remarkably handsome; had a fine figure, fine features, and a florid complexion. These, with his debonair manner and a soft melodious voice, made him a general favourite in society, especially with the fair sex. He entered the room with a cheerful salutation to both his sister-in-law and niece, and though he put on a pleasant smile, he in reality was not in the best of humours. On his way down in the train the death of Mr Alsworth had been a topic of conversation; and his first impression was that, as he knew that the deceased had appointed him sole executor and trustee, his position would not be an unpleasant one. Arabella was a handsome girl, and to have such a fine young creature under his control for the next two years at least, and also to have the management of her property, was not at all disagreeable. But presently something was said about large losses and consequent embarrassment, and then things assumed an entirely different aspect. The idea of having his niece dependent on him, instead of his having the command of her thousands, was a state of things he had never contemplated; and consequently, when he arrived at Netley Lodge, his temper was somewhat ruffled. But he was too

politic a man to let either Arabella or Miss Mortimer know his thoughts; so he smiled graciously on the former, and kissed her affectionately; and then approaching the latter, he said: 'Well, Betsy, how do you do?' and stretching out his hand indifferently, he continued: 'Glad to see you looking so well.'

Miss Mortimer and the Major had never been on particularly friendly terms; but, in her present position, she was very glad that Arabella should have some one to help and advise her more competent than herself; so she replied: 'Thank you, Robert. Thank you very much for coming. In this melancholy business, you will be a great help to my poor Bella.'

'Certainly, certainly! I shall do all I can,' he replied airily. 'But what is this I heard in the train about losses and embarrassment?'

Arabella shook her head. 'We are almost as much in the dark as you are, my dear uncle,' she said. 'All we know for certain is that papa's stockbroker has absconded, taking with him twenty-seven thousand pounds of his money.'

'What! That rascal Sinclair?'

'Yes.'

'But surely the loss of twenty-seven thousand pounds would not mean ruin. Can't you tell me anything more?'

'No; I have written to Mr Ainsley—that's papa's lawyer—and informed him of the sad event; and he replied that, if I would let him know the day appointed for the funeral, he would come down and bring the will and the papers with him. I don't know much about it; but I thought from the tone of the letter that things might turn out better than we expected.'

'I hope and trust, for your sake, my dear, that they may.—But now, what about dinner?'

'We dine at six,' she replied; 'and'—looking at her watch—'it is now half-past five.'

'Well, then, I'll go and dress. I suppose they have taken my luggage up.' And, to Miss Mortimer's inexpressible relief, he rose and left the room, accompanied by Arabella, who volunteered to show him to his apartments.

'What a wretched, cold-hearted creature!' murmured the soft-hearted lady. 'Not a word of sympathy or comfort to the poor child, nothing but money.'

The dinner was over; the ladies had retired, and Major Bowyer was sitting by the fire sipping some of Mr Alsworth's choicest Burgundy, and he felt quite comfortable and quite at his ease. The ill-humour with which he had entered the house, the natural result of bad news and a journey on a winter's day, had yielded to the agreeable influence of the house. He was, too, greatly pleased with his niece. Even if the state of affairs turned out as everybody seemed to imagine they would, he was beginning to think that to have so fine and graceful a girl as a member of his establishment would be no such unpleasant thing, and certainly would, as an attraction, be worth the expense. So he sat on, smoking and thinking till the Burgundy was finished, and at an early hour went to bed.

The days passed slowly. From the time Major Bowyer entered the house, he, as it were, took command of everything, much to Arabella's satisfaction. Miss Mortimer, however, was not so

well pleased. She knew more of her brother-in-law's character than her niece, and had a vivid recollection of what her dead sister had suffered under his despotic rule.

At last the day of the funeral arrived. Arabella had taken a last look at the placid face of her dear dead father; the coffin had been screwed down; and now the sombre procession was slowly wending its way down the drive. The poor orphan was sitting bathed in tears. She had seen the last of him she had loved so dearly, and who had loved her with an equal if not a stronger passion, and she felt sad and desolate. Presently other thoughts crept into her mind and occupied her brain. She was looking back into the past and musing on the future. Was the happy life she had led to be a thing of the past? Had the sunshine of her life faded and passed away for ever? She sat for some time silent and discouraged, how long she never knew, and then she and Miss Mortimer were summoned to the library to hear the will read. Her uncle met her at the door and conducted her to a seat, and the reading commenced.

CHAPTER IV.—SPREADING THE NEWS.

In their own estimation, the Misses Scudamore were not, as some of the inhabitants of Nunsford imagined, selfish, stingy, and narrow-minded; on the contrary, taken at their own appraisement, they were just the reverse, being large-hearted, benevolent, and charitable. It was true that if they distributed tickets for bread and coals, these indispensable commodities were invariably paid for with other people's money. Again, when they had a piece of news, they did not keep it to themselves, but took the earliest opportunity of disseminating it as broadly as possible. There was no newspaper published in Nunsford, and consequently, if the Misses Scudamore had not taken upon themselves the office of 'news-vendor,' nobody would have known anything about anybody's business but their own. If, therefore, the Misses Scudamore looked upon themselves as benefactors to society generally, it is not much to be wondered at.

'There now, Prudence!' said Miss Scudamore; 'that's no idle delusion, that's an undoubted fact.'

'Of course it is,' replied Prudence; 'and I could take my oath to it before a whole bench of magistrates.'

'We'll call in at Mrs Montessor's as we go along and tell her the news. I should think we shall be the first, as the workmen had only just finished when we passed,' said the elder lady.

About ten minutes afterwards they were ushered into Mrs Montessor's morning-room, where they found Miss Puddicombe; and after the usual salutations, Miss Scudamore commenced: 'You've not seen it, of course—it's only just been put up.'

'Seen what?' asked Mrs Montessor.

'The board.'

'What board?'

'The one I told you about—don't you remember?'

'No,' she replied, rather techily.

'Well, then, I'll tell you. It's on the lawn

at Netley Lodge, and it informs the public that this eligible mansion is to be let.'

'Indeed! But I'm not surprised,' said Mrs Montessor. 'After what the poor old man said to me, that is what might have been expected.'

'What did he say?' asked Miss Prudence anxiously.

'He said the state of things was appalling, that men who yesterday thought themselves rich, see ruin and bankruptcy staring them in the face. Meaning, of course, that he was one of them.'

'Ruin and bankruptcy!' cried Miss Scudamore. 'I had no idea it was so bad as that. No wonder the funeral was such a shabby one—no mutes, no feathers, no anything!'

'Ah! I'm really sorry!' sighed Miss Puddicombe; 'they were such nice people, especially Arabella.'

'Do you really think so?' sneered Mrs Montessor; 'I don't. I always thought she was a horrid stuck-up thing, and that the talk about the number of her admirers was all bosh.'

'Talking about admirers,' put in Miss Puddicombe, 'have you heard that Mrs Wallis's son is coming home invalided? They say he went up a river in Africa to release some slaves. He led the party, and behaved most gallantly; and it is expected that he will get his promotion.'

At that moment there came a loud knock at the door, and a moment afterwards Miss Nugent entered, with a newspaper in her hand. 'It's abominable! I never was so deceived in my life!' she exclaimed, as soon as she had shaken hands with Mrs Montessor and Miss Puddicombe.

'What is the matter?' asked Miss Scudamore.

'It's that Bella Alsworth. It's a trick. Read this!' and placing her finger on a paragraph, she handed the paper to Miss Puddicombe.

The kind old lady drew her spectacles from her pocket and wiped them deliberately, adjusted them carefully, spread out the newspaper, and read as follows: 'THE WILL OF MR ALSWORTH OF NUNSFORD.—The will (dated May 9th, 1857) of GEORGE BEDDINGTON ALSWORTH, who died Dec. 17th, was proved at Doctors' Commons on Jan. 23d, by Robert Alexander Bowyer, the sole executor and trustee; and the value of the personal estate was sworn to be under £128,000, the bulk of which is left to his daughter, together with Netley Lodge and all his other house and landed property.'

'Why, then,' cried Miss Scudamore, 'she is, after all, an heiress!'

'Dear, dear,' sighed Miss Puddicombe, 'what a good job!'

'Good job!' blurted Mrs Montessor; 'I think it's scandalous!'

CHAPTER V.—A NEW PHASE OF LIFE.

Arabella was sitting alone; her cheeks were flushed, and a beam of inexpressible happiness, such as she had not felt for many a day, lighted her beautiful eyes. He was coming home, was already in England, and she should see him, should be clasped in his arms and pressed to his bosom. There could be no opposition to their marriage now; and her thoughts were full of

sweet visions, the chief figure in which was her sailor lover. So intensely was she engaged with her own thoughts, that she did not hear the footman announce 'Lieutenant Wallis.'

Frank advanced, unheard, through the double drawing-room, and was almost close to her before she saw him. Then, with a joyous cry, she sprang towards him, and was clasped in his arms, and her lips were smothered with kisses.

'Oh, Frank, where did you come from? I think you must have dropped through the ceiling.'

'No, dear; I came in by the door, in the usual orthodox way. But you were so lost in thought you did not hear James announce me.'

'I was thinking of you, dear,' she said shyly, as she nestled close to his side; 'but I did not imagine you had arrived. What train did you come by?'

'I arrived last night by the last train.'

'I'm so glad you are come. We are going away in about a fortnight.'

'Going away! What for?' he asked.

'Oh, it's a whim of my uncle's. He says there is no need to keep up both establishments, and so I am to live with him till I am married. So we are going to let this and go to his place in Devonshire.'

'Does he know of our engagement?'

'No; but now that you are here to help me, I shall tell him at once.'

'Will he make any objection?'

'I don't know. Why should he?'

'Trustees and guardians are sometimes awkward people to deal with. What sort of a man is he?'

'Oh, he seems a kind-hearted sort of man, and, with the exception of letting the house, allows me to do pretty much as I like.'

For a time they sat in silence, a silence both sweet and eloquent, interrupted at times by words of love and tenderness. The picture, as they thus sat, now and again conversing in low soft tones, was a pleasant one. Frank Wallis was a handsome, manly fellow, tall, and stout withal; and, if the calm, resolute eye meant anything, had the courage and daring of a lion. And Arabella, she had never looked more radiantly beautiful. The time they had been separated had developed, in a womanly way, the graces Frank had seen opening in the girl. The liquid softness of her dark-blue eyes, with their long silken lashes, was the same; but the figure, always graceful, had grown more so; the expression of the beautiful mouth had become more firm.

This happy meeting was interrupted by the appearance of Miss Mortimer, from whom Frank received a most cordial welcome.

'And what are they going to do with *you*, my dear lady?' he asked.

'Not anything. What I shall do with myself I've not decided, except that I shall not live with Major Bowyer,' she said rather curtly.

'He is no favourite of yours, I presume, then?' said Frank.

'No; he's a tyrant; and I shall never forgive his conduct to my poor sister.'

'Tyrant! Oh, aunt! cried Arabella, 'surely that is rather a harsh judgment. I've seen nothing tyrannical about him.'

'Not yet, my dear; but if you attempt to thwart him, well, then, you'll see!'

'Do you think he will be kind to my dear Bella?' Frank added.

'Yes, certainly, all the while she does as he tells her.'

'Don't worry about me, dear,' she said; 'I'm not afraid of him; besides, he may have improved with age, like old port—grown mellow, you know.'

'Well, my child, we shall see,' she replied; and that ended the conversation, and Frank took his leave.

That same evening, the moment Major Bowyer entered the house, Arabella pounced upon him, crying exultantly: 'Frank has arrived, and he has been to see me!'

'And who is Frank, my dear?' he asked coldly.

'Why, Mr Wallis! Don't you know; don't you understand?'

'No; that I do not. I have not the pleasure of knowing the gentleman.'

'How stupid you are! Don't you know he's my sweetheart—the man I am going to marry!'

The Major gave a start. 'The man you are going to marry!' he exclaimed. 'What nonsense is this?'

'It's not nonsense, uncle,' she replied in an offended tone. 'I've been engaged more than twelve months.'

'And pray, who and what is this Mr Wallis?'

'He's a Lieutenant in the navy.'

'A Lieutenant in the navy!' he exclaimed with a sneer. 'My dear child, I cannot think of allowing you to throw away yourself on a man in such a position.'

'But I'm engaged, and I love him!'

'Then the engagement must be broken off!'

'No, indeed; that it never shall!'

'Yes, it must! I shall do it myself, if you do not.'

'You can't!' she flashed. 'Nobody can put an end to it but myself; and as to your speaking to Frank, it's useless; he would not listen to you.'

'Well, well,' he said in a conciliatory tone; 'we will talk about this another time.'

'I'm afraid I shall have some trouble with this girl,' he mused, as he went up-stairs to his room. 'A Lieutenant in the navy!' he exclaimed mockingly; 'and she will have an income of more than ten thousand a year! No, no; it is Lady Cransford you will have to be, unless I am much mistaken, Miss Arabella. You will find me a very different person to deal with than your good-natured old father. Still, it's a most unexpected and unfortunate *contretemps*. I must get her away from this place as soon as I can.'

When the Major was gone, Arabella sat down to think. She felt there was some trouble in store for her. She did not like her uncle's tone and manner. It was quite evident that he was not favourable to such an alliance as she contemplated. He had spoken contemptuously of Frank as a Lieutenant in the navy. But then a Lieutenant might become a Captain, and a Captain might become an Admiral. She was quite sure that her Frank ought to be an Admiral now, if he had what he deserved. But why did Major Bowyer sneer at a Lieutenant in the navy? He

was a Major now; but he must have been a Lieutenant once, and the navy was as good as the army any day—at least in her estimation.

'Throw herself away on a man in such a position!' That was what he said. What did he expect her to do? Marry a lord? Well, she did not know much about lords; and as to being a Lady, she did not care a fig for it. No, no; Frank was a dear good fellow, and come what might, she would never marry any one but him.

THE IRISH INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION BOARD.

READERS of Irish newspapers for the past two or three months will have had their attention attracted by lists of exhibition-winners, prize-winners, classifications of successful schools, and articles generally, under the above heading. As the name does not address itself much to the intelligence of English and Scottish readers, a short article in explanation may be useful.

Some twelve or thirteen years ago the attention of Parliament was drawn by educationists to the defective condition of Irish middle-class education. Primary schools were scattered abundantly over the land, and of excellent quality, thanks to the highly-endowed Board of National Education; university education was amply provided for, too, in the Dublin University, the Catholic University, and the Queen's Colleges of Belfast, Cork, and Galway. But the education of the middle classes, which should act as a feeder for the universities, was almost non-existent. True, there were some grammar-schools, known as the Erasmus Smith's foundations, scattered over the land, but they were very few and widely apart. Moreover, they were mainly Protestant, and youths who were Roman Catholic did not attend them. Such a state of things could not be permitted to continue; and able educationists, who were consulted by the Government, devised the system known as the Intermediate Education.

The Board consists of some six or seven gentlemen of high standing, representing the various denominations. A sum of one million pounds sterling, taken from the disendowed Church of Ireland, was handed over to them, the annual interest of which was to be used for the necessary disbursements. Each year an examination, commencing generally about the 14th of June, is held at one hundred and twenty 'centres' throughout the country. These centres are, in the main, the schools which have sprung into existence since the Intermediate Education Act was passed. At these the candidates for examination attend. These latter are divided into four classes—or 'grades,' as they are more generally called. They consist of Preparatory Grade, youths from twelve to fourteen years of age; Junior Grade, from fourteen to sixteen; Middle Grade, from sixteen to seventeen; and Senior Grade, from seventeen to eighteen. The subjects of examination comprise the full curriculum of a high-class school—Greek, Latin, English Grammar, Composition, English literature, German, French, Italian, Celtic; Euclid, Arithmetic, Algebra, &c.

When the examination is due, 'centre superintendents'—generally selected from the Professors in the various schools—are despatched to the various centres, each entrusted with a box of answer-books—manuscript books of a certain form on which the candidates write their answers—and with a case containing the precious question-papers. To prevent any possible unfairness, the envelopes containing the questions for each day are sealed with the public seal of the Board, which must in nowise be broken; and the envelope can only be opened by cutting along a black line drawn immediately above the seal, which cutting, by the way, must be done in presence of the assembled class, and witnessed by the signatures of one boy from each grade. The periods of examination are from ten to one o'clock and again from three to six. At the termination of each period the student encloses his answer-book in an envelope, seals it, and hands it to the superintendent. It is the duty of this officer each evening to transmit the answer-books to the head office, Hume Street, Dublin.

The examination over and ended, the answer-books are despatched from Hume Street to the different examiners, who go through them and make a tabulated return of the results. This, which generally takes a month, is a period of breathless anxiety and expectancy throughout the country. Students await the record of their merit; Principals, the success or failure of their schools. At last the printed return appears. The names are printed in alphabetical order, and the quantity of marks scored in each subject by each pupil set after his name and totalled.

Now come the innings of students and schools. The first two hundred boys—or thereabouts—in the Junior Grade receive each an exhibition of fifteen pounds per annum, tenable for three years; the first fifty of the Middle Grade receive each an exhibition, tenable for two years, of twenty-five pounds per annum; and the first twenty or so of the Senior Grade receive each an exhibition of forty pounds, tenable for one year. All very substantial recognitions of industry and talent! Those who score next under the exhibitors receive prizes in books to the amount of three and two pounds. The number of these recipients exceeds very considerably that of the former. For those who come after, virtue must be its own reward—they get nothing. In addition to these rewards, special prizes of gold and silver medals, and of sums of ten pounds, are given for distinguished proficiency in particular subjects.

So far for the pupils; now for the schools. For every pupil who has made one hundred days' attendance from the previous 1st November, Results Fees are paid to the Principals of the schools so attended, at the following scale: Junior Grade, two shillings per hundred pass-marks; Middle Grade, two shillings and sixpence; Senior Grade, three shillings. Under this arrangement the school can obtain a maximum grant for each boy in the Junior Grade of five pounds ten shillings; in the Middle Grade, of six pounds ten shillings; and in the Senior Grade, of eight pounds ten shillings.

It will be seen, therefore, that a very considerable stimulus has been added to the energy and industry of both teachers and pupils by the

institution of the Intermediate Education Board. In a poor country like Ireland a sum of forty-five pounds for a boy of, say, fifteen years of age is no inconsiderable prize, and offers a very direct incentive to hard work and earnest study. In like manner, the sums accruing to the schools supply a strong motive-power for assiduous and excellent teaching. Before the Board was established, education in this class of schools—where they at all existed—was given and acquired in a very heedless and perfunctory manner. Now they are brought forth into the full glare of publicity; their merits and defects are noted each year; and it behoves the heads of schools to put their best effort foremost; otherwise, ruin is pretty certain to overtake them. The students will naturally flock to the most successful schools; parents will send their children there; it is the only test open to them of merit and efficiency.

It would exceed the limits of our paper to detail the extraordinary development in education in the rural districts of Ireland which has attended the establishment of this Board. There are some, however, who do not regard this as an unmingled good. They assert that boys whose minds have been elevated by this course of study will return with reluctance—for not all can hope to enter a university course—to the hard work of the farm and the menial duties of their small shops. There may be, and probably is, some truth in this. But, after all, as in the absence of trade and manufactures there is no possibility of their acquiring a knowledge of the one or the other, Irish youths must in the battle of life abroad depend solely on their mental skill and ability; and for this the Intermediate Education system amply fits them. Of good and evil, therefore, the preponderance of weight lies largely with the former.

A LUCKY CATCH.

WHEN Mrs Spellert left Tripley Hall, on the death of old Squire Hervey—where she had been housekeeper some years before the following events took place—she retired to a small ivy-covered cottage at the end of the little village of Tripley, nearest to the Hall, which cottage belonged to the Squire, as did, in fact, all the village. As she was allowed to live rent free, the Squire also gave permission to Mrs Spellert to eke out her income by taking in as lodgers any respectable persons who came into the neighbourhood for fishing and the like. At the present time she had one lodger, who had, as he affirmed, come for the benefit of his health; and better still for her—as she was imparting to a neighbour who had dropped in for a cup of tea—her lodger had paid a month in advance—and such a pleasant gentleman too. The pity was, however, that he was deformed, he being a hunchback.

‘Ay, poor man,’ returned Mrs Miller, ‘it is a pity; but do you think he will stay any longer than the month?’

‘Well,’ returned Mrs Spellert, ‘he says if the place suits him he will, as he gets plenty of sport in his fishing.’

Their conversation was cut short by the entry of the gentleman in question, who, on seeing Mrs Spellert and her visitor rise, begged of them

not to disturb themselves, and inquired of the landlady what time the mail left the village.

‘Six o’clock, sir,’ was the answer.

‘Thank you. That will do nicely,’ said Mr Besley, for such was his name; and passing through the kitchen, he limped up-stairs to his bedroom, he being lame, in addition to his deformity. On arriving there, he quietly locked the door, drew the blind partially down, took off his smoke-coloured spectacles, which was nothing extraordinary, then took off his coat, and with it his hump, which was extraordinary. He then removed his gray beard, which was also false; his limp, too, had disappeared; and he stood a complete metamorphosis from a man apparently about sixty years of age to one really about thirty.

‘Phew!’ he muttered; ‘these things swelter a fellow to death. One good job will be I shall soon have done with them. But now to business. What’s about the time? Ha! five o’clock—just nice time to write to Jim before the old lady gets my tea ready.’

What he writes will give us some insight into Mr Thomas Besley’s character, and the reason of his visit to this out-of-the-way village of Tripley.

Sept. 23, 18—.

DEAR JIM—All’s serene, and everything has worked finely so far. The old lady I am staying with was housekeeper at the Hall, and so I have pumped her well as to the lay of the premises, the back part of which is only separated from this cottage by a thick fir plantation. So I paid a visit there last midnight, dropping quietly out of my room window when all was quiet; so, what with my landlady’s garrulousness and my own natural inquisitiveness, I think I know the bearings of the place. We will commence operations at the back of the Hall, where I have made everything right. As we heard, there will be a large gathering of relatives and friends on a visit, to celebrate the son’s tenth birthday on Saturday, when there will be a grand display of fireworks, which will be given well to the front of the Hall, for safety, from about half-past eight to ten, which must be our time to sail in. Mare and trap as usual. Tell Tom to make for Tripley, and be in the Downleigh lane not later than half-past nine. You must meet me on the old bridge at seven. More when I see you, as the post goes out so confoundedly early. Hope your arm is better and fit for work.—Yours,
TOM.

The letter was sealed carefully; and then dressing himself for presentation to the outer world, he went down-stairs and into the village post-office.

The next day was spent in fishing; and in due course on Friday morning he received an answer to his letter. It was very brief: ‘DEAR TOM—Right you are; will be on the spot. Unfortunately, arm is still painful.—Yours, JIM.’

Mr Besley as he was having his tea on Saturday kindly informed Mrs Spellert ‘that he should go and fish for an hour or so that evening; she need not, therefore, stay in on his account, but go to the fireworks with other people. He would get home when they were over.’ Mrs Spellert was only too pleased, as

everybody in the village intended going to see the display.

Mr Besley took his way toward the river about six o'clock with rod and creel; but when he got to the river-side he dropped these articles into a ditch hard by and proceeded to his appointment. Coming to the bridge where the road crossed the river, he saw a clerical-looking man standing there, who, on seeing Mr Besley, came down the steps at the side to meet him. He carried a dark leather bag, and was evidently about fifty years old.

'Is all right, Jim?'

'Right as the mail, Tom.'

'And now, my lad, I'll put you right as to the ins and outs of this job,' said Mr Besley. 'As I told you, the house must be cracked from the back. The Hall has been built at two different times, the back part as it now is having formerly been the old Hall. But when the present Squire married he made an addition to the front of the old mansion, then he cut a new road round the front of the new part. The old road is really, therefore, closed and very gloomy.'

'Couldn't be better for us,' interposed Jim.

'Moreover, I find,' continued Mr Besley, 'that when the old man died in the old part, the servants got it into their heads that the rooms were haunted; consequently, they are not used except for lumber. So my plan is this: all the village and the servants will be at the front of the Hall; so we will get into the plantation at the back, and as soon as the first rocket goes up, in we go, and in five minutes on the spoil.'

'Any dogs?' queried Jim.

'Not at the back, anyway. You see, the old house was enclosed by a wall, which is still left, and the enclosure used as a kitchen garden, quite retired from the front. Now, we had better be moving over yonder.'

The pair walked slowly on until they came to the road from which they were to commence operations, and were soon at the back of the Hall, and among the trees out of sight.

'What sort of lock is the outside?' asked Jim.

'Only an old-fashioned one,' said Tom; 'and the house door is no better.'

The bag was now opened, and each man slipped on a pair of rubber shoes. The time was drawing on; so Tom moved across the road, and cautiously but quickly, under the shelter of the overhanging ivy, turned a skeleton key in the lock. Jim was soon at his side; and after listening a moment, both went inside the door, which they then fastened by a piece of board.

'Door opens quietly enough,' whispered Jim.

'I took the liberty to oil them all the night I visited here,' was the ready answer.

The house door was next tried, and soon unlocked.

'Ha!' said Tom, 'there goes half-past eight, and true to time, up goes the first rocket.'

As he spoke, it whizzed skywards. Before the stick could have fallen, they were inside the old Hall; and as it was a dark autumnal evening, they lit their bull's-eyes, disclosing the Hall and the stairs.

'So far, so good, Jim, lad. Now up we go.'

Up they went without the least sound; and were soon at the top of the landing. Here they

turned through another door into what had evidently been the old Squire's bedroom. This room they now left by another door, which opened into a long passage, at the end of which was the dividing door between the old and new parts.

'Now for it,' whispered Tom. 'This is a snip!' (a locked door with the key left in on the opposite side).

An instrument like a fine pair of ladies' grooved curling-irons was produced, which he inserted into the keyhole, and gripping the end of the key firmly, he quietly turned it round and unlocked the door. Had any one on the other side seen the key turn so mysteriously, he might have imagined that of a truth the ghost was about to pay a visit.

In less than ten minutes from the time they opened the outer door, they stood in the new part of the house. Producing another bag from the interior of the one carried, they proceeded along the passage towards the front of the Hall, and took a room to the right for a commencement, which was evidently a ladies' room. They had scarcely entered, however, before the sound of a quick footstep was heard ascending the stairs. Jim suppressed an oath, his companion motioning in dumb show, both dropped behind a cheval glass which stood handy. Whoever was coming, was arrested on the stairs by some one calling: 'Mary, bring Lady Trevor's wrap also, and be quick, or you will miss the next piece.'

'Bother Lady Trevor!' ejaculated Mary, and in another instant she was in the room, came close to the cheval glass, and hurriedly snatched up what she wanted from a lounge in front, and ran down-stairs again.

'Only a minute's delay,' growled Jim; 'but it perhaps means losing a ten-pound note.'

They lost no further time, however, for any valuables that lay handy were swept into their capacious bags. Thus they proceeded through the different rooms with great celerity, proving they were not novices. If a drawer proved awkward, a little persuasion with a small jemmy soon gained an entry, the outside noise drowning theirs.

'This will be about the last room we can venture, Tom,' said his partner. 'What's the time?'

'Just a quarter past nine. I think we had better make a move.'

Looking through a corner of the window, they perceived there were four more pieces to let off in addition to the piece of the evening.

'Many happy returns of the day. Jim, my boy, they won't wish us many happy returns, when they find our little game out.'

'Not exactly,' said Jim with a grin.

They both slipped out of the room, when Tom stopped. 'Jim, from the looks of the fireworks they have to let off, they will be a good hour yet. Are you with me to slip down the back stairs, just for a venture of ten minutes, and getting a bit of plate from the butler's pantry? I think I can spot it directly.'

'In for a penny, in for a pound,' replied Jim. 'Down we go.'

So, leaving the one bag in a recess, they slipped quickly down-stairs, and guided by Tom, who had been enlightened by innocent Mrs Spellert,

soon were packing a goodly quantity of the silver into the bag. They were just thinking of returning, when in the midst of their success they were seemingly to be thwarted, for they heard the outer door open and close, then some one came along the Hall directly for where they were. Jim put his mouth to the other's ear: 'Lay hold quick, if he comes in here!'

'He'—for it was Mr Parker the fat apoplectic old butler—did come in, and to his astonishment he thought the door fell upon him, and he knew no more for the time being.

'We shall be nabbed yet; out with you!' ejaculated Tom, who, notwithstanding he had faced danger many times, felt his legs tremble a little. Just then the Hall clock went the quarter to ten.

The top stair was reached, the first bag taken from its recess, and in another minute they were once more in the Squire's room with a bolt slipped behind them. Here the old proverb was exemplified, 'Much will have more,' by Jim noticing the Squire's old-fashioned silver watch and seals, which were twisted round a nail with a black ribbon near the bed. Jim thought he would have them, but could not very easily detach them from the nail.

'Don't be a fool,' said Tom; 'we shall both be lagged.' But Jim was stubborn, and after a minute's delay, snatched ribbon and nail together, and dropped it amongst the other valuables in the top of his bag, saying as he did so 'that it would weigh with the rest.'

Tom fumed into an oath, and at that they proceeded down-stairs, then outside, and stood once more in the lane.

'How far is it,' inquired Jim, 'to the other bridge?'

'A mile and a half quite, so best leg foremost,' replied Tom.

They had proceeded about half the distance, when suddenly the Hall bell pealed out with a clang, clang through the still night-air. 'There goes the signal,' said Jim. 'They must have found out our game, and my arm feels as if it had started to bleed again. It must be the weight. I am ready to drop the bag. What's to be done?'

Tom ground his teeth in vexation at this, and answering, said: 'The police and every one else, now they have heard that bell, will be coming this way for a short-cut; and these bags will create suspicion. The police station is not far from the bridge. We dare not turn back. As it is, we are bound to meet a dozen perhaps, including police.—I have it. We will sink the swag here in the river; the water's deep, and we will fetch it later on, when things are quieter. Give me some wire, quick.'

A ring of strong wire was quickly produced by Jim, then wound and twisted through the handles of the bags; both were then dropped gently into the water, the wire paid out until they touched bottom. The other end was then fastened round a willow stump partially under the water.

They sprang to their feet. 'Now, Jim, when we meet any one, understand there's a fire at the Hall—the stables will do.'

'Right,' said Jim; and off they set at a good pace. They had left their spoil perhaps a hundred yards when the form of a policeman loomed

up, and a labourer with him. He came up to them at a quick pace, and when he reached them, they could see he was a young beginner in the force.

'Is the sergeant at home, my man?' said Tom, with an officious air, acting as spokesman, which caused the policeman to touch his cap—'as the Squire asked us to run round and tell him that the stables were on fire.'

'And I'm blest if I didn't think so, sir, as I was coming along my beat,' was the policeman's reply. 'It's them fireworks, I'll lay a crown.' And added he: 'You'll meet the sergeant; perhaps you'll tell him, sir; I must be off.'

And off he accordingly went with his companion at a run. They met several farm-labourers, and passed them quickly on, with a laconic, 'Stables on fire!' They were soon on the bridge, and there met the police sergeant face to face. Tom was even astute enough to send the sergeant after his man with the same tale.

Breathing freer, they soon put the remaining distance between them, and reaching the lane, gave the signal; and in a few minutes were in the trap and spinning away with Tripley far behind, and Jim almost in a faint with pain from a wound in his arm, the result of a previous midnight raid.

Two days after these events, a long canal boat, similar to those seen any day passing along our inland canals, came slowly along the stretch of water by which Mr Besley and his companion had passed. The boatman was taking his turn at the helm, his wife leading a sorry-looking nag, which towed the boat. He was thinking to himself of the many good fish he had taken from this particular stretch of water, and wishing he had the time for a spin at that moment. Turning his helm sharply at a slight bend, he heard a sudden swish, and a splendid pike, which had been sunning itself, dashed under the pollards which lined the opposite bank, leaving a miniature line of foam on the water.

He uttered an exclamation of astonishment and regret that he had not his boat-hook handy, to have struck it with. 'Twenty pounds if it were an ounce,' he gasped; and, forgetful of his helm, he turned, staring in astonishment at the spot they were slowly leaving, when he suddenly found himself running into the bank. 'I should like a chance at that joker,' thought he, as they went along; and to his joy, when they arrived at the lock, he found they would have to wait until the wharf manager came from his dinner, as he wanted to see him.

'That means a good hour,' said Sam the boatman. 'I'll try my luck.'

Sam quickly got his rod and tackle and was soon on the spot. After a fruitless half-hour, he began to think it would be of no use. 'The beggar ought to be hereabouts,' he grunted as he put on a fresh bait; when, at the end of another ten minutes, just as he thought he heard a halloo, swish, down went his float, and whirl went the reel with tremendous velocity.

Sam's legs trembled for the moment; but though excited a little, he knew how to handle his fish. He spent a good half-hour giving him plenty of line, and winding him in whenever he got a chance, groaning in vexation that he

had no one to give him a hand with the gaff hook.

Meanwhile, the wharf manager had grown impatient, and set out after Sam. As soon, however, as he reached him, he forgot to reprimand, and entering into the spirit of the sport, seized the gaff hook, and soon landed the fish.

'Egad, Sam, you're lucky to catch such a beauty. Look at his mouth; he's given somebody some sport—there's half-a-dozen hooks in it!'

'Hallo, Mr Wills, what have you got there?' some one said at the moment; and looking up, the manager saw the Squire. He was equally surprised at Sam's splendid catch, and promptly offered him a sovereign for it, which was accepted. The Squire arranged that Sam should take the fish to the lock-keeper's, where he would send for it from the Hall.

After Sam's departure, the wharf manager inquired whether any further clue had been found as to the burglary.

'None whatever,' answered the Squire, 'beyond the fact that the two men who doubtless committed the robbery came this way, got to the bridge here, deluded the police, who identified one as a Mr Besley; and after that disappeared, no doubt being disguised at the time.'

The Squire now took his way back to the Hall; and when the pike arrived, ordered it to be packed in a hamper and forwarded to a noted firm in the City to be preserved and cased.

Two mornings later, the Squire sat at breakfast; most of his friends had departed, not more chagrined than he at the loss of the valuables. After the more important letters, he carelessly opened the letter of acknowledgment from the firm of taxidermists; but instead of the formal letter, his attention was riveted by the following:

October —, 18—.

SIR—Pike received safely, and shall be returned as soon as finished. You will be surprised to learn that on opening the pike we found an old-fashioned silver watch and seals with ribbon attached. On examining it, which from appearance had not been in the stomach very long, we found your late father's name engraved inside. We have therefore forwarded it as we found it, per same post as this letter, trusting you will receive it safely.—Your obedient servants,

BELL & SWIFT.

The package was opened, and the watch identified at once.

'Now, however did the pike get hold of this!' was his exclamation, as he passed the letter to his wife.

She advised that Detective Vean, whom they knew as a clever officer, should be at once telegraphed for. And the suggestion was acted upon.

In a few hours he arrived, and all the facts were laid before him. It did not take him long to arrive at a decision.

'It's as plain as a pikestaff what this precious pair have done. They must have had something to put their plunder in—that is a certainty; but, according to the sergeant and other evidence, the two had nothing of the kind when they were met. Then it remains thus—the alarm came too quickly for them; they had no outlet but to

keep straight on for the bridge; therefore, they have planted their booty until a more convenient time. I propose, then, sir, seeing that the watch came from the river, to explore that first.'

Having obtained the boat hook, he dropped it into the water, and walked slowly along, now and again catching it in a piece of river weed or a submerged willow twig. Thus they proceeded, and with a few such false alarms, were rewarded at length by the boat-hook catching the wire. Stooping down, and giving the hook to the Squire, he exclaimed, as he plunged his arm into the water: 'I think we have got something solid this time.'

Looking around to see that no one was about, he carefully drew up the wire until the bags were nearly at the surface; then, with the Squire's assistance, the two bags were laid on the path, one being partially open.

'That explains how Mr Pike got hold of the watch, sir,' laughed Detective Vean.

Running the water from the bags, and taking one each, they went back to the Hall, the detective begging the Squire not to mention a word to any one that he had recovered the valuables, not even to his friends whose property had been stolen.

'You see, sir, it won't hurt them to wait a little longer, as they will be sure of them eventually, though they don't know it; and I shall almost be sure to capture the thieves when they come for their booty. I will wait until dusk, and then plant these bags again with a few brick ends inside them instead of valuables, and then set a watch.'

Two days afterwards, the Squire was notified by the police that Mr Besley and his associate Jim, who were disguised as farm-labourers, had the night before been taken in the act of putting the bags into their trap.

Detective Vean had done a good piece of work, and he was quite satisfied with that and the Squire's present of a fifty-pound note. He was further satisfied at the assizes, when the pair received sentences of twenty years each, they being old offenders.

The look of astonishment each offender gave was a study, when the facts of the pike and watch were given in evidence; and when they turned and left the dock, Jim's expression was: 'Well, I'm blown! A splendid job like that spoiled, and us lagged for twenty years all through a blessed pike!'

STORY OF A FRENCH INVASION.

THAT the sacred soil of the British Islands was desecrated by a French campaign within a hundred years ago is known to comparatively few; fewer still are acquainted with the details, English historians contenting themselves generally with a bare mention of the fact. Although the occurrences about to be narrated took place in the west of Ireland, yet they were of so extraordinary a nature that a history of them will be found interesting.

By way of preface, it may be necessary to say that the Irish rebellion of 1798 had just been suppressed, and although during the rising the

Irish had looked to France for aid, for one reason or other it had not been forthcoming, until, fortunately for the British Government, it was too late. On the 22d of August 1798, as the Bishop of Killala, County Mayo, was holding a visitation of his clergy at his residence there, three frigates, two of forty-four guns and one of thirty-eight, under English colours, entered the bay and dropped anchor. Two of the Bishop's sons and the Port Surveyor rowed out to the ships with the intention of boarding them; on doing so, they were informed, to their great astonishment, that they were the prisoners of the French Republic. The same evening about three hundred French troops were landed and immediately advanced on the town. Notice was instantly sent off to Ballina, seven miles to the southward, where a small English force was stationed; and meanwhile the garrison, composed of yeomanry and fencibles to the number of fifty, gallantly advanced to meet the invaders. Being overwhelmed by numbers, however, and losing two of their party by a fusillade from the French, they turned and fled, twenty of them being taken prisoners. Thus the French effected a landing and gained possession of Killala. The whole forces of the French were now landed, consisting of about eleven hundred officers and men with two guns, under General Humbert; but they calculated on being joined by the Irish malcontents, for whom they had brought arms and uniforms. Next morning, an advanced column of one hundred men, of whom forty were mounted on horses 'requisitioned' for the purpose, advanced on Ballina, and were soon followed by the main body. On the evening of the 25th they entered Ballina, the garrison of which fled after a faint resistance. Here several hundred Irish joined the standard of the 'Liberators,' making, together with those who had joined since the landing of the French, about fourteen hundred auxiliaries. Humbert, encouraged by these additions to his forces, determined not to give them any time for reflection; but advanced at once on Castlebar, the chief town of Mayo, where a large British force was stationed.

The troops at Castlebar, made up mostly of militia and yeomanry, in a bad state of discipline, numbered about four thousand, with fourteen guns, under General Hutchinson; but at the last moment General Lake, as senior officer, took over the command, which occasioned great discontent and some confusion among the troops. The French were expected to advance by the main road from Ballina, on which a force had been stationed to watch them, and the British dispositions were made accordingly; but Humbert, who was a veteran in the art of war, chose a road by which he was not expected, namely, to the west by the Pass of Barnagee, which had been considered impassable, and so came upon the British on their left flank. When Humbert came in sight of the formidable array opposed to him, he concluded that surrender must be his fate; but, all the same, determined to make at least some show of resistance. The English, on the other hand, had been taken unawares; and,

surprised by the flank movement of the French, had hastily to take up a new position about a mile from their former one. This, and the warlike appearance of the French troops, did not tend to increase their confidence. The French advanced on the right and left of the English position in small bodies amid a cloud of smoke, and under a smart fusillade and hot fire from the English artillery, which, however, did not check their advance. The English, becoming alarmed at the unusual tactics of the French, and by a movement to turn their left, which unfortunately was undefended, retreated, were seized with panic, broke, and fled in confusion through the town, cavalry and infantry mixed in wild disorder. A more disgraceful defeat had, in short, seldom befallen the British arms. Artillery, ammunition, arms, and everything that could impede their flight were abandoned to the enemy. On they fled to Tuam, thirty-eight miles from the field of battle. After a short rest, they posted on again towards Athlone, where an officer of carabineers and sixty men arrived at one o'clock on Tuesday the 28th, having performed a march of eighty miles in twenty-seven hours, a no small achievement if it had been for a better purpose. It is impossible to say where the fugitives might have stopped if their flight had not been arrested at Athlone by the arrival of the Viceroy, Lord Cornwallis, of Yorktown fame. This marvellous flight was derisively called by the Irish, 'the Races of Castlebar.'

The French now took possession of Castlebar, the only resistance offered them being from a small body of Highlanders, who chose rather to face the enemy than join in a disgraceful flight. The losses of the English, in killed, wounded, and missing were said to be about three hundred and fifty.

The French celebrated their victory in a characteristic fashion: the officers gave a ball and supper to the ladies of the town; and so well did they deport themselves that they very soon became general favourites. But business had to be attended to as well as pleasure. Having by his victory gained possession of Mayo, Humbert immediately established a Provisional Government and formed districts, over each of which he placed a magistrate; and, to make all complete, appointed a Mr Moore, a gentleman of the district, as Provisional President. Proclamations were issued in the name of the Irish Republic, and supplies, &c. were paid for with notes on the Irish Directory. Having made all ship-shape and done everything calculated to impress the natives with a sense of the power of their allies, the next move had to be considered, for Humbert very well knew that he would not long be allowed to remain in undisturbed security.

While Humbert was thus busily employed in providing a constitution for the new republic, the Viceroy was becoming alive to the gravity of the situation. The malcontents, encouraged by the successes of the French, were threatening to assemble in large numbers, with the ultimate design, it was said, of joining the French and marching on Dublin. On receiving news of the defeat at Castlebar, Cornwallis hastened by forced marches in the direction of that town. He arrived on the 4th of September at Hollymount,

fourteen miles from Castlebar, and was preparing to advance, when he received information that the French had abandoned their position and had marched in the direction of Foxford.

Humbert's position was critical; his Irish auxiliaries, additional numbers of whom had joined him since his victory, could not be depended on—were, in fact, utterly useless, some of them, indeed, never having seen a gun before. He knew that at the slightest check they would desert him; they had a too lively recollection of the horrors of the late rebellion. Humbert had, in short, expected to receive more substantial aid from the Irish; he had also expected reinforcements from France, but now saw that they could not arrive in time to do him any good. Nevertheless, he determined to do his duty, and prolong the campaign as far as possible. He therefore abandoned Castlebar on the 4th of September, and turned north-east towards Foxford, with the intention of reaching Sligo, where he had a faint hope his reinforcements might yet land. Humbert now found himself followed by two bodies of troops, one under Colonel Crawford, and another under General Lake, which hung upon and harassed his rear. A third, under General Moore—afterwards Sir John—watched him at a distance; while Cornwallis with the main army marched parallel with him towards Carrick-on-Shannon. As if this were not enough, on reaching Colooney on the 5th, about forty miles north-east from Castlebar, Humbert found himself confronted by a fifth force, under Colonel Verreker, of the Limerick militia, with a force of three hundred and thirty men and two currie guns. A fierce and obstinate fight ensued—this was indeed the only real battle of the whole campaign—but after lasting about an hour, Verreker, finding himself overpowered by numbers, was compelled to retreat, with the loss of his guns, to Sligo.

Although Humbert was victorious in this encounter, it caused him to change his plans. He now marched towards Manorhamilton by Drumnahair, abandoning eight of his guns by the way; but in approaching the former place suddenly turned to the right, in a south-easterly direction by Drumkerin, and attempted to reach Granard, in Longford, where a rising had taken place. His rear was now constantly harassed by the enemy, and on the 7th a smart skirmish took place with Crawford's advanced guard, in which the French were victorious. Humbert now crossed the Shannon at Ballintra, but so closely followed that his rearguard had not time to break the bridge. He halted some hours at Cloone, to give his worn-out troops a brief rest, and arrived next day, the 8th, at Ballinamuck.

The Viceroy, crossing the Shannon at Carrick, was meanwhile marching on Saint Johnstown, in order to get in front of Humbert on his way to Granard. The drama was now drawing to its close. Completely surrounded by an overwhelming force, Humbert saw that surrender was inevitable. For the honour of France, however, he determined to make at least a formal resistance; he therefore disposed his forces in order of battle and awaited the attack. His rearguard was attacked by Crawford, and, being overpowered, surrendered; and the remainder, after resisting General Lake for half an hour, laid

down their arms—the whole force amounting to about eight hundred and fifty, the rest having been killed or wounded since the beginning of the campaign. The entire British force which surrounded Humbert numbered about thirty thousand, or five thousand more than were employed at Waterloo, or, in later days, at the battle of the Alma.

While the French received honourable terms of surrender, the Irish auxiliaries, in number about fifteen hundred, were shot and hanged without mercy, five hundred of them being killed in this way.

The closing scene of the drama was the recapture of Killala, which had remained in possession of the French, or rather of Irish insurgents under two or three French officers. It was not until the 22d of September that the royal forces, twelve hundred strong, arrived at Ballina, the Irish garrison fleeing at its approach. The English advanced on Killala in two columns, from the north and the south. The garrison posted themselves on the Ballina road, but were speedily overcome, and fled through Killala, pursued by the cavalry. At the other end of the town they were intercepted by the second column, and about four hundred of the unfortunates were killed.

In this extraordinary campaign, which lasted from the 22d of August to the 8th of September, the French had marched one hundred and thirty miles, penetrating to the very heart of Ireland, and distant only sixty miles in a straight line from Dublin, and had fought five engagements, in all of which they had been victorious. Why a handful of French troops should have achieved such success was not so much due, after all, to their own prowess, as to the nature of the forces opposed to them. These were mostly local militia, quite unused to real war, and some of them disaffected, and not inclined to fight very hard against those they secretly regarded as their friends. It is related that a number of militia, who were put down as missing after the affair of Castlebar, had gone over to the French; one of them, on being afterwards asked why he had done so, replied, that 'it was not he who had deserted, but the British army, who had run away and left him behind to be murdered!'

SONNET ON CHRISTMAS.

How have they dawned on us, those Christmas days,
The birthdays of the Friend as yet unseen?
In childhood's far-off vale with gladness keen
A wonderland of brightness to our gaze;
Then, the slow change, as creeps the autumn haze,
The vision fades to thoughts of what has been,
Of voices that we miss, and altered scene,
And feet that walk no more on Life's highway.
Yet through all change, the Christmas star shines on
Lonely and lovely; though the earth-lights die,
The soul looks up, and finds its goal at last,
And asks no more, nor sighs for pleasures gone.
One day its Christmas shall be kept on high,
With all Life's hopes fulfilled—its sorrows past!

MARY GORGES.

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BOTANY BAY.

THE waves rustle at my feet on the long curving bar of sand, too lazy to break, excepting here and there on an outcropping ledge of rock. A boat lolls lazily at its anchorage, the anchor-rope shining like a line of silver hung with pearls as it dips and comes up dripping from the water. The gulls wade about in the shallow pools, or paddle into the dimpling wavelets, calling harshly to their neighbours, sailing backwards and forwards in short flights; and the latter drop down to compare notes. They come up quite close, tempted by the scattered shells and weeds, so close that it is easy to distinguish where the soft dun gray of back and wings shades off into the pearly white of the breast and under parts. They seem proud as any tan-booted lady to display their handsome little webbed feet, which, with the strong beak, make a pleasant contrast to the rest of the body. They will be away shortly out there over the wide Pacific, the boom from the breaking waves of which is carried faintly to the ear. High overhead a sea-eagle floats almost without motion. A school of porpoises come bouncing and rolling along; and presently the dorsal fin of a shark makes itself visible where the water shallows. The Bay is a favourite haunt of the finny pirate. Give him a show of making a dinner at the expense of your leg, and see if he is as lethargic as he looks.

The drip, drip of the water over the rocks behind has a restful sound, and the simmer of the soft breeze through the metallic foliage of the gums helps to temper the hot sunshine. Capes Banks and Solander stand out boldly at the entrance of the Bay; and away to the southward stretch the line of low coast hills, Cape Bass—if I have not travelled too far to the southward—forming the boundary of vision. A black pillar of smoke rises up from behind the Cape. The smoke means that there is a bush-fire raging somewhere on the fat Illawarra plains. The undulating pall of bush has borrowed a tender

blue from the sunlight, which somehow seems to diminish the distance and add to the distinctness. The sun will be dipping shortly, and will change the slopes into meadows of purple gold, and the Bay into a plain of crimson and roseate; while the shadows will gather under the line of coast-cliffs. Then the boats will come crawling out, to steal away to the fishing-grounds. The dip, dip of the oars and the rattle as they swing in the rowlocks travel far through the stillness. To the left, just inside the Heads, rises a tall monumental pillar, backed by a couple of Norfolk Island pines. The sight of the pillar sets me dreaming about the French navigator La Pérouse, and, as a natural consequence, Captain Cook soon treads on the heels of the Frenchman. Under the influence of a pipe, the warm sunshine, and the soft breeze, I slip fairly into dream-land, to wander with Cook among the pleasant fields of his native moorside Yorkshire village of Marton—wander in my own far-away county, where the bonnie Cleveland Hills now, as ever, keep watch and ward over my home.

‘Bacca, Boss.—My word, him sleep.’

It was one of the aborigines from the small camp at the point who had rudely broken into my dream, and who valued his services at sixpence as well as the ‘bacca.’ My word, ‘him’ had slept—slept until the night had descended over sea and hills and sloping bush. The rush of the rising tide comes breaking in from the Heads, while the rustle along the bend of sand has given place to a low plashing and sobbing.

Let us turn back the leaves of time for one hundred and twenty years. In the waning light of one of the closing days of April 1770, there comes beating up from the southward the good ship *Endeavour*, three hundred and twenty tons, Captain James Cook. Captain Cook, after observing the transit of Venus at the island of Tahiti—the primary object of his voyage—is now bent on carrying out his other and, most certainly to him, congenial instructions—‘the making of further geographical researches.’ He has circumnavigated New Zealand, and then, sailing west-

ward ho! has, after three weeks' knocking about in the Pacific, struck the coast of the almost unknown, wholly unexplored *Novæ Hollandæ*—Australia, the Great South Land. Northward he has crawled under the unbroken, uninviting wall of rock, and gazed on the illimitable monotony of sombre forest beyond it. And now at last, on this late April evening, he has discovered a break in the chain. The head of the little *Endeavour* swings round; she feels her way between the two rocky headlands, which, when she bids them farewell, will bear the names of the two intrepid naturalists who accompany Cook, Dr Solander and Mr (afterwards Sir Joseph) Banks. She slowly steers across the cove which forms an elbow at the entrance, passes Bare Island, and then fairly enters the placid waters of the Bay. Captain Cook's quaint Journal tells how he tried to hold converse with the natives—'Indians,' as he calls them—how they were so hostile that he tried to persuade them to reason with a 'Brown Bess'—and how this reasoning failed to have the wished-for effect, failed even to strike fear into the hearts of the untutored savages.

The name Botany Bay is its own expositor. Perhaps not anywhere in the whole world would it be possible to find such a lavish waste of flowers as along the coast hills of Australia in the early summer months. The English summer is garlanded with blossoms; but ever there is the predominating, relieving green of the grass and foliage, which, abundant as the flowers may be, makes superabundance an impossibility. Excepting where the mangrove swamps occur, a noticeable feature of Australian coast scenery is that between the timber-line and the wave-limit there is generally a belt, often narrow, but in some places swelling out into wide downy reaches, clothed with dwarf-bush and a tangle of heaths, vines, and an almost unending variety of flowers and shrubs. The very nature of every item of the flora of Australia—trees, shrubs, plants, grasses, mosses—would appear to be to bear blossoms, and not blossoms that are pale, but the brightest reds, purples, blues, yellows, and the purest whites, with the infinity of shadings the sunlight evolves out of these ground colours. With this glowing mass of petals the brightest of green foliage is looked for, and, failing this contrast, a sense of oppression is born—the same sense of oppression that makes itself felt in an art gallery, where the very variety and the lavish display of pictures seem to absorb the personality which alone appeals to the artistic.

It is not to be wondered at that the botanists of Captain Cook's expedition should have christened the newly-found haven as they did. Six-score years have gone since Mr Banks and Dr Solander were fascinated by the wonderful variety of native flora, yet to-day the haven is as appropriately called Botany Bay as it was when Nature reigned supreme. The immediate

vicinity of the historical portion of the Bay has undergone very little change. The bare sandy dunes of the southern shore mirror back the glistening shafts of sunlight, just as they must have done on that April day in 1770. There is one solitary house breaking the golden curve of bush-backed sand, and that is all. The northern shore, however, is the centre of interest. Massive old gum-trees, with their curiously-twisted trunks and arms in places sweeping almost into the water, shadow and cling to the rocks, in the damp cool crevices of which nestle a thousand ferns and flowers. Many-coloured vines and parasites link tree to tree with pendent floral chains. Under the pleasant shade of the primeval giants and their under-roofing of vines is the everlasting carpet of flowers.

It is anything but an easy task on an Australian summer day to break through the thick tangle of undergrowth; yet any one that will persevere will not be without his reward. In the wealth and variety of orchids alone is a life's delight. On the flats where the timber bends to the black swamp, and along the sparkling creek that runs out of it, they grow thick. Around that swamp a botanist might spend weeks and months without exhausting its treasures. It is a garden of tropics, compared with which the best-stocked hothouse would sink into insignificance. Sweet is the breath of the salt sea—sweet with its own fresh sweetness, and it is made sweeter still by the aroma of the acacias and honey-gums. Amongst the trees, in place of the pleasant rustle of fallen leaves, there is the crisp crunch of the dried gum-bark, which thickly strews the ground. Bright-plumaged birds and gem-like butterflies and insects flit and flutter about; watchful-eyed lissom lizards bask on every stone and trunk; occasionally a snake, beautiful in spite of its sinister associations, shuffles away to cover at the sound of a footstep; and the mosquitoes must not—will not—be forgotten.

Botany Bay boasts a river. At its eastern end, where now stands a fashionable watering-place, George's River, known in its higher reaches by the pleasant-sounding native name of Woniora, empties itself. The exploration of this river opens out a very paradise of wood and flower-land.

After a short stay, the *Endeavour* sailed away northward from Botany, past, and without discovering, Port Jackson, the finest harbour in the world, the only remnant of Cook's visit being the Union-jack which he left floating on the North Head. For seventeen years the 'Indians' were left in peace. Then came Captain Phillip with the 'First Fleet'—a fleet of eleven convict ships, crowded with five hundred and sixty-four men and one hundred and ninety-two women convicts. He came to found a new nation, the American War of Independence having made it necessary that some other outlet should be found for emptying England's prisons. Phillip soon

ascertained that, beautiful as Botany Bay might be, it was not fitted for settlement. The land was not suitable for cultivation; water was scarce, and the Bay was too shallow to allow of vessels approaching within reasonable distance of the shore. With commendable promptitude, he discovered and shifted his quarters and his convicts to Port Jackson. But short as was Captain Phillip's stay, it left a taint on the name of Botany Bay which was long regarded as synonymous with convictism. While round the shores of Port Jackson, the very centre of convictism, has grown up a city of four hundred thousand inhabitants, Botany Bay has been left pretty well in its primeval state. In real history it has become redolent only as the site of tanyards and other noxious trades, and as the rallying-ground of Heathen Chinese gardeners. There are scattered houses along the eastern and part of the northern shore; but the interesting portion of the fore-shore and adjoining bush remains almost as wild as when Captain Phillip broke camp. The presence of the small settlement of aborigines at the point helps to heighten the primitive character of the surroundings. At one time a custom-house stood at Botany Heads; but as in all things else, the custom soon drifted to the successful rival, and now the old custom-house has descended to a commonplace dwelling.

Not the least interesting relic of Botany is the monument raised by his countrymen to the ill-fated French explorer La Pérouse. It stands up a tall plain monolith, backed by two towering Norfolk Island pines, bearing inscriptions in French and English to the memory of the explorer and his companion voyagers. Scribbled everywhere over the pillar are the names of Frenchmen. Only a few days after Captain Phillip had effected a landing, two strange vessels came to an anchorage in Botany Bay. These vessels proved to be the French exploring ships *Thétis* and *Esperance*, commanded by La Pérouse. Phillip's landing a few days previously saved Australia from becoming a dependent of 'La Belle France' instead of a possession of His Britannic Majesty, George the Third. La Pérouse, disappointed doubtless, stayed and refitted his ships, after which he sailed away southward into the unknown, to be heard of no more until the bones of the *Thétis* and *Esperance* were discovered bleaching on the reefs of the islands of Santa Cruz, where the French commander and his crews were murdered by the natives.

Botany Bay is one of the favourite picnicking and fishing-grounds of the Sydneyites. It lies between six and seven miles from the heart of the city. A tramway carries pleasure-seekers beyond the far-reaching suburbs, and then through a long stretch of sandy swamp-land, until late years, the source whence the city water-supply was drawn, but now a luxuriant wilderness of Chinese gardens. To reach the picnicking ground, however, the would-be worshipper of Cook and Phillip and La Pérouse has yet to traverse as high smelling a section of the round earth as can be sampled up from anywhere, a whole colony of tanneries and boiling-down houses having located themselves there.

Such is Botany Bay after six-score years of advancement have passed over it. Starting with

a tarnished name and the disadvantage of shallow waters, it has remained and is likely to remain a silent stretch of sea in the midst of a beautiful tropical flower-garden—a Botany Bay in reality.

BLOOD ROYAL.*

CHAPTER XVIII.—GOOD OUT OF EVIL.

THAT journey back to town was one of the most terrible things Maud had ever yet known in her poor little life. Dick leaned back disconsolate in one corner of the carriage, and she in the opposite one. Neither spoke a single word; neither needed to speak, for each knew without speech what the other was thinking of. Every now and again Dick would catch some fresh shade of expression coursing like a wave over Maud's unhappy face, and recognise in it the very idea that a moment before had been passing through his own troubled mind. It was pitiable to see them. Their whole scheme of life had suddenly and utterly broken down before them: their sense of self-respect was deeply wounded; nay, even their bare identity was all but gone; for the belief that they were in very truth descendants of the royal Plantagenets had become as it were an integral part of their personality, and woven itself intimately into all their life and thought and practice. They ceased to be themselves in ceasing to be potential princes and princesses.

For the Great Plantagenet Delusion, which Edmund Plantagenet had started and only half or a quarter believed in himself, became to his children from youth upward, and especially to Maud and Dick, a sort of family religion. It was a theory on which they based almost everything that was best and truest within them; a moral power for good, urging them always on to do credit to the great House from which they firmly and unquestioningly believed themselves to be sprung. Probably the moral impulse was there first by nature; probably, too, they inherited it, not from poor drunken, do-nothing Edmund Plantagenet himself, through whom ostensibly they should have derived their Plantagenet character, but from that good and patient nobody, their hard-working mother. But none of these things ever occurred at all to Maud or Dick; to them, it had always been a prime article of faith that *noblesse oblige*, and that their lives must be noble in order to come up to a preconceived Plantagenet standard of action. So the blow was a crushing one. It was as though all the ground of their being had been cut away from beneath their feet; they had fancied themselves so long the children of kings, with a moral obligation upon them to behave—well, as the children of kings are little given to behaving; and they had found out now they were mere ordinary mortals, with only the same inherent and universal reasons for right and high action as the common herd of us. It was a sad come-down—for a royal Plantagenet.

The revulsion was terrible. And Maud, who was in some ways the prouder of the two, and to whom, as to most of her sex, the extrinsic reason

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for holding up her head in the midst of poverty and disgrace had ever been stronger and more cogent than the intrinsic one, felt it much the more keenly. To women, the social side of things is always uppermost. They journeyed home in a constant turmoil of unrelieved wretchedness; they were not, they had never been royal Plantagenets.

Just like all the rest of the world! mere ordinary people! And they, who had been sustained, under privations and shame, by the reflection that if every man had his right, Dick would have been sitting that day on the divided throne of half these islands! Descendants, after all, of a cobbler and a dancing-master! No Black Prince at all in their lineage! no Henry, no Edward, no Richard, no Lionel! *Cœur-de-Lion*, a pale shade! Lackland himself taken away from them! And how everybody would laugh when they came to know the truth. Though that was a small matter! It was no minor thing like this, but the downfall of a faith, the ruin of a principle, the break-up of a rule in life, that really counted!

There you have the Nemesis of every false idea, every unreal belief: when once it finally collapses, as collapse it needs must before the searching light of truth, it leaves us for a while feeble, uncertain, rudderless. So Dick felt that afternoon; so he felt for many a weary week of reconstruction afterwards.

At last they reached home. 'Twas a terrible home-coming. As they crept up the steps, poor dispossessed souls, they heard voices within, Mrs Plantagenet's, and Gillespie's, and the children's, and Mary Tudor's.

Dick opened the door in dead silence and entered. He was pale as a ghost. Maud walked stately behind him, scarcely able to raise her eyes to Archie Gillespie's face, but still proud at heart as ever. Dick sank down into a chair, the very picture of misery. Maud dropped into another without doing more than just stretch out one cold hand to Archie. Mrs Plantagenet surveyed them both with a motherly glance. 'Why, Dick,' she cried, rushing up to him, 'what's the matter? Has there been a railway accident?'

Dick glanced back at her with affection half masked by dismay. 'A railway accident!' he exclaimed with a groan. 'Oh, mother dear, I wish it had only been a railway accident! It was more like an earthquake. It's shaken Maud and me to the very foundations of our nature!' Then he looked up at her half pityingly; she wasn't a Plantagenet except by marriage; she never could quite feel as they did the sanct—And then he broke off suddenly, for he remembered with a rush that horrid, horrid truth. He blurted it out all at once: 'We are not, we never were, real royal Plantagenets!'

'I was afraid of that,' Mary Tudor said simply. 'That was just why I was so anxious dear Maud should go with you.'

Gillespie said nothing, but for the first time in public he tried to take Maud's hand for a moment in his. Maud drew it away quickly. 'No, Archie,' she said with a sigh, making no attempt at concealment. 'I can never, never give it to you now again. For to-day I know we've always been nobody.'

'You're what you always were to me,' Gillespie

answered in a low voice. 'It was you yourself I loved, Maud, not the imaginary honours of the Plantagenet family.'

'But I don't want to be loved so,' Maud cried, with all the bitterness of a wounded spirit. 'I don't want to be loved for myself. I don't want any one to love me—except as a Plantagenet!'

Dick was ready, in the depth of his despair and the blackness of his revulsion to tell out the whole truth, and spare them, as he thought, no circumstance of their degradation. 'Yes, we went to Framlingham princes and princesses; and more than that,' he said, almost proud to think whence and how far they had fallen; 'we return from it, beggars. I looked up the whole matter thoroughly, and there's no room for hope left, no possibility of error. The father of Giles Plantagenet, from whom we're all descended, most fatally descended, was one Richard—called Plantagenet, but really Muggins, a cobbler at Framlingham; the same man, you know, Mary, that I told you about the other day. In short, we're just cousins of the other Plantagenets—the false Plantagenets—the Sheffield Plantagenets—the people who left the money.'

He fired it off at them with explosive energy. Mary gave a little start. 'But surely in that case, Dick,' she cried, 'you must be entitled to their fortune! You told me one day it was left by will to the descendants and heirs-male of Richard Muggins, alias Plantagenet, whose second son George was the ancestor and founder of the Sheffield family.'

'So he was,' Dick answered dolefully, without a light in his eye. 'But, you see, I didn't then know, or suspect, or even think possible—what I now find to be the truth—the horrid, hateful truth—that our ancestor, Giles Plantagenet, whom I took to be the son of Geoffrey, the descendant of Lionel, Duke of Clarence, was in reality nothing more than the eldest son of this wretched man Richard Muggins; and the elder brother of George Muggins, alias Plantagenet, who was ancestor of the Sheffield people who left the money.'

'But if so,' Gillespie put in, 'then *you* must be the heirs of the Plantagenets who left the money, and must be entitled, as I understand, to something like a hundred and fifty or a hundred and sixty thousand pounds sterling!'

'Undoubtedly,' Dick answered in a tone of settled melancholy.

Gillespie positively laughed, in spite of himself, though Maud looked up at him through her tears and murmured, 'Oh, Archie, how can you?'

'Why, my dear fellow,' he said, taking Dick's arm, 'are you really quite sure it's so? Are you perfectly certain you've good legal proof of the identity of this man Giles with your own earliest ancestor, and of the descent of your family from the forefather of the Sheffield people?'

'I'm sorry to say,' Dick answered with profound dejection, 'there can't be a doubt left of it. It's too horribly certain. Hunting up these things is my trade, and I ought to know. I've made every link in the chain as certain as certainty. I have a positive entry for every step in the pedigree—not doubtful entries, unfortunately, but such conclusive entries as leave the personality of each person beyond the reach of

suspicion. Oh, it's a very bad business, a terrible business!' And he flung his arms on the table, and leaned over it himself, the very picture of mute misery.

'Then you believe the money's yours?' Gillespie persisted, half incredulous.

'Believe it!' Dick answered. 'I don't believe it; I know it is—the wretched stuff! There's no dodging plain facts. I can't get out of it anyhow.'

'Did you realise that this money would be yours when you saw the entries at Framlingham?' Gillespie inquired, hardly certain how to treat such incredible behaviour.

'I didn't think of it just at once,' Dick answered with profound despair in his voice; 'but it occurred to me in the train; and I thought how terrible to confess it before the whole world by claiming the wretched money. Though it might perhaps be some consolation, after all, to poor mother.'

'And you, Maud?' Gillespie inquired, turning round to his sweetheart and with difficulty repressing a smile. 'Did you think at all of it?'

'Well, I knew if we were really only false Plantagenets like the Sheffield people,' Maud answered bravely through the tears that struggled hard to fall, 'we should probably in the end come in to their money. But oh, Archie, it isn't the money Dick and I would care for. Let them take back their wealth: let them take it: if they will! But give us once more our own Plantagenet ancestry!'

Gillespie drew Mary aside for a moment. 'Say nothing to them about it for the present,' he whispered in her ear. 'Let the first keen agony of their regret pass over. I can understand their feeling. This myth had worn itself into the very warp and woof of their natures. It was their one great inheritance. The awakening is a terrible shock to them. All they thought themselves once, all they practically were for so many years together, they have suddenly ceased to be. This grief and despair must wear itself out. For the present we mustn't even inquire of them about the money.'

And indeed it was a week or two before Dick could muster up heart to go with Archie Gillespie to a lawyer about the matter. When he did, however, he had all the details of the genealogy, all the proofs of that crushing identification he had longed to avoid, so fully at his finger-ends, that the solicitor whom he consulted, and to whom he showed copies of the various documents in the case, hadn't a moment's doubt as to the result of his application. 'I suppose this will be a long job, though,' Gillespie suggested, 'and may want a lot of money to prosecute it to its end? It'll have to be taken for an indefinite time into Chancery, won't it?'

'Not at all,' the solicitor answered. 'It's very plain sailing. We can get it through at once. There's no hitch in the evidence. You see, it isn't as if there were any opposition to the claim, any other descendants. There are none, and by the very nature of the case there can't be any. Mr Plantagenet has anticipated and accounted for every possible objection. The thing's as clear as mud. His official experience has enabled him to avoid all the manifold pitfalls of amateur

genealogists. I never saw an inheritance that went so far back made more absolutely certain.'

Poor Dick's heart sank within him. He knew it himself already; but still, he had cherished throughout some vague shadow of a hope that the lawyer might discover some faint flaw in the evidence which, as he considered, had disinherited him. There was nothing for it now but to pocket at once the Plantagenet pride and the Plantagenet thousands—to descend from his lofty pedestal and be even as the rest of us are—except for the fortune. He turned to Gillespie with a sigh. 'I was afraid of this,' he said. 'I expected that answer. Well, well, it'll make my dear mother happy; and it'll at least enable me to go back again to Oxford.'

That last consideration was indeed in Maud's eyes the one saving grace of an otherwise hopeless and intolerable situation. Gradually, bit by bit, though it was a very hard struggle, they reconciled themselves to their altered position. The case was prepared, and as their lawyer had anticipated, went straight through the courts with little or no difficulty, thanks to Dick's admirable working up of all the details of the pedigree. By the time eight months were out, Dick had come into the inheritance of 'the Plantagenets who left the money,' and was even beginning to feel more reconciled in his heart to the course of events which had robbed him so ruthlessly of his fancied dignity, but considerably added to his solid comfort.

Before Dick returned to Oxford, however, to finish his sadly-interrupted university career, he had arranged with Mary that as soon as he took his degree, they two should marry. As for poor Maud, woman that she was, the loss of that royal ancestry that had never been hers seemed to weigh upon her even more than it weighed upon her brother. The one point that consoled her under this crushing blow was the fact that Archie, for whose sake she had minded it most at first, appeared to care very little indeed whether the earliest traceable ancestor of the girl he loved had been a royal Plantagenet or a shoe-making Muggins. It was herself he wanted, he said with provoking persistence, not her great-great-grandfathers. Maud could hardly understand such a feeling herself; for when Archie first took a fancy to her, she was sure it must have been her name and her distinguished pedigree that led an Oxford man and a gentleman, with means and position, to see her real good points through the poor dress and pale face of the country dancing-master's daughter. Still, if Archie thought otherwise—Well, as things had turned out, she was really glad; though, to be sure, she always felt in her heart he didn't attach quite enough importance to the pure Plantagenet pedigree that never was theirs, but that somehow ought to have been. However, with her share of that hateful Sheffield money, she was now a lady, she said—Archie strenuously denied she could ever have been anything else, though Maud shook her head sadly—and when Archie one day showed her the photograph of a very pretty place among the Campsie Fells which his father had just bought for him, 'in case of contingencies,' and asked her whether she fancied she could ever be happy there, Maud rose with tears in her eyes and laid her hand in his, and

answered earnestly: 'With you, dearest Archie, I'm sure I could be happy, my life long, anywhere.'

And from that day forth she never spoke to him again of the vanished glories of the Plantagenet pedigree.

Perhaps it was as well they had believed in it once. That strange myth had kept them safe from sinking in the quicksands when the danger was greatest. It had enabled them to endure, and outlive with honour, much painful humiliation. It had been an influence for good in moulding their characters. But its work was done now, and 'twas best it should go. Slowly Dick and Maud began to realise that themselves. And the traces it left upon them, after the first poignant sense of loss and shame had worn off, were all for the bettering of their moral natures.

THE END.

SOME CURIOSITIES OF THE ORDERLY-ROOM.

OUR soldiers in former days had many duties to perform, which, since the establishment of the new Metropolitan Police Force in 1829, have been generally relegated to the province of the blue-coated guardians of the peace; hence various orders issued from time to time to the regiments of Guards quartered in London—more especially the Foot-guards—throw some curious side-lights on the manners and customs of over a century.

Of the forces which had been raised during the Civil War, Charles II. was permitted by Parliament at the Restoration to retain certain regiments as a royal guard—a body destined to form the nucleus of our standing army. Some of these were called 'Coldstreamers,' after the Berwickshire town where Monk raised them in 1660. The term 'Grenadier' was not in the first instance applied exclusively to a particular body of men, for every regiment contained a certain proportion of grenadiers. Evelyn, in a note in his Diary for 1678, mentions their introduction as follows. 'Now,' he tells us, 'were brought into service a new sort of soldiers called Grenadiers, who were dextrous in flinging hand-grenades, every one having a pouch full; they had furred cappes with coped crownes like Janizaries, which made them look very fierce; and some had long hoods hanging down behind, as we picture fools, their clothing being likewise pybald yellow and red.'

The Royal Regiment of Guards was first raised by Charles II. in Flanders in 1656; and another regiment was combined with it under Colonel John Russell in 1665. Civil duties of a most varied kind fell to the lot of the new Guards. In 1676 we find a sum of twenty-five pounds being granted to one hundred and ninety-one inferior officers and men drawn from both regiments of Foot-guards, as a compensation for losses incurred in an extensive fire which took place at Southwark in that year. The soldiers had given effective assistance in preventing the spreading of the conflagration, and no doubt their clothing and arms had been greatly injured or destroyed. Fire-engines with hose-pipes are said to have

been first used at this fire. A few years previously—about 1657—a fire-engine had been constructed by Hautsch of Nuremberg, and the flexible hose was introduced in 1672 by a Dutchman named Vanderheide. The fire-insurance companies of London had each a separate establishment of fire-engines until 1825, when several of the foremost companies united their establishments, and a few years later the first Fire Brigade was formed.

In 1667 the Life-guard was sent on a curious and destructive errand—not to quell an insurrection, as was believed in Samuel Pepys's circle, but to destroy a flourishing crop of tobacco at Winchcombe, 'which it seems the people there do plant contrary to law.' It is said that tobacco was first cultivated in this Gloucestershire parish of Winchcombe St Peter after its introduction into England in 1583, proving a considerable source of profit to the inhabitants, till the trade was placed under restrictions.

The origin of the 'Sergeant's Guard' attending during the performances at royal theatres can be traced back to 1672, in which year a royal command was issued to the Foot-guards 'to send a careful officer with such number of soldiers as you shall think reasonable to the theatre in Dorset Gardens, to keep the peace there at and about the time of public demonstrations, so that no affront may be given to the spectators nor no affront to the actors.' The theatre at Dorset Gardens stood fronting the river in Fleet Street, on the east side of Salisbury Court, and hither the 'Duke's Company' of actors removed from Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1671. The theatre was still standing in the year 1720, but appears to have been pulled down shortly after that date.

In 1721, Rich—famous as the introducer of pantomime on the English stage—obtained leave for a party of the Guard to do duty at his theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields in a similar way. The necessity for military aid arose out of a disturbance which had been brought about by a dispute between a certain Earl and the manager Rich. The Earl, it seems, during a performance of the *Beggar's Opera*, being behind the scenes, crossed over the stage to some friends of his on the other side amid the hisses of the audience. An altercation was followed by blows, and a rather serious riot was the outcome of this storm in a teacup. King George I., on hearing of the affair, ordered a guard to attend there in future.

Again, in 1725, we find an order that at a ball given at the theatre in the Haymarket, one hundred privates under a captain were to attend, and were 'not to permit any person to enter into the said theatre in habits that may tend to the drawing down reflections upon religion or in ridicule of the same.' The theatre above referred to was built by Vanbrugh in 1705, but was burnt down in 1789.

The English have never taken very kindly to the masqued ball—a masquerade given by Henrietta, the queen of Charles I., on a Sunday having indeed caused a riot. The most splendid affair of the kind, however, took place at the Opera House in 1717, and was provided by the celebrated Mr Heidegger. In 1724, these entertainments were preached against by no less an authority than the Bishop of London; and in

1729 the Grand Jury of Middlesex 'presented the fashionable and wicked diversion called masquerade, and particularly the contriver and carrier-on of masquerades at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket, in order to be punished according to law.'

Turning to the Jacobite rising of 1715, we find the following curious entry in the records of the Coldstream Guards: 'June 10th, 1715. The Guards were posted in different parts of London to prevent persons wearing white roses.' We do not hear whether a similar order was issued against the custom of wearing patches as political emblems: one side of the face signifying Whig, the other, Tory principles. Adherents of the Stuarts were also known by wearing white ribbons; while certain ladies at Bath, who hesitated to commit themselves, wore the colours of both parties, and won for themselves the name of 'trimmers.'

The state of feeling at the death of Queen Anne is well shown by an incident which took place in April 1714. A review had been ordered to take place in Hyde Park on the 17th of the month; but the new clothing of the First Regiment of Footguards was not delivered till the preceding evening; and in the hurry, the officers failed to examine it, and it turned out that some articles of the clothing, especially the shirts, were so coarse that the soldiers considered they had been cheated, and some insubordination ensued. The detachment marching to the Tower carried their shirts in their hands, exhibiting them to the shopkeepers, saying: 'These are Hanover shirts.' The Duke of Marlborough, however, took immediate steps to remedy these defects; and it is satisfactory to learn that the affair ended by the soldiers all drinking the king's health.

About this time the pay of a soldier in the Foot-guards was twopence per diem, being twopence more than that of the ordinary foot-soldier. Out of this, however, considerable deductions were made. The Colonel provided the clothing; while arms and armour—with the exception of swords—were found by the State. The Colonels' clothing system, which was open to many objections, nevertheless survived till after the Crimean War in 1854.

In connection with costume, a curious order was issued in 1735 that the officers of the Coldstream Guards were to appear 'on Tuesday next as at a review,' and were to have on 'twisted ramified wigs, according to the pattern which may be seen at the Tilt Yard to-morrow.' This probably refers to the long gradually-diminishing plait to the wig, with a great bow at the top, and a smaller one at the bottom, which were styled 'Ramilie' after the battle fought in 1706. At a review by Lord Scarborough in 1735 the Guards were ordered to appear with 'their coats pulled down so as to sit well and even, their hats to be well put on, and their hair tucked under, for no man will be suffered to wear a wig unless it is so like a head of hair as not to be perceived.' In 1746, again, 'no soldier will be permitted to wear a wig after the 25th of March next;' and in 1747 it was ordered that 'officers for the future do always mount guard in queue wigs or their own hair done in the same manner;' and soldiers 'who cannot wear their hair through age or infirmity are to provide

themselves with wigs made to turn up like the hair, which they are to wear on mounting days.'

An amusing order, in July 1736, directs the men 'to appear perfectly clean and shaved, square-toed shoes, gaiters, their hats well cocked, and worn so low as to cover their foreheads, and raised behind, with their hair tucked well under and powdered, but none on their shoulders, the point of their hats pointing a little to the left;' and so forth.

In 1823 trousers were introduced and breeches discontinued throughout the British infantry, as well as shoes and leggings. The new trousers were made of bluish-gray cloth, and half-boots were now worn. In April 1736, an order—in which the spelling is rather defective—directs that 'no sentinel is on any account to quit his arms nor suffer any bench, chair, stone, or seat whatsoever to be in his centry-box, nor drink or smoke on his post, nor wear a nightcap when centry, but his hair under his hat, and everything in good order.'

A certain nervousness as to the state of the Guards' apparel is evident in an order issued in July 1737: 'Particular care to be taken that the Hampton Court party on Monday morning have good blue breeches on, because their clothes are to be looped up.' A severe disciplinarian seems to have been in command of the Grenadiers in 1735, judging from an order issued in October of that year that 'any soldier that comes to the parade with two shirts on, brings any necks [*sic*] in his pocket or pouch, or changes his linen on guard, shall receive one hundred lashes on the next mounting day.'

The last century was distinguished by numerous riots and disturbances of various kinds, and the services of the Guards were often needed. It is from several orders issued in 1732 that the custom of placing sentries at the different Government offices seems to have arisen, the early months of that year having witnessed numerous street disturbances. In April 1733 a letter was addressed by the Secretary-at-War to the officer in command of the Foot-guards at the Tower, directing him to assist the Commissioner of Customs in securing all contraband goods; which is of interest, as showing the difficulty of enforcing the payment of duty, and the prevalence of smuggling at this period. The port of London was calculated to lose about one hundred thousand pounds a year in this manner. The Report of Sir John's Cope's Committee of the House of Commons in 1732 contains some very astounding facts and figures. In the nine years before that date, two hundred and fifty Custom-house officers had been beaten and otherwise ill-treated; while six had been murdered. The number of prosecutions had been upwards of two thousand. The Report went on to state that the smugglers had 'grown to such a degree of insolence as to carry on their wicked practices by force and violence not only in the country and remote parts of the kingdom, but even in the City of London itself, going in gangs armed with swords, pistols, and other weapons, even to the number of forty or fifty, by which means they have been too strong not only for the officers of the revenue but for the civil magistrates themselves;' and so forth.

The definition of Excise in Dr Johnson's Dictionary as a 'hateful tax' would seem to have

commended itself to very many persons at this period. In November 1750 the three regiments of Guards were required to find detachments to be in readiness to assist the civil authorities in resisting any attempts to rescue some outlawed smugglers then prisoners in Newgate, as intelligence had been received by the Government that a number of desperate men, also smugglers, had set out from Norfolk and Suffolk with a view to releasing their comrades.

A curious order to the Grenadier Guards in August 1725 directed 'a detachment of sixty-four men under a lieutenant and ensign to March to Barnet and be assisting in seizing and securing the deer-stealers who infest the Chase of Enfield and carry away the deer'—an offence by no means uncommon at this period. White, in his *Natural History of Selborne*, tells us that 'towards the beginning of this century all this country [Hampshire] was wild about deer-stealing. The "Waltham Blacks" at length committed such enormities that Government was forced to interfere with that severe and sanguinary Act called the Black Act [1723], which comprehended more felonies than any law that was ever framed before.'

The state bordering on frenzy to which many speculators in the South Sea scheme had been reduced on the bursting of the bubble in 1720, accounts for an order issued in 1722 'that the Tower Guard should at any time afford aid and assistance whenever required by the Directors of the Bank, the South Sea or the India Company.' The Bank of England—founded in 1694—was at this time only feeling its way to public confidence, and its business was carried on not in the magnificent pile of buildings we now associate with its name, but in Grocers' Hall, in the Poultry. The desolate condition of the South Sea House in his day is well described by Charles Lamb.

An order issued in October 1745 gives a good idea of our old constitutional force and its decay at this period: 'If the militia are reviewed to-morrow by His Majesty, the soldiers of the three regiments of Guards are to behave civilly, and not to laugh or make any game of them.' The militia had been much neglected during the era of Marlborough's victories, very few musters except in the City of London having taken place. Dryden rather maliciously referred to the force as

In peace, a charge; in war, a weak defence;
Stout once a month they march a blustering band,
And ever but in time of need at hand—

the sentiment contained in the last line having been since frequently applied to other guardians of the peace! At the accession of George III. it was raised by lot or ballot of persons eligible in all the counties of England, and whoever was drawn was compelled to serve in person or by substitute for a given term. In May 1763 a detachment of Guards was quartered in Spitalfields, on account of the frequent disturbances brought about by the weavers, who were aggrieved by the introduction of French silks into this country. These riots continued at different intervals for several years, and much consternation was caused by companies of weavers patrolling the streets disguised as sailors and armed with

cutlasses. The efficiency of the modern police force has rendered the employment of military in civil disturbances very rarely necessary.

In conclusion, a word may be said about the Cato Street Conspiracy against the ministry in 1820, when a party of Coldstreams was ordered to assist the Bow Street officers in the capture of the conspirators, which was effected, after a desperate resistance, in the stable in the street off the Edgware Road once called Cato, and afterwards rejoicing in the equally classical name of Homer! The ringleader, Arthur Thistlewood, was the last person committed as a prisoner to the Tower.

THE IRONY OF FATE.

CHAPTER VI.—LORD CRANSFORD.

SOME weeks have elapsed since the events related in the last chapter occurred, and the time for Arabella's departure was at hand. Everything had been arranged. Miss Mortimer, kind good soul that she is, had taken her departure, she having gone to reside with a lady at Eastbourne. Netley Lodge is let, and the incoming tenant is expected to take possession in a few days. The Misses Scudamore and the rest of the gossips were in a state of anxiety to discover who the newcomers were and what Major Bowyer had to say to Arabella's engagement. With regard to the first, Arabella either would not or could not, at any rate she did not choose to gratify their curiosity; and as to the latter, when Miss Nugent ventured to hint at her anxiety on this point, she got such a rebuff that no one else had ventured to seek for further information.

The lovers looked forward to their separation with something like dismay. Up to this point, her guardian had placed no obstacle in the way of their meeting. He did not want a scene; he saw that Arabella was a girl to be led, not driven, and he therefore determined to bide his time.

As the day drew near for their departure, the Major opened the ball by suggesting that before proceeding to Devonshire they should break the journey by a short stay in London, so as to give Arabella an opportunity of seeing something of London and London life. But Bella refused the offer point-blank. She did not feel, suffering as she was from the recent loss of her kind father, equal to entering into London society, and preferred, if her uncle did not object, to defer her visit to a more convenient season.

'Of course, if you prefer it, my dear, we will go right through; but I should like to have been able to introduce you to my friend, Lord Cransford.'

'Who is Lord Cransford?' asked Bella. 'I never heard you mention him before.'

'Perhaps not. He is quite a young man; but he is very nice, and is a dear friend of mine, and I should like you to know him.'

'My acquaintance with lords and members of the aristocracy is not very extensive,' replied Bella gravely; 'but as far as it has gone, I don't think they possessed a very high order of intel-

lect; and were rather proud and stuck-up. Of course, as I was an heiress, they were very civil and condescending to me, and one or two had the temerity to ask me to marry them; but I very soon gave them their *congé*. I could never stoop so low as to marry a man for his title; and as far as my experience goes, that was the only recommendation they possessed.

The Major smiled sarcastically, saying: 'Your experience must be either very limited, or your introducers unfortunate. But, my dear Bella, is it possible—do I understand you aright—that you had offers of marriage from members of the aristocracy, and refused them?'

'Certainly. Do you think I would marry a man simply because he was a lord?'

'I suppose not. But what did your father say to this?'

'Oh, pappy! poor old dear, he only laughed, and said I was a strange little girl; but that, as he did not want to get rid of me, it was all right.'

'But surely, child,' insinuated the Major, 'it was rather thoughtless of you to throw such a chance away.'

'Not at all. Why, my Frank is worth half-a-dozen of such nincompoops!'

'I wish you would not talk about Mr Wallis in that way,' he said testily; 'I strongly object to it.'

'Oh, I can't help that; you will have to get over it. He is my Frank, you know; and he says he never was in love till he saw me!'

'My dear girl, this is all childish nonsense! You are too young to marry, and too inexperienced to know what is good for you. You must remember that you are my ward, and that it is your duty to obey me.'

'Yes, I know all about that. I'm quite willing to obey you; but you must not try to thwart me. Papa never did, and I know if you were to try, I should rebel at once.'

For a few minutes there was silence in the room. Then Bella asked: 'What sort of a man is this Lord Cransford?'

'Young, and very handsome.'

'Yes, yes; I know all about that. He's got a head, of course; but is there anything in it?'

'Well, I should say there was—he knows a thing or two.'

'That is, I suppose, he can play at poker, *écarté*, and billiards?'

'Yes, most probably; and lawn-tennis and cricket.'

'Quite an accomplished gentleman, I suppose. Can he dance?'

'Yes, he is a splendid waltzer,' replied the Major.

'Ah!' she mused, 'does he ever read?'

'Yes; he's a great reader, especially of newspapers; he takes in *Bell's Life* and the *Era*.'

'A sportsman and a patron of the drama. Ever do anything in the way of amateur theatricals?'

'No; I think not.'

'Ah! that's a pity.—Where does he live?'

'He has chambers in the Albany.'

'Yes, yes; but his country seats?'

'Well, you see, he is the nephew of the Duke of Falmouth, and he does not come into his estates till his uncle's death.'

'Are they poor?'

'No; the Duke's estates are very large.'

'That goes for nothing; they may be mortgaged up to the hilt, as papa used to say.'

'I know nothing about that,' replied Major Bowyer. 'I never inquire into the private affairs of my friends.'

At this moment the door opened, and James announced: 'A man from Mr Blackburn to see you, sir.'

'All right, James; I'll be with him immediately.'

The Major left the room, and almost at the same moment the bell rang again, and Lieutenant Wallis was announced.

'Oh, Frank!' cried Bella, rushing forward and putting her arms round his neck, 'I'm so glad you have come. I want to talk to you. I'll fetch my hat and cloak, and we'll go out into the garden.—You don't object, do you, dear?'

'No, my sweet Bella,' he replied, still holding the hand she had placed in his. 'Let us go at once.'

So Bella ran for her hat and cloak, and they went out into the shrubbery. As soon as they were clear of the house, Bella commenced: 'I think uncle's let the cat out of the bag at last, Frank. I told you I knew he'd got some scheme in his head to make me a lord's wife; and now it's come out. I'm to be Lady Cransford!'

'Lady Cransford!' he iterated.

'Yes; I'm to marry Lord Cransford.'

'Lord Cransford!' he repeated. 'Is it possible your uncle could be so base?'

'Base! Why, what's the matter with Lord Cransford?'

'He's a man no respectable girl ought to associate with. He's a *roué*, a gambler, and a blackleg; in short, a thorough blackguard!'

'Good gracious!' exclaimed Arabella. 'Why, my uncle speaks so highly of him. "An accomplished gentleman" was the phrase he used.'

'Yes; that's quite true in a certain sense. He is handsome, tall; with elegant manners, and a soft melodious voice; but if he possesses any heart at all, it must be a black one. I should say there are few crimes, short of murder, that he has not committed.'

'How came you to know so much about him?'

'He is my cousin.'

'Frank!' she exclaimed incredulously, 'is it possible? You cousin to a lord?'

'Yes, dearest; only, as we were poor, my mother dropped her title, and thinks it best not to talk about our rich and titled relations.—But now, dear, I must get you to keep this a secret. My mother would be greatly annoyed if it was known in Nunsford.'

'You may depend on me, dear; wild horses should not drag the secret from me,' replied Arabella.

'I trust you implicitly, darling,' he said softly; and then, after a pause: 'I don't like the outlook; I'm afraid you will have a hard battle to fight.'

'I know that, dear. I know now that my uncle will do all he can to prevent our marriage; but we must trust in God's good providence to help us.'

'Yes, darling; and I think He will,' responded

Frank. 'If anything was to happen to separate us, I don't think I could exist.'

'Nothing but death shall, dear!' she replied earnestly. 'I don't expect the next two years will be very happy ones for me; but we must hope for the best.'

CHAPTER VII.—FOILED.

Winter had come and gone, and spring was verging into summer. There was music in the air, the hum of bees, and the joyous song of the lark; and loveliness was spread over the earth like a mantle.

Arabella, in her little cosy boudoir, sits gazing out at the beautiful Devonshire landscape which spreads itself before her. All Nature was rejoicing; but the beauty of the scene and the melodious harmony of the bees and birds brought no joy to her heart. She was sad and lonely, everything was so different now from what it was when her dear father was alive. Major Bowyer was polite and amiable, or rather tried to appear so; but Arabella knew full well that it was a mere cloak to cover some more important and ulterior design. She had many causes of anxiety, but the chief one was that for some weeks past she had received no letters from Frank. He had got his promotion, and had joined his ship in the Mediterranean. He had promised to write immediately he reached Malta; but no letters had arrived. The question she was now debating was, had Frank really not written, or had his letters been intercepted? Another source of annoyance was that her uncle's visitors were mostly of the masculine gender; and the neighbouring gentry, especially of the softer sex, seemed to give her and Clumber Park as wide a berth as possible.

How she longed to get back to Nunsford; how she pined for a sight of good Miss Puddicombe and gentle Mrs Wallis! Even the Misses Scudamore would have been a welcome interruption to the monotony of Clumber Park.

A much more lively and very different scene was taking place in the Major's study.

'It's no use, my friend,' said Lord Cransford; 'the girl's as obstinate as a mule; and, unless you can speedily alter the state of things, I shall cut the business, and you'll have to get another customer for your heiress.'

'Hush! hush!' said the Major softly; 'if any one was to hear you!'

'What do I care if they did!'

'That's true enough; but I do. You are too hasty, my friend, as you will see. You are not going about the business in the right way.'

'Now, that's just like you, Bowyer, trying to throw the blame on my shoulders,' exclaimed Lord Cransford. 'You have deceived me, and so has she. I thought the whole thing was settled, or at least understood, and that all I had to do was to go in and win; and now she laughs at me, and refuses me point-blank.'

'You are too hasty, my friend,' said the Major. 'You have not had so much experience of the sex as I have. You expected that she would leap into your arms and weep tears of joy and exultation. But that's not the way with young ladies of the present day.'

'It's all very well to talk in that way,' replied Lord Cransford; 'but I believe she means what

she says, and that, unless you can put the screw on, the game is all up!'

'Well, then, my friend,' said the Major coolly, 'we shall put the screw on, and, if necessary, pretty sharply; but I don't think it will be necessary. This is only a bit of romantic affectation. I'll have a talk with her in the morning, and I pledge you my honour that to-morrow you will meet with a very different reception.'

The following morning, shortly after breakfast, Arabella received a peremptory message from Major Bowyer to say he wanted her in his study immediately.

'Tell Major Bowyer I will be with him in half-an-hour,' she replied. 'I'm busy now;' and the servant departed.

'Don't you think you had better go as soon as you can?' suggested Mrs Manser. 'He was as cross as two sticks at breakfast, and a little compliance would mollify him.'

'But I don't want to; I want to make him in a rage. I'm going to be as cool as a cucumber; and the more angry he is, the more advantage I shall have over him.'

At this moment Thomas re-entered the room. 'If you please, miss,' he said, 'master says he can't wait, and he desires me to say that you must come at once.'

'Oh, that's all nonsense!' replied Arabella.

'Yes, miss, I daresay it is; but I can't go and tell master that.'

'No, Thomas; of course you can't,' replied Arabella with a pleasant smile. 'You can, however, give my compliments to Major Bowyer, and say that, as I find it impossible to be in two places at once, and as I have some letters to write, I see no other alternative but that I should defer my interview with him till a more convenient season.'

Thomas bowed, and was about to depart, when Arabella continued: 'Don't bring me any more messages, because you interrupt me, and I want to send off my letters by the next post.'

With a broad grin on his usually stolid countenance, the footman proceeded to the study and delivered his message verbatim, and was thereupon told to pay a visit to his satanic majesty, to which Thomas replied, 'Yessur,' and retired.

Major Bowyer was a man who usually had his temper well under command; but this defiance of his authority was almost more than he could bear; and he walked up and down the study grinding his teeth and vowing vengeance against his ward, and muttering incoherent ejaculations, of which only a portion was intelligible, such as 'Cursed impertinence!' 'Impudent young hussy!' 'Wants to ride her high-horse, hey? Well, mind you don't come a cropper;' and so forth.

At the end of half an hour Arabella made her appearance, and her smiling face and laughing eyes formed a strong contrast to the scowling brows and angry face of her uncle.

'I'm so sorry I could not come before, my dear uncle,' she said blandly; 'but you see you choose such inconvenient times for your interviews.—And now, what is it you have to say?' and she laughed a little irritating laugh.

'I must beg of you to be more serious, Miss Alsworth,' said the Major excitedly, 'for what I have to say affects your future happiness as

well as mine.—Take a seat ;' and he motioned her to a chair. 'Lord Cransford has made you an offer of marriage. Such an alliance would be advantageous to both you and me in every way. It would give you a title and the *entrée* into society ; and as to me, well, my interest in the matter is small. I have considered the whole matter temperately and calmly, and have formed my resolution simply under a consideration of your happiness and welfare, which, as your guardian and trustee, I think it my duty to take. I have come to this conclusion after full and calm reflection, and not all the tears and prayers in the world shall move me. I know it is for your good ; I know it is my duty to be determined—and I am determined. You must marry Lord Cransford !' He kept his eyes steadily fixed on her face as he said this ; he seemed to have imagined that this declaration would have been followed by prayers, tears, or declamation ; but Arabella was perfectly silent. She was a little pale—that was all the emotion she displayed.

'I am prepared,' he went on, 'to be accused of the most unparalleled cruelty in thus forcing your inclination and using the power I possess in obliging you to accept this proposal, which the whole world will consider, in your situation, a most fortunate one ; and I should despise myself if, in a moment of weakness, I held out any alternative which might lead you to hesitate as to the acceptance of it.'

'Hesitate !' she cried in mocking tones, as she rose up and faced him. 'No ; I shall not hesitate for a moment. I distinctly and absolutely refuse Lord Cransford's offer of marriage. I should despise myself if I for one moment hesitated to give up the man I love for such a creature as he is !'

For a moment or two the Major stared at her as one petrified. Was this chit of a girl to set him at defiance ? He sat fixed in his chair. His amazement was so great he could hardly realise the situation. He had pictured her throwing herself at his feet and weeping and beseeching him to spare her ; and instead, she was standing before him defying him to his face.

'Have you anything more to say ?' she asked.

'Only that you shall marry Lord Cransford !' he repeated.

'I will not !' she answered firmly ; 'no earthly power shall make me !'

'You may struggle,' he said harshly ; 'but you will find it is vain to resist. Go to your room, and don't leave it till I send for you.'

'Go to my room ! What for ?'

'Because I command you to do so.'

'But suppose I refuse. What then ?'

He rose up and assumed a menacing attitude, and roared : 'Leave the room, girl !'

'We are not in Turkey,' she said calmly, 'and you are not the Great Mogul.'

'Will you leave the room !' he exclaimed, advancing towards her. 'I am your guardian, and I command you to retire to your room.'

'Don't be silly ; I shall not leave the room till I choose,' she exclaimed with a laugh. 'If you want me to go, you must speak more politely. You should say : "My dear niece, you have upset my beautiful little matrimonial scheme, and I

am in a most disagreeable humour ; will you kindly leave the room, and not make your appearance again till I send for you ?"'

Major Bowyer retreated to his chair, and sat and scowled at her.

'Won't you say it ?' she asked quietly.

Not a word came from the Major's lips, but he sat biting them savagely.

'Well, if that will not suit you, I'll try you on the other tack. Command me to sit down, and not leave the room on peril of your displeasure, and I will at once relieve you of my presence.'

There was a pause, and then she continued : 'You are hard to please. Won't either of these courses suit you ? Well, then, I'll go ; not to please you, but myself ;' and she walked calmly across the floor and closed the door quietly after her.

Major Bowyer sat silently pondering over this strange and unexpected termination of the interview with his ward, for which he had so sedulously prepared himself. What was he to do now ? was the question he asked himself, but was unable to answer.

Meantime, Arabella had flown up-stairs to her room, and closed and locked the door, and sat down to think. Thus far, the victory had been on her side ; she had repulsed the enemy ; but would he not return to the attack ? There was one thing she was glad of, and that was that her uncle had shown his hand : he intended, if he could, to force her to marry Lord Cransford. She knew nothing about the law, and she wondered if he had the power to compel her to marry whether she would or not. She was only a weak girl ; she was alone and almost friendless ; but her heart was strong and her spirit unbroken. No law, no compulsion should compel her to go to the altar and bind herself to a man like Lord Cransford.

SHOES AND SHOEMAKERS.

Boots and shoes are such prosaic things nowadays that it would be unreasonable to suppose them interesting ; and yet they have as quaint a history as any part of fashion's fabric. They were not always the factory-made articles which dangle pitifully in ungainly attitudes at the shop doors, and fit more or less clumsily the feet of the people we pass every day. They are rarely even pretty now, except it be in the dainty forms fashioned by artists in leather for the nightly decking of light fantastic toes ; and their general aspect is one of commonplace sameness. Yet once upon a time, in the ruffling days of the Merry Monarch, there were gallants who turned their high top-boots down to their ankles that they might reveal the costly laces with which they were lined. And earlier by a hundred years or so there were Walter Raleigh and other gay wights who promenade in diamond-studded shoes worth eighty thousand pounds. So gorgeous was the footgear of the times gone by that they put a king in a difficulty. When Charles VII. ascended the throne of France, so impoverished was his exchequer that he was actually at a loss to find a subject who would supply him with the magnifi-

cent coronation boots which all precedent required should be of white satin lavishly embroidered with gold lilies. Even the red deerskin brogues which the hardy Highlander carved out of the newly-slain deer and lashed round his calves with the hair outwards were more interesting than the shoes of to-day, for he made them himself, and their very uncouthness was full of suggestion.

Tight boots have troubled the world ever since it wore leather; but it is fortunate for the shoemakers that the author of the misery of toe-pinching is not always treated as he was once in Spain. The story goes that the bootmaker to Don Carlos, the son of Philip II., took him a pair of boots which were too small to be comfortable, and by the order of the angry Prince they were cut in pieces, boiled, and forced down the wretched fellow's throat, so that he was well-nigh killed. It was something rather worse than a tight shoe which Don John of Austria wore; it was, says the legend, a pair of shoes the soles and leather of which had been impregnated with poison; and after he wore them he died.

A curious investigation of the shoe-history of Napoleon Bonaparte has been made. It is assumed that in his boyhood he was careless as to his garments, and therefore as to his shoes. But when he became a Lieutenant of artillery he wore boots of soft black leather reaching to the knee. Having advanced to the rank of Captain, he donned boots 'à la Souvoroff,' which resembled hessians; but from the time when he became Brigade General, right through to the end of his First Consulship, he was addicted to top-boots. As Emperor, however, he wore long boots such as those used by Life Guardsmen; and to these he remained faithful throughout the duration of the Empire. Now the pathos of the history begins. When the poor fallen Emperor lived in St Helena he drew up with his own hand an inventory of his wardrobe; and all that remained to him out of his greatness was half-a-dozen of shirts, the like number of handkerchiefs, six pairs of silk stockings, two hats, two pairs of cambric sheets, two pairs of boots, and two of slippers. One pair of boots was placed on his body and buried with him; and when his remains were exhumed in 1840, it was found that though the thread with which the boots were sewn had decayed, and the bones of the feet peered mournfully between the soles and the uppers, yet the good leather remained as tough and stout as ever. And there is the less reason to wonder at this, in the opinion of the investigators, for Napoleon during the long period of fourteen years had his boots from only one tradesman, a Pole, who kept a shop in the Palais-Royal, and who preserved a set of his Imperial patron's lasts, on which he had inscribed, with quaint devotion, every one of his famous victories.

Of the lore and associations of boots and shoes there is practically no end. Nursery legend has endowed them with marvellous qualities of speed. Jack the Giant-killer's shoes of swiftness and the great monster's seven-leagued boots were gear that a man might sigh for when pressing circumstances taught him the discreeter part of valour. But these are frank falsehoods; even in the nursery they are fiction. Not so with some of the superstitions which tradition has laced around

shoes. It was unlucky, for instance, to put on the left shoe first, and when Augustus Cæsar did that one day, he narrowly escaped assassination. Under the old regime, when Japanese friends met in the streets they took off their shoes, and this notion prevails almost universally in the East. A shoeless foot betokens servitude, humility, and respect. Shoes are left at the door of the mosque when the worshipper enters; and if a friend calls on another, his shoes await him on the door-mat.

That appalling habit of throwing old shoes at weddings has several derivations. One theory is, that the shoe is thrown because it is a lucky instrument in its old age. Another is, that the custom is a relic of the period when the bride was taken by force, and that the discharge of these missiles is all that remains of the old combat. A third is, that the Anglo-Saxon father gave the bride's shoe to her husband, who touched her on the head with it as a sign of his authority, and that the throwing of the shoe indicates the parental resignation of all claims on the bride's obedience. Yet in Turkey the groom is the one most affected, for the moment he is married his good friends set upon him and beat him soundly with slippers as a sign of their affection. The Jews sealed a bargain by plucking off the shoe, as it is written in the verse, 'For to confirm all things a man plucked off his shoe and gave it to his neighbour; and this was a testimony in Israel.' The origin of the common saying about the hidden spot where the shoe pinches is ascribed to a Roman citizen who was divorced from his wife, though he had always seemed to live happily. When he was questioned by his friends, he put out his shoe to them. 'Is it not new and well-made?' he said; 'yet none of you can tell where it pinches.'

There is nothing new about high heels; they are as old as Hamlet's time at least. The melancholy Prince addresses the lady player: 'Your ladyship is nearer heaven than when I saw you last by the altitude of a chopine;' and a chopine was only a high heel which the fair ladies of old used to increase their stature.

The men who make these harmless necessary portions of our attire form one of the most remarkable classes of artisans. 'How is it,' said Sir Robert Peel once to a deputation of working men, the leaders of which were both shoemakers—'how is it that you shoemakers are foremost in every movement? If there is a plot, or conspiracy, or revolution, or political agitation, I find always that there is a shoemaker in the fray.' The answer to this pointed inquiry is not recorded; but there is no doubt that the intellectual activity of shoemakers is, or it may be fairer to say, was greater than that of any other body of workmen. This was more noticeable, it may be, fifty or a hundred years ago, before education was so generally diffused as it now is. Then they were recognised as singularly advanced in shrewdness, power of argument, and logical deduction, and in thoughtfulness. Their mental vigour took them into tangled fields of speculation, and led them to study their national literature with exceptional assiduity. Local preachers, class leaders, and eloquent advocates many of them were; strenuous political partisans, and agitators for many reforms; and often their meditations led them also into theo-

logical highways and byways, where their method of travelling was not of the orthodox kind. They seemed to beat out their theories as they beat out their leather; and every nail they drove into the sole of a shoe was as a stroke driven home in the process of mental construction.

Novelists and poets have been prone to people their works with shoemakers. Kingsley, Dickens, Lytton, Macdonald, and others have described shoemaker types; and it has been remarked as significant that when writers such as Hannah More wished to convey their moralities through a homely medium they chose shoemakers, and set them talking in their shrewd and suggestive way. It may be that notable shoemakers would have been noteworthy whatever their occupation in life. It may be that Thomas Edward, the Scotch naturalist, whose life Smiles so admiringly describes, would have been as earnest, as devoted, as enlightened, and as persevering, if he had been a stonemason or a smith or a carpenter. But the fact remains that he was a maker of shoes, and that it was in the intervals of this not very inspiring trade, and in spite of the difficulties which poverty and misunderstanding put in his way, that he did so much in the interests of science, and secured recognition very late in the day as a man of altogether exceptional claims to honour.

Yet in spite of the conditions which seem to favour the mental development of shoemakers, there have been those who scouted the occupation. In the Border town of St Boswells there was a shoemaker named John Younger, who wrote his autobiography. The passion for pen-work will show itself, and Younger must needs tell how it was debated in his boyhood whether he or his brother should go to the university. The choice for this distinction fell on the brother. 'So George got on with his Latin, whilst I got on with my shoemaking and mending the best way I could. This craft of mine was the most unproductive and vexatious business, after all—a constant botheration, what with pleasing my customers and looking after my journeymen, who often would not or could not attend to matters so pointedly as was found absolutely necessary. This through a lifetime has entailed a world of hourly care and extra care on myself, with a super-sufficiency of daily vexation. If I had my life to begin again just now, I would rather at once commence henchman to the gipsy king-fisher in the most troubled waters above-ground than be a village shoemaker on the most promising conditions ever brought within the vision of a poor son of the craft.' There seems a querulous discontent about this; the causes assigned are insufficient for vexation so great and continuous; and one must fear that John Younger had ever a longing eye on his brother George's Latin and higher opportunities. A shoemaker who thinks much is often misanthropic; and yet better be a good shoemaker than a bad philosopher. These remarks, however, have not the same unexceptional application to the present time that they have to the time just past. Shoemakers are not nowadays so strongly individualised. They are items in a factory rather than self-complete units in a particularly vigorous system of life. There is a good deal of the old character left; but part of it has gone; and many shoemakers show an

unfortunate tendency to degenerate into machine-made men, as commonplace, and stereotyped, and hopelessly uninteresting as the shoes they help to manufacture.

THE LEOPARD MAN-EATER.

A VERY terrible but true tale of the loss of human life has been received from India. Upwards of one hundred and fifty poor natives in the Rajshye district (or county) of Lower Bengal have been killed by a leopard. It is hardly necessary to say that the people of the villages, over an area of about forty square miles, in which the animal committed its ravages were reduced to a state of misery and terror until their enemy was slain. The Government of Bengal during the past year has been spending hundreds of thousands of rupees to prevent the death of any of its native subjects from starvation or famine; but, so far as can be ascertained, the same Government only offered a reward of fifty rupees, instead of the ordinary reward of five rupees, for the destruction of this terrible leopard, which, towards the end of its career, was killing women and children at the rate of two or three a week.

The special interest and importance of the case is derived from the fact that a leopard is not usually addicted to taking human life. Everybody has heard or read stories of man-eating tigers; but in the records of Oriental sport and natural history, there is, I believe, no mention of a systematic man-eating leopard. Wolves and jackals are well known as prowling about villages and carrying off little children almost before the eyes of their parents. The leopard has been always regarded as the chief enemy of goats and of poultry and of the village dogs. It has seldom tried to molest human beings who did not first interfere with it. The late Mr Wood, in his popular work on Natural History, thus describes the leopard: 'In its own country the leopard is as crafty an animal as our British fox; and being aided by its active limbs and stealthy tread, gains quiet admission into many spots where a less cautious creature could not plant a step without giving an alarm. It is an inveterate chicken-stealer, creeping by night into the hen-roosts, in spite of the watchful dogs that are on their posts as sentinels, and destroying in one fell swoop the entire stock of poultry that happen to be collected under that roof. Even should they roost out of doors, they are no less in danger, for the leopard can clamber up a pole or a tree with marvellous rapidity, and with his ready paw strikes down the poor bird before it is fully awakened.' From this quotation it may be seen that a leopard was looked upon by a generally well-informed English naturalist as little more than a large cat, the deadly enemy of poultry. But this is too favourable a view of its character. A leopard would prefer a goat or a sheep to a fowl if it could get them. It will occasionally kill a calf if it finds the little animal without the protection of the mother-cow. It is very much addicted to killing dogs. The annals of the Indian hill-stations, such as Simla and Mussoorie, contain many stories of the pet dogs of ladies being carried off before their eyes. Even a large dog of the Newfoundland breed has been known to tremble with fear

at finding itself within scent of a leopard. Any fierce dog, such as a mastiff or bulldog, on smelling a leopard, will rush to attack it; but a dog of this kind should always be furnished with a broad leathern or metal spiked collar, to protect its neck from the jaws of the leopard, which invariably tries to seize the dog by the back of the neck.

A leopard has been known to attack and severely wound a man who has gone to the rescue of his own kids or fowls, or who has voluntarily waylaid and attacked the wild beast. But it is quite a new thing that a leopard should assail unoffending human beings and carry off their bodies to devour them at its leisure. Tigers, especially man-eating tigers, are now seldom to be found; but leopards are still numerous in and about the villages of some parts of Lower Bengal, where the jungle, or undergrowth of shrubs and thorny plants, and the high grass afford them shelter. It would indeed be a terrible thing if every leopard in Lower Bengal were to take to killing and eating children and women, after the manner of the beast which has been devastating the villages of Rajshye.

It was in the month of July 1890 that information was given to the Rajshye police that a girl aged four and a boy aged seven had been killed and eaten by a leopard. The report was at first not believed. It was rather suspected that the children had been murdered, or that jackals had carried them off. But in August the villagers came again to the police and declared that the leopard had been seen to kill a boy aged eight, and that on another day it had carried off a baby only six weeks old. Still the police and the superior authorities were incredulous, and nothing further occurred till December, when information was given that a boy of seven had been killed by a leopard. The villagers persisted that it was one and the same leopard that had committed all these ravages. They described it as a large heavy-shouldered beast, with rather a short tail. There is much difference in the size of leopards; and when the skin of a dead leopard is measured from the tip of its snout to the end of its tail, the possessor of a long tail may be represented as a large animal, whereas its head and neck and body were really on a small scale. Any one who looks at the leopards in their dens at the Zoological Gardens can see for himself how much the animals differ in size and substance. Be this as it may, the story of the villagers was soon confirmed by the renewal of the leopard's ravages; for in January 1891 there were no fewer than eight victims. The following list shows how its depredations were continued. 1891—January, eight human beings; February, two; March, six; April, one; May, seven; June, six; July, seven; August, fourteen; September, twelve; October, twelve; November, ten; December, thirteen. 1892—January, fourteen; February, twenty-one; March, thirteen; April, one. It is probable that the number in April might have increased, but fortunately on the 6th of April the leopard was killed by a party of sportsmen, and there was an end of the destruction of human beings.

It will be observed that the old doctrine of *nemo repente fuit turpissimus* applies to the man-eating leopard. The natural fear of man deters it at first; but as it grows bolder in crime, it

finds that it is exceedingly easy to kill a defenceless child or woman, whose delicate neck is crushed in an instant between its powerful jaws. There is no resistance; and it may be that the leopard soon finds that human flesh and blood are delicacies, such as they are said to be in the opinion of most cannibal tribes whose habits have been so minutely described by the adventurous travellers who have resided among them. The first human being that the Rajshye leopard was known to have killed was a little girl about four years old. The child was playing in the courtyard of her parents' house, when just before sunset the leopard sprang upon her, and carried off the body into the nearest high-grass jungle, and was beginning to devour it, when the outcries of the assembled villagers caused it to leave the corpse. It would be monotonous to try to give the particulars of every separate victim. The leopard usually made its attack about sunset. One evening a woman of thirty and her son of ten were returning from a neighbouring market. The leopard sprang upon the boy; but the mother bravely ran to defend him, when the leopard seized her by the neck and killed her, and then carried off the boy's body into the jungle to devour it. This was seen by several other persons returning from the market, who fled as fast as they could. On another occasion a cowherd, on arising in the early morning, missed his mother, who had been sleeping in the same hut at a few yards' distance from him. When daylight appeared, he saw a naked body lying in the courtyard of the house, and he found that it was his mother's corpse. Her neck had been broken, and the leopard having sucked the blood, had left the body where it lay. The body was still warm, and the leopard had probably slunk off on seeing the son moving about. The leopard seems hardly ever to have attacked a grown-up man, although it is stated that six grown-up men died in the course of the year from wounds received by them in attacking it and trying to rescue a victim.

It is hardly necessary to say that many attempts were made by different persons, European and native, to kill the leopard as soon as its ravages became notorious; but they were unsuccessful. The explanation given is that the leopard hid itself in the fields of high sugar-cane, which were impenetrable to man and elephant. The sportsmen usually took out some elephants when they wanted to kill the leopard; but it is very little use to hunt for a leopard with two or three elephants; for the elephants may not be sent into the sugar-cane crops, and if there is no sugar-cane, a leopard can easily hide itself in the thick grass and scrub jungle so as to be invisible to the rider of an elephant. It is true that on the day when the leopard was killed, there were nineteen elephants brought into the field, and they succeeded in driving it out, beating shoulder to shoulder, from a patch of high grass in which it was trying to hide itself. But the leopard was not found, or put up, by the elephants. A poor man, whose wife had been killed by the leopard, had seen the beast climbing up into a tree, and he ran to tell the sportsmen where it was. When it came down from the tree, it was easy to surround it; and after a considerable number of shots, the leopard was killed. It

was a male, and its length was six feet six inches, the head and shoulders being abnormally large. The skin when cured was stretched to seven feet nine inches.

Doubtless, there was no want of courage on the part of the gentlemen who went out to try to kill the leopard; but they seem to have been rather inexperienced sportsmen, and they did not know how to hunt a leopard. If they had had the good fortune to read Mr F. B. Simson's *Sport in Eastern Bengal*, they would have found valuable instruction in the two chapters that he has written on Leopards. In the first place, the leopard should be sought for and shot by the sportsman on foot. Mr Simson writes thus: 'I consider that exposure to a leopard on foot, with due precaution and a proper weapon, is only a fair sporting risk, and accidents must happen occasionally.' Mr Simson is certainly entitled to speak. He shot many leopards on foot; he was twice badly wounded by a leopard, but on one of these occasions a third leopard unexpectedly attacked him from behind, when he had already killed two others in the same patch of grass jungle. Mr Simson mentions that an old French gentleman whom he knew used to go about hunting for leopards with a nondescript sort of dog, half pariah, and half spaniel. 'When this dog smelt a leopard, he would cock his ears, and point out from a respectful distance where the leopard lay. The Frenchman kept on peeping and peering about, wholly regardless of anything the leopard might do in the way of attack, till he could sight the animal. He then killed him, almost to a certainty, with a single shot.' Mr Simson goes on to say that he has hunted leopards with dogs, and has been at several such hunts with other people's dogs. But dogs are either too timid or too plucky, and the plucky ones that go at the leopard get killed. Still the dogs help to find the leopard, and it seems that they might have been used with more advantage in seeking for the man-eating leopard. But to use dogs effectually the sportsman must be on foot. There is no chance of a good combination of dogs with elephants, for the latter hate the dogs, and will run away from them; and the dogs mistrust the elephants, and decline to hunt. Finally, no use seems to have been made of trackers, or of seeking for the leopard by its footprints on the mud after rain. Professional trackers are almost unknown in Bengal; but an Englishman fond of sport soon teaches himself how to track, and can impart the knowledge to one or more of his own native servants.

ABOUT LOCO.

THE enterprising Englishman who emigrates to the south-western prairies of North America with a view to ranching, has many trials awaiting him of which he little dreams in Old England; but to my mind the worst evil of all is to find one's self unwittingly the purchaser of a ranch on which Loco is found. Few people who have not been out West know anything about this plant, which is so much dreaded by cattle ranchmen, and therefore I think a few remarks about it may not prove uninteresting to some readers.

This loco is a pretty plant, something like a vetch in appearance, with white, purple, and red flowers. The leaf is alternately pinnate, and the leaflet lanceolate. It is the first green herbage that springs up after the long winter, and perhaps that is the reason it seems irresistible to some cattle in the early spring. It takes its name from a Mexican word meaning 'mad;' and it is often called the 'Crazy Weed,' from the direful effect it has upon cattle or horses if eaten in any quantity. At the commencement, the poison seems slow in showing itself; the first symptom usually being a dull glassy look in the eyes, which gradually seem to dilate and become wild and staring. To an experienced 'Westerner' this is sufficient warning, and if he is wise, he will remove the animal at once to some distant pasture free from the weed, for if left to graze on the dangerous herb, the symptoms will become more pronounced, the vision becoming impaired, and the victim developing an aptitude for indulging in grotesque antics, sometimes rushing madly about as if demented. When horses are affected, they generally show it first by being troublesome in harness, balking, backing, and often rearing and hurling themselves backwards. A 'locoed' horse has the greatest objection to having its head touched in any way, and consequently is difficult to harness.

The last stage of the disease is a gradual wasting away of the animal; and this ends fatally. I once saw a cow that was badly 'locoed;' the poison had got thoroughly into her system and she was as thin as a rail. Her ribs showed plainly through the skin, and she was so weak she could hardly stand. Her owner had kept her shut in a corral away from the fatal loco, and fed her up well; but she was too far gone, and got so wretched at last that a bullet put an end to her sufferings.

Strange to say, cattle born on the prairies seem instinctively to avoid the plant; and it is chiefly imported animals, often valuable high-grade beasts, that fall victims to their partiality for it. It is very difficult to eradicate loco once it has got a firm hold on a pasture, and I believe the best thing is to plough up the land. It grows in big patches, and in the 'fall' the large pods containing the seeds burst and are carried on by the winds to spread elsewhere.

I was for some time on a ranch where loco flourished wonderfully, in spite of the owner's efforts to get rid of it. He was advised to drown it first with water from the irrigation ditches, and then let the hot sun scorch it up. Note that under this treatment it thrived and spread! Again he was told by an 'old-timer' that the only thing was to cut it down just before it seeded and burn it. He did so; and the next year his best hay patch was thick with loco blossom. Although there is a prevalent idea that loco hay is harmless, my friend would not run the risk of giving it to his horses, and lost the crop.

I once helped to drive a cow from a loco patch

to a corral; the distance was not a mile, and yet with the help of another rider it took us two hours and a half to succeed. The cow ran all over the place in a silly dazed way, until we got our two horses close along each side of her, so that she could not turn easily, and with difficulty kept her moving on straight ahead. Her sight seemed peculiarly defective; on the way, she fell clumsily into an irrigation ditch that she could easily have crossed, and we got her out with no end of trouble. Again, coming to a fence-pole lying on the ground, she stopped abruptly and commenced dancing and plunging about in front of it for some minutes; then, with a great bound, she jumped over it as if it was two or three feet high! A 'locoed' horse of mine while feeding quietly in the stable one morning was seized with a spasm; it reared suddenly, threw itself backwards and broke its neck before two men who were standing by could do a thing to try and save it.

A few years before I went to the southern part of Colorado, where I first came across loco, the weed was spreading so rapidly there that the Government offered a bounty for every ton of it dug up by the roots, which was to be destroyed after being weighed. This wise measure for battling with the evil was frustrated by the greed of some of the Mexicans and lower stamp of ranchmen, who, tempted by the reward, actually cultivated the plant as a profitable speculation, until their unscrupulous business was suspected, and it was deemed expedient to take off the bounty, as the amount of loco that was produced seemed incredible.

There are many theories afloat about loco among Westerners. Some maintain that it is not the plant at all that does the mischief, but a tiny red worm that is found only in its roots, and that animals that are affected must first eat the root and swallow the worm. One man will believe that this worm attacks only the intestines, and another will declare that it finds its way at once to the brain. In defence of this worm theory it is urged that botanical experts have failed to discover anything supposed to be injurious to cattle or horses in the specimens of the plant sent to them for analysis. One daring ranchman I knew actually tasted the leaves, and said they had a strong flavour of salt about them, which would doubtless be acceptable to bovine palates.

I was once talking to an owner of a large horse-ranch, and having noticed that loco grew abundantly on the land, but that his horses looked none the worse for it, I asked the reason. He told me he had lost many until he heard accidentally that salt and copperas together made an effectual antidote to the poison; for by the way he maintained that the plant was injurious in itself, and quite repudiated the worm theory. He said that since he had left the remedy where the animals could always get at it, he had not lost one. It seemed hard to believe in this somewhat homœopathic treatment of the disease, but this horse-owner had the greatest faith in its efficiency. I never met any one else who had tried the daring experiment. I was much interested in the noxious plant, and watched all loco cases that came under my notice most carefully; but whether the trouble arises from poisonous leaves or worms I cannot tell. I dried some specimens of the plant,

and sent them on my return to England to an authority on such things, but he was not able to name it; so I conclude England is at present free from the weed, and I hope she may never have any transplanted to her shores. It may not be uninteresting to close these remarks by saying that in localities where loco is found, a word has been coined from its name, and if people are deficient in intellect, or odd and eccentric, they are designated 'locoed'!

IN PHILIPHAUGH WOODS.

Oh lovely woods of Philiphaugh!
As through your leafy glades I wander,
I watch the shadows come and go—
I watch the sunlight's golden glow—
And listen to the rippling flow
Of Yarrow's streamlet, gliding yonder.

Oh peaceful woods of Philiphaugh!
Where tiny rabbits frisk and gambol
Along the path in baby play—
The mossy path where blooms of May
And beechen boughs o'erhang the way
As slowly, idly, on I ramble.

Oh happy woods of Philiphaugh!
Where sounds the sweet wood-pigeon's cooing,
And pheasant's call, and blackbird's trill;
Where finches warble clear and shrill,
And thrushes pipe with mellow thrill:
All songs of hope, and love, and wooing.

Oh fragrant woods of Philiphaugh!
There hawthorn buds sweet scents are blending
With violets faint, and primrose pale;
While piney odours on the gale
Across my senses softly sail;
Incense from summer winds descending.

Oh dusky woods of Philiphaugh!
Famed in old times of war and glory,
Where Outlaw Murray held his sway;
Where fought Montrose his luckless fray—
While Carterhaugh across the way
Of playful elves sings gentler story.

Oh mystic woods of Philiphaugh!
You beckon me with magic finger;
For cool and calm as falls the dew
From yon far sky of tender blue,
Your spell upon me falls anew,
As daily 'neath your shades I linger.

O blessed woods of Philiphaugh!
In days to come my inward vision
Will bring me, down your paths to stray,
Though earthly feet be far away—
And mem'ries bright will ever stay,
Filling my soul with dreams Elysian.

J. E. ANDERSON.

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NOVELISTS' PICTURES.

THE spread of education and the growth of Free Libraries have undoubtedly stimulated the appetite for fiction, and added largely to the great army of novel-readers. The novelist may regard the fact with unconcealed exultation; the man of serious mind, who likes his literature solid, and is not troubled with an excess of imagination, may deplore and condemn this development of the love for what he contemptuously styles 'light reading.' Between these possible extremes is a mass of fluctuating opinion. Many public speakers and writers, when touching on this topic, appear to feel themselves bound to regret, in a more or less half-hearted way, the over-proportionate attention shown to fiction, as evidenced by library statistics and publishers' returns; while at the same time they are obliged to confess that, after all, it is only a perfectly natural phenomenon. Novel-readers, who are of all ages and of all ranks, do not trouble themselves much about the matter. Incident, character, ghastliness, crime, philosophy, theological discussion, humour—all, as exhibited in fiction, attract special classes of readers. A literature that can suit so many diverse tastes, and which is read for such an infinite variety of reasons, needs no formal vindication.

There is one feature in modern fiction of the better class which is especially attractive to dwellers in cities, and to all whose lives consist largely in a daily routine of bread-winning, but not specially interesting or intellectually stimulating labour. These readers find particular enjoyment in what we may call the novelists' pictures. Landscape, seascape, still-life, rural life, are all to be found, with many other kinds of art, often in great perfection, in the pages of popular novels. These pictures can be enjoyed without reference to the stories in which they appear; and one striking scene of natural beauty may remain photographed upon the mind when plot and dialogue, incident and character,

have all vanished into the limbo of forgetfulness.

Scott, encyclopædic novelist as he is—touching all themes, and adorning all that he touches—has not many set scenes of sea- or land-scape, but his interiors are inimitable. The description of the Antiquary's study, with its multifarious contents and wealth of learned litter, is a masterpiece in the Dutch or Flemish style. Other striking pictures of the same school are the drinking-bout in Luckie Macleary's change-house, which so narrowly escaped a tragic ending; the Alsatian tavern in the *Fortunes of Nigel* where Duke Hildebrod admits the fugitive Scotch lord to all the privileges of the Whitefriars; and more than one scene in *Rob Roy*.

Dickens has not much to show in the way of landscape; but the harsh ugliness and mist-laden desolation of the river-side marsh districts haunt the memory of the reader of *Great Expectations*. A few bits might be recalled; but, as a rule, the picturesque in landscape is not much touched by the author of *Pickwick*. The same may be said, though not so strongly, of Thackeray. It would be difficult to point out any complete or striking picture either of land or sea scenery in any one of his novels. Character and humour are all in all.

Hawthorne has several pictures of singular interest and force. Most striking of all, perhaps, is that scene in the *Scarlet Letter* where Arthur Dimmesdale, conscience-driven, ascends at dead of night the platform of shame, where he is joined by Hester and the child. All three suddenly stand revealed as the glare of the lightning-flash for a moment lights up the sleeping town, and shows the strange scene of midnight penance to the eye of the single witness, the mocking Roger Chillingworth. Many of Hawthorne's short sketches are simply pictures drawn by a master-hand, which, being drawn, are left to tell their own tale and point their own moral. Some are wonderfully vivid. There are few more impressive things in literature than *Young Goodman Brown*, wherein the night-walk through the

forest and the scene of hellish revelry at the great gathering of the witches are depicted with extraordinary power.

Among more recent novels, Mr William Black's are pre-eminently rich in pictorial wealth. With such a book, for example, as *White Wings* in his hands, the city-bound reader can behold a succession of invigorating sea-scenes. A few strokes of the novelist's pen and he is in the midst of a broad sweep of sunlit sea; above him strains the bellying canvas, and beyond the few feet of shining deck heave the deep green surges. He feels the spray upon his face, and the salt sea-breeze upon his cheek. What more delightful picture than this can be revealed to the mind's eye of a reader by the fireside, on a December or January evening, when the actual world outside offers nought but mud and mire, damp, darkness, and cold? Scenes of this kind abound in Mr Black's books; but landscapes also are not wanting, as no reader of the *Strange Adventures of a Phaeton* will need to be told. There is a lovely morning picture of woodland scenery in *Green Pastures and Piccadilly*. The early, golden light strikes through the long lines of the trees in a Surrey wood, and a lady, who has risen early to enjoy the sylvan scene, stands motionless to watch the gambols of the rabbits that flash in and out of their holes, and are the only disturbers of the peace that lies brooding among the sun-touched trunks, and on the glorified bracken and underwood.

Sea-pictures of great force and beauty and of an infinite variety are to be found in the books of Mr Clark Russell, a writer who adds to an intimate knowledge of every aspect of the ocean, an unequalled power of vividly presenting to the reader its every phase, its beauty, its music, and its grandeur.

Beautiful and finished pictures of various kinds are also to be found in the works of many other living novelists. Ouida occasionally succeeds in a very marked degree, but too often her pictures are painty and laboured, and sometimes gaudy. There are lovely views of New Forest scenery in Miss Braddon's *Vixen*; and her most finished and artistic novel, *Joshua Haggard's Daughter*, contains more than one picture of Cornish furze-grown common and breezy hill-side that live in the memory. In George Meredith's *Richard Feverel* there is a beautiful river-side scene, wherein young Richard first experiences the delirium of youthful love, which in any collection of novelists' landscapes would assuredly take high rank. Some of Mr Walter Besant's stories of the last century contain elaborate and very carefully finished drawings of quaint interiors. The curiously-named story, *The World went very well Then*, begins with a singularly vivid and faithful reproduction of an ancient apothecary's shop and its adjoining living-room.

George Eliot's first great novel opens with a perfect picture. No reader of *Adam Bede* can

ever forget that country carpenter's shop, sweet with the fragrance of newly-cut wood, where the slant beams of the evening sun light upon the stalwart figure of Adam singing as he works. Admirers of Mrs Poyser do not need to be reminded of the many delightful pictures of grange and farmstead, and of the rich, cultivated landscape of Central England, that adorn the pages of *Adam Bede* and other novels by the same hand. In her later works, where the style becomes more artificial, and where the influence of the sweet Warwickshire meadows and woodlands has only too evidently yielded to that of modern philosophy and metaphysics, George Eliot's brush loses much of its picturesque power. Occasionally there is a touch of the earlier manner. In *Theophrastus Such* there is a passage in the essay on 'Looking Backward' which is strongly reminiscent of Mrs Poyser's country: 'And then the tiled roof of cottage and homestead, of the long cow-shed where generations of the milky mothers have stood patiently, of the broad-shouldered barns where the old-fashioned flail once made resonant music, while the watchdog barked at the timidly venturesome fowls making pecking raids on the outlying grain—the roofs that have looked out from among the elms and walnut trees, or beside the yearly group of hay and corn stacks, or below the square stone steeple, gathering their gray or ochre tinted lichens and their olive-green mosses under all ministries.'

Like all great writers, George Eliot recognises the village inn as the glass wherein country humour and manners mirror themselves. The immortal scene at the 'Rainbow' in *Silas Marner* is perfect in drawing as in humour. Another inn-gathering of a different kind is that at the 'Sugar Loaf' in *Felix Holt*, where Boniface proclaims his political creed in a delightfully simple and yet comprehensive fashion: 'I'll plump or I'll split for them as treat me the handsomest and are the most of what I call gentlemen; that's my idee. And in the way of hacting for any man, them are fools that don't employ me.'

Scenes of rustic life and manners of another kind are to be found in the Dorsetshire tales of Thomas Hardy. His books abound in cottage and tavern interiors, whose characteristics are graphically delineated in a few lines, while life is given to the picture by the Shakespearean-like humour of the clowns, with whose ways and modes of thought the Wessex novelist is so intimately acquainted. Mr Hardy is also a master of landscape. Casterbridge, or Dorchester, with its approaches of pillared shade, is painted with a loving hand in more than one of his novels; and the Wessex downs and fertile vales, dotted with many a quaint old crumbling church tower, are drawn with a vividness and a feeling for natural beauty that afford a constant pleasure to the reader. A little farther west, and we are on the ground which Mr Blackmore has made peculiarly his own. *Lorna Doone* has revealed the

beauties of Exmoor to many a wondering reader ; and the greater Devonian tableland, Dartmoor, is a topic of which Mr Blackmore does not easily weary. There are many pictures of it, both in its sunny aspect, when from an unclouded sky the sun beats fiercely on miles of heather and bog and granite rock ; and in its hours of storm and tempest and driving mist, when danger besets the feet of the unwary wayfarer at every step. Its every aspect may be found depicted in a masterly manner in *Christowell*, *Cripps the Carrier*, and other of Mr Blackmore's books.

It is hardly necessary to mention in this connection the works of Richard Jefferies, for, as a novelist, this wonderful observer of Nature was somewhat of a failure. But poorly as *Revis* and its brethren may rank as works of fiction, they contain many exquisite word-pictures worthy to be placed beside those which fill the pages of his earlier and greater books. Jefferies has sometimes been styled a cataloguer rather than a painter of Nature ; but the criticism is not just. His effects are gained by the perfect rendering of a multiplicity of details, but the arrangement of the material is no mere dry, mechanical catalogue. Every stroke, every detail tells, until the carefully and delicately elaborated picture is complete.

Another great master of the picturesque is Robert Louis Stevenson. There are seascapes in *Treasure Island*, and winter pictures of American woods, deep in snow and haunted by the stealthily gliding forms of silent Indians, in that wonderful romance *The Master of Ballantrae*, that are graven deep on the mental retina of all readers who are gifted with the smallest spice of imagination. The latest of his books, *The Wrecker*, has some very vivid pictures of tropical storms in the South Seas, when 'overhead, the wild huntsman of the storm passed continuously in one blare of mingled noises ; screaming wind, straining timber, lashing rope's end, pounding block, and bursting sea contributed.' But it is, perhaps, in *Kidnapped* that Mr Stevenson's descriptive powers are seen at their best. The 'Flight in the Heather' of Alan Breck and poor David Balfour of Shaws is a continuous panorama of Highland scenery. Here is a western loch : 'It was near noon before we set out ; a dark day, with clouds, and the sun shining upon little patches. The sea was here very deep and still, and had scarce a wave upon it, so that I must put the water to my lips before I could believe it to be truly salt. The mountains on either side were high, rough, and barren, very black and gloomy in the shadow of the clouds, but all silver-laced with little watercourses where the sun shone upon them.' Without any attempt at what is ordinarily called word-painting, with no straining after effect by the use of extravagant and far-fetched descriptions and similes, by the simple but masterly use of a few lines in black and white, a perfect picture is produced.

In the same natural but graphic way the loneliness of a Highland glen is placed before us : 'The dawn had come quite clear ; we could see the stony sides of the valley, and its bottom, which was bestrewn with rocks, and the river, which

went from one side to another, and made white falls ; but nowhere the smoke of a house, nor any living creature but some eagles screaming round a cliff.' The scene changes to 'a cleft in the head of a great mountain, with a water running through the midst, and upon the one hand a shallow cave in a rock. Birches grew there in a thin, pretty wood, which a little farther on was changed into a wood of pines. The burn was full of trout ; the wood of cushat-doves ; on the open side of the mountain beyond, whaups would be always whistling, and cuckoos were plentiful.' Loch and glen and mountain side need only the desolate moorland to complete the picture of the Highlands : 'The mist rose and died away, and showed us that country lying as waste as the sea ; only the moorfowl and the peewees crying upon it, and far over to the east, a herd of deer, moving like dots. Much of it was red with heather ; much of the rest broken up with bogs and hags and peaty pools ; some had been burnt black in a heath-fire ; and in another place there was quite a forest of dead firs, standing like skeletons.'

It is not every writer who can paint a picture in plain prose, who can set forth in a few lines a scene, distinct as life and instinct with life, before his readers' eyes. The rendering of colour is a further difficulty. Poetry lends itself more easily to the art. Shelley, when Ione describes the shell that Proteus presented to Asia, gives a perfect picture in three lines :

See the pale azure fading into silver,
Lining it with a soft yet glowing light ;
Looks it not like lulled music sleeping there ?

Shelley's delicately beautiful drawing and Keats's gorgeous colouring are beyond the reach of the humbler artist in prose. The novelist's pictures, life-like though they may be, must always partake to some degree of a Quaker-like simplicity in the matter of colour. In compensation for this defect, the novelist can give us greater firmness of outline and a more realistic rendering of details. And these two qualities go far to make the perfect prose picture that delights the eye of the reader, and remains engraved upon the tablets of the brain, a thing of beauty which is a joy for ever.

THE IRONY OF FATE.

CHAPTER VIII.—ESCAPED.

Two days had passed, but nothing fresh occurred to excite further alarm or suspicion in the mind of Arabella Alsworth. Lord Cransford still remained a guest at the Hall, and was unusually kind and amiable in his manner to her. Major Bowyer, on the contrary, preserved an appearance of indifference, almost of contempt, which ill concealed the rage that filled his mind and heart.

On the third day, shortly after breakfast, Thomas the footman knocked at the door of Arabella's sitting-room and asked if he could speak to her, and being told to 'come in,' he entered cautiously and closed the door.

'What is it, Thomas?' she asked.

'Are you quite alone, miss?'

'Yes, quite alone.'

'Excuse me, miss, but did you get a letter this morning?'

'No. Why do you ask?'

'You won't let master know that I told you—will you, miss?'

'No; you may depend on my secrecy.'

'There was one for you, miss; I saw it on the Major's desk. I thought you wouldn't get it, from what I overheard. It's a plot, miss, against you: you are to be carried off and compromised—that's what they said.'

'Who said so?'

'Lord Cransford and master. They talked about post-horses and chloroform.'

'How came you to hear all this?' asked Arabella.

The man hung his head and grew quite red in the face. 'I heard your name, miss, and I couldn't help it—I listened.'

'Very wrong, I know, Thomas; but very fortunate for me.—Thank you very much. This information is most valuable. It is very kind of you, and I shall not forget it.'

'Just one word more, miss. If you've any secrets, don't trust 'em to Mrs Manser; she's in the plot.'

When the man was gone, Arabella sat down to think. It was, then, as she had suspected—her letters had been intercepted. Fortunately for her, her suspicion had been so far aroused that she had herself posted the last letter she had written to Frank. This annoyed and vexed her beyond measure, for she had very little doubt not only that her letters had been intercepted but that they also had been read. That was, however, of small moment. The idea of being compelled to marry Lord Cransford was most repugnant to her, and it was now evident that, by fair means or foul, her uncle intended she should be Lord Cransford's bride; and, if no other means would serve their purpose, her reputation was to be tarnished. She could hardly realise that men could be such monsters; but at anyrate she must meet plot by plot. She was not safe under her uncle's roof. If she staid any longer at Clumber Park, she felt sure her doom was fixed. She must either flee or tamely submit. She resolved on the former, whatever might be the consequence, and now thought of nothing but how this could be accomplished.

She was not long in deciding on the course she would take; she had plenty of money, for the greater portion of her quarter's allowance was still in hand; and she had a goodly number of jewels, many of which were valuable. When all in the house were asleep, she would steal down-stairs and make her escape. She would make her way to London, take some cheap lodgings in one of the outskirts, and wait till she was of age. If her funds did not last, she would apply to Mr Ainsley; she felt sure he would assist her. Indeed, if she did not change her mind, she had half decided she would go to him at once and seek his advice. At anyrate, rather than return

to her guardian's protection, she would work for her living—do anything, rather than be tied to such a man as Lord Cransford.

So the day passed; and a little after midnight Arabella, dressed very plainly, opened her chamber door, and listened. All was silent. She took up her bag and umbrella and advanced to the top of the stairs, and again listened. All silent. She passed softly down the carpeted stairs, and, approaching the door, was endeavouring to lift the great bar which secured the entrance, when she was startled by the sound of voices in angry altercation, and she paused, letting the bar drop softly back into its place. The next instant the study door was flung violently open, and Lord Cransford came out, cursing loudly, and vowing that Major Bowyer was a cheat. For a moment Arabella was so paralysed with fright that she could not move. The light from the study fell full upon her, and she expected every moment to be discovered and dragged into the study and an explanation demanded.

It soon became evident that the two men were in an advanced state of inebriation; and the language used by Lord Cransford was of such a character that her soul revolted at it; but what roused her indignation most was to think that her uncle wanted to marry her to such a man. The thought made her shiver.

After a good deal of remonstrance and persuasion Lord Cransford was induced to return to the study; the door was closed, and all was once more quiet.

'What should she do now?' was the question Arabella asked herself. 'Should she unbar the door and make a dash for liberty? Or should she return to her room and wait a more favourable opportunity?'

She chose the former, and again essayed to lift the weighty bar—this time successfully. The key was turned; the latch was lifted; the door swung open; there was a strong rush of air and then the report of a door closing. Arabella was startled; but she had sufficient presence of mind to shut the Hall door quickly, yet quietly, and hurry off down the avenue leading to the lodge. She hastened on till she reached the gates, and, to her great disappointment found them locked. This, to a girl of Arabella's temperament, was not an insuperable obstacle. She was strong and agile; and finding a place in the wall where she could reach the top, she drew herself up, dropping softly on the other side. She paused for an instant to listen: not a sound could be heard but the roaring of the wind. Thus far all had gone well; and she started to walk along a country lane leading to a distant village.

Major Bowyer was never an early riser; but on the morning following Arabella's flight, he was unusually late, both he and Lord Cransford having indulged more freely than usual on the previous night. The first thing he did on entering the breakfast-room was to inquire for Arabella, and he was told that she had not yet left her room.

'Go and call her; tell her I'm waiting for my breakfast,' he said testily.

Thomas left the room, returning in a few minutes with the intelligence that Miss Alsworth was not in her room; and her maid said that the

bed had not been slept in. Search was at once made high and low, but no Arabella could be found.

Major Bowyer's stern and dark though still handsome countenance was more dark and lowering than usual when he realised the fact that his wicked plot had been defeated and that his victim had escaped. He was still more annoyed when Lord Cransford, on hearing of her flight, announced his intention of throwing up the game and proceeding to London by the next train.

Major Bowyer was, as may be imagined, dreadfully irate at Lord Cransford's desertion; and Thomas and the grooms who were sent to scour the country in search of the fugitive had rather a bad time of it; and in the end, when no tidings could be obtained of Arabella, Major Bowyer retreated to his study, there to drown his anxiety and vexation in his accustomed potations.

Arabella, previous to starting, had carefully arranged her plan. She had decided that, instead of taking the train for London from the nearest station, she would walk to a small town some three miles distant, and take the down-train for Exeter. On her arrival she at once proceeded to the Queen Street Station, with a view to take the up-train by the South-western to Waterloo. Here, finding that she had over two hours to wait, she proceeded to a waiting-room, where she had not been long seated, when an old lady and her maid entered and sat down not far distant. The lady seemed of rather a garrulous nature, and after dilating on the stupidity of railway directors in not having trains ready for people, and telling Arabella where she was going to, she said: 'You seem to have no one with you, my child; you are very young to travel alone.'

'Yes, I am quite alone,' replied Arabella.

'And where is your destination?'

'London.'

'Have you friends there?'

'No.'

'I'm not inquisitive,' said the old lady after a pause; 'but I should very much like to know what is the business which is taking you to London?'

'No business at all. I've run away from my guardian.'

'Run away! What for?'

'Because he wanted to marry me to a bad man, a man I hated.'

'And you are going to London alone, and have no friends there! Why, child, you must be mad!'

'Oh! I've got plenty of friends, but not in London;' and then the poor girl, who was moved by the tender tones of the stranger, told her the whole story. When Arabella mentioned the name of Lord Cransford, the old lady started.

'Lord Cransford!' she exclaimed. 'My dear child, what an escape you've had! He's the most disreputable young man I know. I don't wonder at you running away; but to go to London without money or friends!'

'Oh! I've plenty of money,' retorted Arabella; 'so, if you will help me to find respectable lodgings when I get there, you will be doing me a great service.'

'Lodgings, child! Let you go into lodgings all by yourself! No, no; I'm going to take you home with me.'

'Oh yes, gladly, if you will let me pay for my board and apartments.'

'I don't let apartments, and I don't take boarders,' replied the old lady, 'but I wish to have a companion for a time, and I have taken a fancy to you, if you will come.'

'I am not sure,' replied Arabella, 'that I would be right in engaging myself permanently, more especially that I have money to pay for what I want.'

'Don't you see,' answered the lady, 'that a girl, a beautiful and attractive girl like you, living alone in lodgings, would be in great danger? It's not to be thought of. You do not know me, and I admire your independence. Indeed, if you will not accept of my invitation, I do not know what can be done; however, we will talk more about it in the train, as I see Johnson has taken our tickets. You had better get yours. Have you any luggage?'

'No, not any,' replied Arabella, with some hesitation. She was looking with something like dismay at the grand gentleman in livery who addressed the little old lady as 'Your Grace!' She felt hot and red, and ready to sink into the earth. This lady to whom she had offered payment for her board and lodgings was a Duchess! It was a dreadful situation; but at the moment there was nothing to be done but to get her ticket, which she did at once.

When they were seated and the train had started, the old lady turned to Arabella and said laughingly: 'Now, child, will you refuse to accept my offer, if I refuse to take payment for your board and lodging?'

'No, no,' replied Arabella, blushing hotly.

'Pray, pardon me; it was done in pure ignorance.'

'I know it was, child; and I'll forgive you if you will let me shelter you for a time at least. I really think it was a special providence that arranged we should be thus thrown together. There is no knowing what might have happened if I had not made a mistake in the train. You are young and inexperienced. You say you have money; you might have been robbed.'

In pleasant chat, the time passed quickly, Arabella every minute growing more in love with this delightful old lady, who was doing all she could to make the poor girl by her side feel at her ease; and the train steamed into Waterloo Station almost before she knew where she was.

A carriage with more tall gentlemen in livery awaited them, and they were at once driven to a mansion in Berkeley Square.

The Duke met his wife in the hall and greeted her tenderly.

'Now, John, dear, I want to introduce this young lady to your notice; but we'll go up into the drawing-room, because I'm going to give you a surprise.'

When they were alone, she commenced: 'This is Miss Arabella Alsworth, who has run away from her guardian because he wanted her to marry our scapegrace of a nephew; and this, my dear,—turning to Arabella—is my husband, the Duke of Falmouth!'

Arabella was struck dumb with astonishment. That she should in this way have stumbled upon

near relatives of the man she was fleeing from seemed impossible.

'So you preferred to run away rather than marry a handsome man, and become a peeress, and the future Duchess of Falmouth!' smiled the Duke.

'Yes; good looks without good principles don't go far with me,' said Arabella; 'and as for titles, if you will pardon me for saying so, I have never set much store by them.'

'Well, my dear girl,' said the Duke pleasantly, 'I like your principles and I admire your frankness.'

'So do I,' interjected the Duchess. 'What do you think she told me, John? That she would not accept of my hospitality unless I let her pay for her board and lodging.'

'Capital!' laughed the Duke. 'What did she propose as a remuneration?'

'Oh, I don't know—I did not ask her. I offered to take her as a companion; but I am not sure that she appreciated even that,' said the old lady, laughing.

Arabella spoke, half pleadingly. 'You said you had forgiven me.'

'So I have; but this is too good a joke to be kept a secret, and you see how my husband enjoys it.'

'That is so,' rejoined his Grace. 'But now for a moment let us be serious. I knew, or fancied I knew, that some day I should have to be introduced to a young lady rejoicing in the name of Arabella Alsworth, and I was quite prepared to find her a silly, empty-headed girl, who wanted to become the wife of a lord, and did not object to pay a good price for the honour. Well, I have had the pleasure of being introduced to her, and I find her a young lady of strong will and determined purpose, who does not care a fig for titles.'

'Thank you,' said Arabella, rising and making him a profound curtsy. 'But,' she continued, 'there is one thing to be said in extenuation of my bad taste in refusing to become Lady Cransford. Before I had the honour of being introduced to your nephew I was engaged to another man.'

'Ho, ho! this is interesting,' said the Duke. 'May I be allowed to know the name of this favoured individual?'

'Yes, certainly. It is Wallis, and he is a Commander in the royal navy.'

'This is really a most remarkable coincidence!' exclaimed his Grace. 'Commander Wallis is also my nephew.'

'Of course he is,' laughed Arabella. 'I knew that long ago; he told me so when he warned me against Lord Cransford.'

'Well, my dear child,' said the Duke after a pause, 'I congratulate you. Frank Wallis is an honest man and a gentleman, and I respect him. He and his mother have only two faults—they are very proud and very poor.'

'Oh, you must not say anything against Frank!' flashed Arabella, 'or I shall pick up my belongings and make tracks for Camden Town or some other suburban retreat.'

'Make tracks!' expostulated the Duchess; 'who taught you to use such an expression as that?'

'I don't know, but I think it was Lord Cransford.'

There was silence for a few minutes, and then the Duchess said: 'Come with me, child, and we will make ourselves presentable; the dinner bell will ring directly.'

THE SENSE OF HEARING IN ANIMALS.

It is not necessary to explain here the complicated structure of the human ear, nor the marvellous way in which rapid movements or vibrations of the air, after reaching our outer ear, are thence conveyed to the brain, and there perceived as noise, or, if sufficiently regular and rapid, as musical sounds. We do not find exactly the same structure in other creatures, nor is the organ of hearing always in the same place or of the same shape. What is usually called the ear—that is, the external ear—is of course but a small part, and not a really essential one, of the organ of hearing. Some creatures have no external ears; while in others, such as hares, and also in nocturnal creatures, the external ears are very large, and serve as ear-trumpets or resonators. Those living underground, on the other hand, have none, neither have reptiles; yet we know the latter can hear and be influenced by sounds; indeed, snake-charmers all use music as one means of taming snakes. Beasts of prey, lions, tigers, &c., have their external ears standing forward to catch sounds in front. The creatures they hunt have theirs turned back, so that they may hear when their enemy behind is pursuing them. The skate tribe, in contrast to this, have their external ear orifices on the top of the head. The external ears of bats are greatly developed; in many, they are longer than the head; and in some kinds they are nearly as long as the body and head together! They are also very mobile; and the bat can, at pleasure, move each ear independently of the other, the better to catch sounds. The fennec, a species of fox, has, however, the largest ears in proportion to its size of any animal.

The auditory organs of different insects are not only in different parts of the body, but in some are in more than one part; they also differ in construction, some being far simpler than others. There is evidently an organ of hearing in the antennæ of some insects, though it may not be confined to this part of the body; in locusts, for example, the organ is in the abdomen; while grasshoppers and crickets have ears in their anterior legs. These latter are two oval, glassy structures, whose purpose was for long a puzzle to observers; they are now, however, known to consist of a group of cells varying in size, each cell being in connection with a nerve-fibril and containing an auditory rod.

The wood-cricket makes a loud noise by rubbing the edges of its wing-cases together. This noise is so loud that in some countries it is kept in captivity as we should keep a bird, and its note can be heard from one end of a village to another. These are call-notes or love-songs, and are made by the males only. The common field-cricket in the same way sits at the entrance of its burrow stridulating or making this peculiar note till a female approaches; then a softer note succeeds, and he caresses the female with his antennæ. The house-cricket acts in a similar way, as do many other insects. The musical instruments

thus used are different, but the object of this insect music is the same. It is therefore certain that other insects of the same family can both hear and take pleasure in the sounds thus made by the males, or they would not be attracted by them.

One other example of the fact that insects purposely make sounds in order to be heard by their mates may be given. The female of a pair of beetles was put inside a box, where the male speedily found her by the noise she made, locating the sound by his antennæ. He took no notice of her until this stridulating noise began; so it was not by smell he discovered her; and further, he failed to find her when his antennæ were removed. Beetles and moths may also be frequently seen moving their antennæ towards the place from which a sound proceeds.

In a recent number of *Nature* (October 6, 1892) Dr Alcock, of the Indian Marine Survey, describes a red crab which has a stridulating apparatus similar to that of some insects. The object of the noise in this case appears to be to prevent intruders from entering an already occupied burrow; for if one approaches, the crab remonstrates, at first gently, but more and more loudly and shrilly if the intruder does not at once retreat.

The mosquito has feathered antennæ, and it has actually been proved that the different minute hairs of which these feathers are really composed respond to different notes; thus, some hairs respond strongly to the note C (five hundred and twelve vibrations per second), which is the note made by the female; other hairs respond to other notes—that is to say, the various hairs begin to vibrate when their own special notes, and those only, are sounded. It is as yet somewhat uncertain whether ants, bees, and wasps can hear; or, at all events, if they can, their range of hearing must be very different from ours, for they take no notice of sounds whether made by the voice, violin, or tuning-fork, whatever may be their pitch. However this may be, whether they can hear or not, ants appear to have auditory organs in their antennæ; they are of a peculiar form, consisting of a long tube, sac, and then a nerve: these may serve as microscopic stethoscopes, as it were. A little creature something like an ant can certainly make a chirping noise by rubbing a ribbed surface on its body; ants have a similar rasp or nutmeg-like surface, though they make no sound that we can hear, except, some say, a kind of whine when irritated may, however, be audible to themselves.

The sounds made by many insects change according to their feelings; one wasp, a very clever builder, brings the little pellets of earth for its pouch-like nest with a song of triumph, a busy hum succeeding, as it begins work. Certain sounds are also said to accompany certain acts: thus a sting is preceded by a sharp sound. Shakespeare appears to have known this, for, in *Julius Cæsar*, Cassius says:

But for your words, they rob the Hybla bees,
And leave them honeyless.

Antony. Not stingless too.

Brutus. O yes, and soundless too;
For you have stolen their buzzing, Antony,
And, very wisely, threat before you sting.

An angry bee's hum is different from the hum of the merely busy bee. Bees' wings vibrate some four hundred and forty times per second to make their ordinary sound, thus producing the note A, but a tired bee makes the note E, produced by three hundred and thirty vibrations a second. A house-fly makes almost exactly the same note, its little wings actually vibrating three hundred and thirty-five times per second to produce its familiar and irritating buzz. That this almost incredible speed is really attained, and is not mere guesswork, is known in two ways. First, the exact number of vibrations necessary to produce this sound is well known; and still further to prove the fact, a fly has been so fixed that each movement of its wings made a mark upon a rotating cylinder; the marks were then counted; and the calculation as to the number of movements of the little fly's wings, which had already been made from the sound produced, was proved correct.

Spiders, too, can certainly hear. Many drop out of their webs on to the branches below—probably from the habit of thus protecting themselves against wasps—on hearing a shout or sound made by a tuning-fork; others try to seize it; while a high-pitched shout caused several of another kind (the diademas) to raise their legs and strike at the imaginary insect. Spiders are equally attracted by notes of a low pitch, but a very loud sound causes them to retreat; while a heated tuning-fork fills them with terror.

Scorpions have a sensitive ear for most sounds, including those made by a violin. They are even affected by sounds which are quite inaudible to the human ear (does it sound paradoxical to speak of an inaudible sound?); while a tuning-fork so angers a scorpion that it will attempt to sting the fork, if near enough. Blowing air on them immediately stops their flight. Two appendages—or antennæ—under the thorax of scorpions probably represent their organs of hearing.

Reptiles, amphibia, fishes, and even creatures as low down in the scale of life as the jelly-fish, all have auditory organs; but whether this always and necessarily implies the power of hearing, is still somewhat doubtful.

Some molluscs, for example, the fresh-water mussel, can boast of auditory organs—of very simple structure, it is true—in their feet; so can the cyclas, a bivalve. In fact, do not we ourselves sometimes use other organs besides the ear for hearing? After Beethoven, for example, became deaf, he used to hear by pressing a stick against the piano, while the other end touched his teeth.

Birds undoubtedly have a very keen sense of hearing; thrushes may often be seen intently listening for worms underground, while many can also accurately imitate a great variety of sounds. Parent birds may sometimes be noticed teaching their young ones to sing; some young wrens were lately seen sitting in front of their mother, who was singing; one young bird tried to imitate her, but after a few notes, failed. The mother then began again, when the young bird made a second and a third attempt—at each effort, singing a few more notes correctly, until the whole song was learned. Each of the

young birds was taught in the same way until all could sing.

The higher animals, as is well known, are conscious of sounds; indeed, the horse and the deer have a very acute sense of hearing; while many animals, the dog and the cat, for example, can discriminate between different tones in the human voice, and even between different notes in music. A dog distinguishes perfectly well between a scolding and a caressing tone; while one dog was noticed invariably to howl at the note D, whether played or sung; and Gautier writes of a cat that had a similar dislike to the note G, and always tried to silence the note or the person producing the sound. Livingstone describes a monkey concert he once overheard: screams, chattering, the noise of pebbles dropping and of wood purposely struck against hollow trees, all combined to produce—as one can easily believe—a quite unique effect. Then there are the howler monkeys of America, so called from the hideous noises they keep up the whole night long. Travellers say these sounds can be heard at a distance of two miles, and that the imitation of various animals, together with the sounds of roaring, groaning, and moaning, are enough to make one believe that half the beasts of the forest are in deadly combat. These dismal noises are mostly made by the males; the females join in, but with a less harsh cry.

Cows, again, are very partial to music, and have been known to follow a singer repeatedly, as closely as possible. So will wild cattle. In fact, the power of singing has more than once been the means of rescuing people from certain death through a threatened stampede of wild-cattle in the prairies of America.

In the human ear there are fibres differing in length and in tension, each—according to the ingenious theory of Helmholtz, published a few years ago—responsive to a sound of a certain pitch and to that only. From thirty to thirty thousand vibrations per second are the limits of sound usually audible to the human ear, or about seven octaves; and in the ear are some two thousand eight hundred fibres, or about four hundred to each octave of sound. A difference of about one sixty-fourth of a tone is audible to a trained ear; indeed, some musicians can distinguish even smaller differences. A later theory, however, also propounded by Helmholtz, is that segments of the basilar membrane are stretched like a series of strings, with varying degrees of tension, each string responding to a sound of a particular pitch. This latter view is supported by the fact that though birds have not these fibres—or rods of Corti, as they are also called—they can distinguish differences of pitch. But, on the other hand, the result of experiments made on the *Mysis*, or opossum shrimp, points to the truth of the earlier theory. This little crustacean has two ears, or auditory sacs, in its tail, the different hairs on which respond to different notes; thus, on blowing a keyed horn, one hair was found to respond weakly to D, but strongly to D sharp, another to G; and so on.

One other part of the inner ear must be noticed here—namely, the otoliths or ear-stones, found in the semicircular canals, of which the use, to us at all events, is not yet clearly understood, but which are of great importance in the ears

of some creatures. The crustacea, for example, mostly have a very simple hearing organ; it is merely a sac containing fluid—in which are the otoliths or ear-stones—with feathered auditory hairs, and is found at the base of the lesser or inner pair of antennæ—the antennules. This sac is cast with each moult, and with it, of course, the ear-stones; and it has been observed that the crustacea often actually pick up and place in their auditory sacs little grains of sand to serve as otoliths. Perhaps they intensify vibrations. They may easily be observed in the cod, in the shape of a flat white stone in the interior of its head. A theory has quite lately been advanced by Professor Crum-Brown to the effect that these otoliths, which are closely connected with the semicircular canals, are really the organs of a recently-recognised sense—that of rotation; that is, that instead of the otoliths responding to auditory vibrations, they and the fluid in the semicircular canals are aids to recognise changes of motion and its direction. (It would be out of place to refer at length here to the fact that one vertebrate, and only one, has but two, instead of three, semicircular canals. If these canals do serve to indicate direction—the three canals corresponding to space, as we know it, of three dimensions—does the absence of one canal point to a possibility of space being limited to two dimensions in some creatures?) In the blind-fish these canals are found to be unusually large; while the otoliths are sometimes single, sometimes numerous. If single, they are free; otherwise, they are held in position by the gelatinous surroundings.

Animals may hear sounds that are inaudible to us. Certainly the sounds that give the keenest pleasure to many animals—cats, for example—are seldom capable of giving pleasure to us. We know, of course, that sounds may be too low or too high—that is, the vibrations may be too slow or too rapid—to be audible to the human ear; but it does not follow that they are equally inaudible to differently-tuned ears. The limits of audible sound are not invariable even in the human ear: women can usually hear higher sounds than men, and the two ears are not, as a rule, equally keen. A sound may be quite inaudible to one person and plainly heard by another. Professor Lloyd-Morgan mentions as an instance of this a case in which the piping of some frogs in Africa was so loud to him as almost to drown his friend's voice, but of which his friend heard absolutely nothing! The same thing may be observed by any one possessing the little instrument known as Gaiton's whistle. The sound made by this whistle can be made more and more shrill, until at last it ceases to be heard at all by most persons. Some can still hear it; but by raising the sound still higher, even they cease to hear. The sound is still being made—that is, the whistle is causing the air still to vibrate, but so rapidly that our ears no longer recognise it, though the existence of these inaudible vibrations is detected by a 'sensitive flame,' as was first shown by Professor Barrett in 1877.

If we dared, at the close of such a long and, we fear, somewhat dry article, touch upon metaphysical subjects, we should point out what a wonderful thought is thus opened before us—

that the world around us may be filled with all manner of noises and musical sounds, which only our deafness prevents us from hearing, but which at some future day we may be able to recognise. Instead of science and knowledge taking away from the beauty of the world, do they not constantly open our eyes to fresh wonders and possibilities, teaching us that the world is far richer, and vastly more interesting, than we ever imagined it to be in the days of our ignorance?

THE VALLEY OF SHEITAN.

A STORY OF THE BHORE GHÁT INCLINE.

By HEADON HILL.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

A RAGGED blear-eyed vulture sat lazily preening itself on the topmost summit of 'The Duke's Nose,' one of those solitary peaks which dot the slope of the Western Gháts towards the plain of the Konkan below, and which are in themselves miniature mountains rising on the rugged face of the great range. The bird suddenly paused in its toilet and sniffed the air. There was a moment's deliberation; and then, as if with an effort, it launched itself into the throbbing noontide atmosphere, winging its flight in ever-widening circles, which brought it at last within view of its quest. But instead of descending to a ready meal, the vulture was constrained to exercise the virtue of patience on a neighbouring crag. For the cause of attraction rose from no half-eaten relics of a panther's feast, only from the *al fresco* cookery of two young English officers bent on tiffin.

Lionel Heygate and Dick Manners were neither of them particularly imbued with a love of the picturesque, and it was probably by accident, or because of the convenient shade of an 'ashook' tree, that they had selected this spot for a camping-ground in the middle of a day's shooting. The place was a little terrace, twelve feet square, that jutted out from the jungle-covered mountain side. Above and below this natural point of vantage the ground sloped far too abruptly to admit of the operations of the old Mahratta 'shikari,' who was busy heating an 'all-blaze pot' on a fire of twigs.

But though the reason which brought the sportsmen there may have been a matter-of-fact one, the view which they commanded was sufficiently out of the common to hold their attention. Twelve hundred feet below, and, from the steepness of the descent, looking as if a stone could be thrown upon it, commenced the fair stretch of the Konkan plain—the broad belt of fertile land that lies between the foot of the Gháts and the Indian Ocean. Far away in the distance a shimmer of the sea now and again flashed through the sultry haze on the horizon, so fitfully that it might have been taken for the mirage. To the right and left was a wild tangle of mountain scenery. Gorge and ravine, beetling cliff and

giddy precipice, were piled together in bold confusion, all tending upwards to the level summit where lay the vast Deccan tableland. Thickly-matted undergrowth covered everything, softening the rugged grandeur of the ascent with tropical colour. Save for the faint lowing of cattle on the plain below, intense silence reigned.

Suddenly the illusion of perfect isolation was broken by the shriek of a railway whistle and the unmistakable rumble of an advancing train. Manners walked to the edge of the terrace and looked over; then he called to his companion: 'We are just above the reversing station. Come here, Heygate, and see the train come in. It is curious to watch the ways of Clapham Junction in this wilderness.'

Heygate joined his friend. The train was just emerging from a tunnel that seemed to spring from the side of a sheer precipice half a mile away, whence the line was carried on a narrow cornice carved in the shelving rock on to a broad plateau, which jutted out below where the two officers stood. This plateau is the half-way house of the Bhore Ghát Incline, which rises from Karjat, in the valley below, to Lonauli, at the top of the Ghát. The railway runs on to the plateau in the form of a V, the left-hand shank of the letter representing the line which has ascended from the valley, and the right-hand one the line which has to still further ascend by many tortuous spirals and dizzy gradients to the tableland of the Deccan above. The necessity for a reversing station at this point is made plain by the facts that at the apex of the V there is a giddy precipice running down two hundred feet sheer to a jungle-covered ravine, and that the plateau was not broad enough for the daring engineers who planned this mighty work to dream of a curve. Thus both up and down trains run into the reversing station with their engines facing in the same direction, and are stopped about a hundred yards from the brink of the precipice. The engine has then to be shunted round the train, to be attached to what was formerly the rear; and the journey is resumed up the mountain to the right or downwards to the left, as the case may be.

The place is a station only in name. There is no platform, and there are no buildings, beyond a rude hut for the use of the pointsmen who keep watch and guard against the ever present danger of that terrible abyss. The station is not used for passenger or goods traffic. It is simply an engineering contrivance for the convenience of the railway itself, and its main features are the multiplied lines of metals used for shunting and reversing the engines. The contrast between the utter loneliness of the stupendous scenery and the triumph of invention which has invaded it is never more striking than when a train thunders on to the plateau, crowded with noisy passengers—'Sahib-logue' and native.

The train which Heygate and Manners were watching was coming down the incline, and was therefore approaching the reversing station along the right-hand shank of the V. The gradient at

that part of the incline is one foot in forty, and the brakes were hard at work all along the train, while the steepness of the track was further counteracted by showers of silver sand poured upon the metals by automatic sprinklers attached to the axles. At the approach to the plateau, a pointsman stood with his hand on the lever, ready to turn the train on to the proper line for the reversing operation.

'By Jove!' exclaimed Manners, 'I shouldn't care to have that fellow's responsibility. See, Heygate; if he made a mistake in the points, the train would run into that short siding to the right, and thence clean over the cliff. There's nothing to stop it; everything depends on that man's nerve and sobriety.'

'I expect he's got plenty of both, or he wouldn't be chosen for the job,' replied the other. 'That nasty drop there must be the place which the natives call the "Valley of Sheitan," because a train full of coolies went over during the construction of the line. The European railwaymen speak of it as the "Valley of the Shadow of Death."'

'Well, there's going to be no smash this time,' said Manners; 'the pointsman has vindicated himself. A nigger too, isn't he?'

'Half-caste, I should say, by his costume,' said Heygate. 'He is dressed in what he would probably call "Europe" clothes. Besides, the company wouldn't trust a "pukka" native in a place like that. A mild Hindu might be tempted to send the train over the precipice—as an experiment in mechanics.'

The train had come to a halt with much clatter and jangle. From the eyrie perch where the two sportsmen stood it was only possible to see the roofs of the carriages, and the great panting engine, which was being uncoupled preparatory to reversal. An English guard, conspicuous in white linen tunic and sun helmet, descended from his van and walked along the train in the direction of the first-class carriages in the centre. Approaching one of the latter, he opened the door, and, to the surprise of the watchers above, gave his hand to a young lady, who leaped lightly on to the six-foot way. Then the couple walked away together to the edge of the precipice, and from the man's gesticulations it was evident that he was pointing out features in the surrounding scenery.

'That's rather extraordinary, I should imagine,' said Manners, examining the pair through his field-glasses. 'I wasn't aware that the company expected their people to act as guides to tourists. The guard has an excuse, though. The girl is pretty, I think. What do you make of her?'

Heygate took the glasses and brought them to bear on the couple below. The girl was clad in a plain white dress, with a black band encircling her waist; and her broad-brimmed pith hat was bound with ribbon of the same colour. Even at that distance Heygate could make out that her head was crowned with masses of red-gold hair, and that her fair cheeks wore a delicate pink tint, not common among English women who have been over a year in India. She was listening to her companion with an air of interest, and was palpably impressed with the grandeur of the view.

'Yes, she is pretty,' said Heygate, returning

the glasses; 'and not long in the country, to judge by her complexion.'

The guard and the lady strolled back to the train, and passing to the farther side of it, were lost to view. The engine had now taken up its new position, and all was ready for a start. The half-caste pointsman moved over to another set of levers on the down line; a signal arm, a mile away down the mountain side, fell with a jerk; and the train went clattering off the plateau on to the incline, with another eight miles of winding gradients to descend before it touched level ground again.

For a moment Heygate and Manners were so busy watching the sand-brakes as they were brought into play that they had no eyes for the spot the departing train had lately occupied. Heygate's gaze was still turned in the direction of the giddy track when his friend exclaimed: 'Look there, man! What's the meaning of that? The girl has been left behind.'

'And doesn't seem to mind it much, either,' returned Heygate. 'See! she is going to picnic under the shade of that "anjün."'

It was true enough. The trim figure in white had not returned to the railway carriage, but was seated at the side of the line, beneath one of those wonderful shrubs with plum-like leaves and pink and lilac blossoms springing from bough and trunk—a combination which makes you fancy at a distance that you see blue air through the tree, till on coming close the delusion vanishes.

Besides the solitary picnicker and the dusky pointsman a hundred yards away, there was not a sign of life down at the reversing station. The rows of shining metals, glistening white in the rays of the sun, coiled and interlaced in seeming confusion round about the points, and then, diverging, wound away like twin snakes on their several ways, one up and one down the mountain side. But for the girl and the pointsman and the lonely railway track, Heygate and Manners would have looked on primeval wilderness. The picture was so near being one of absolute solitude, that the girl with her paper packet of sandwiches and her homely English dress made a foreground almost startling in its contrast. Somehow, this foreground seemed to convey the idea of helplessness, from the want of proportion between its fragile prettiness and the stern grandeur of its surroundings.

The pointsman came slowly along the line to where the girl sat. As he approached her, he pocketed a pipe which he was smoking and took off his hat, performing both movements with a certain air of ostentation, as though he desired to obtain full credit for his politeness. The girl merely nodded, and went on with her luncheon, listening carelessly while the pointsman stood and talked. It was evident that this was not their first meeting.

Heygate and Manners began to be interested in the scene.

'Extraordinary idyll, this,' said the latter. 'Did you ever see a nigger take his hat off before?'

Heygate had been longer in India than Manners, and put his friend right, remarking: 'He isn't a nigger, old fellow; at least, not a regular nigger. He is a half-caste, and is prob-

ably a good deal prouder of his "Europe blood" than you are. They are a worthless lot of vagabonds—these Eurasians, or Chee-Chees, as the Hindus call them. I wonder that girl allows him to speak to her.'

'She can't very well help herself,' said Manners. 'See! the fellow is getting excited.'

The Eurasian was certainly emphasising his speech, the sound, but not the words, of which had risen so as to reach the unseen watchers. He was gesticulating strangely, and repeatedly struck one hand against the other as he urged some point upon his listener. The girl sat apparently unmoved, except that every now and then she turned her gaze up the line, as if hopeful that some one would come and put an end to what looked like an embarrassing *tête-à-tête*. Suddenly the man paused and stood waiting for an answer to some question he had put, and the reply came promptly in the form of an emphatic shake of the head. What followed was the work of a moment. The pointsman stooped and laid his hand roughly on the girl's wrist; there was a slight scream, a responsive shout from the hill-side, a scramble and a rush, half fall, half somersault, down the jungle-covered slope, and Lionel Heygate, torn and bleeding, pushed his way through the matted creepers on to the plateau and gripped the half-caste by the collar. Manners in little better plight followed.

Heygate slung the pointsman round, and released his hold with a violence which sent the man staggering some yards away.

'I trust you have not been alarmed?' he said to the girl, who had risen from her seat and was eyeing her late aggressor with a look in which there was plenty of contempt, but little of fear.

'I was a little frightened,' she said, acknowledging Heygate's salutation with a grateful smile. 'This place is so lonely. That is the reason why Carnac took advantage. He is too great a coward to do any real harm, I think.'

The pointsman stood glowering at the trio a few paces off, his sallow features three shades paler with suppressed passion. But his manner was outwardly apologetic. 'I meant no wrong,' he began in the servile whine which the unfortunate Eurasians have inherited from the Asiatic side of their ancestry, but which sounds doubly repugnant in the English tongue. 'I only wanted to make Miss Hudson attend to what I was saying; that is why I touched her. I am very sorry.'

'Well, go about your business; and thank your stars I didn't throw you over the cliff,' said Heygate. 'You ought to have known better than to speak to this young lady at all.'

The man slunk quietly back to his levers, and Heygate turned to his new protégée. 'You seem to know the fellow?' he asked, with a curiosity which he tried hard to justify by the circumstances.

'Yes,' she answered. 'I live at Lonauli—the station at the top of the incline—with my father; and Luke Carnac lives there too. He—he worries me a good deal.—You see,' she went on with a slight blush, 'he considers himself a European; and, as my father is in the employ of the railway company also, Luke cannot understand that we don't quite look upon him as one of ourselves. I did not know he was on duty at the points

to-day, or I should not have come here.—Would you mind waiting till the train comes up the Ghât? I am going back to Lonauli by it.'

Of course the two officers assented. A shout to the 'shikari' resulted in the transfer of their temporary camp to the plateau, where, while the contents of the all-blaze pot were being overhauled, Sibyl Hudson was induced to explain her presence at the reversing station. It was very simple. Her father, the guard of the train which had passed, had brought her down to see the wonderful view from the top of the precipice, and had arranged for her to go back by the next train that came up from Bombay. She had only come out from England three months before, and had travelled up to Lonauli at night. Hence the beauties of the reversing station were new to her.

It was not long before the train came clanking up the incline, and pulled up close to where the little party was seated. The guard, who had promised Sibyl's father to give her a lift home, got down and came over to them, looking rather surprised to find his charge in strange company; but he was civil enough when told that the two sportsmen had waited by her request, because she became alarmed at the solitude of the place. The girl seemed proudly reluctant to refer to the impertinence of the half-caste. Even when Heygate, bidding her farewell at the carriage door, said: 'Of course you will get that impudent fellow discharged,' she answered: 'Oh, it is not worth troubling about; Luke will not have an opportunity of being rude again.—But I am very grateful to you for coming to my assistance.'

'May I—that is may we—call and see if you are the worse for your adventure? I mean if we happen to camp near Lonauli?' asked Heygate, loth to let the acquaintance come to an end so abruptly, but not pausing to analyse his motives.

The girl hesitated for a moment, and then looked him frankly in the face. 'I do not know why you should not,' she said; 'you are gentlemen, and—and will be able to understand that it is possible for my father to be a gentleman too, though he is a guard on the railway. He will be glad to see you and thank you himself.'

The train panted slowly over the points, past the scowling half-caste, busy now with his levers. Heygate and Manners stood looking after it as it wound its way along the cornice-like ledge that approached the first tunnel. It was not till the last carriage had disappeared that either of them spoke, and then it was Manners who said: 'No matter what her belongings may be, Miss Sibyl is most assuredly a lady. Father, a service-man come to grief, perhaps.—You seemed rather struck, I thought, Lal?'

Heygate's reply hardly touched the question. He was looking meditatively at the pointsman. 'Come; let's be going,' he said; 'we shall get a shot at a "sambur" perhaps, now that the sun is sinking. If I stay here, I shall punch that nigger's head, and get fined in the district court.'

They shouldered their rifles and stepped out, downwards towards the valley, followed by the 'shikari.' Manners knew his friend, and didn't trouble to point out to him that he was somewhat

inconsistent in his description of the half-caste. Before their trifling adventure, Heygate had pulled him up for calling the man a nigger. Now, Heygate called the man a nigger himself.

BUILDING SUPERSTITIONS.

THE manner of reception by the inhabitants of India of European ideas and customs is full of interest to the student of sociology, and there is often a conspicuous humorous element present. When a pillar-post was first set up in a village in Northern India, the simple people jumped to the astonishing conclusion that it was a new deity, and accordingly decked it with flowers for the purposes of worship. With regard to the recent census, there was great excitement and diversity of opinion. Some of the more careful souls were under the impression that it was a taxing trick. Others—and their name is legion—thought that one object of the census was to procure lists of persons eligible for sacrifice. Not only the census but every public work in the way of bridges or railways excites great consternation. It is believed that every undertaking of this description is started by a propitiatory sacrifice of human beings. As late as the year 1880 the *Times* mentioned that the new harbour-works in Calcutta were regarded with great suspicion by thousands of credulous natives, who firmly believed that persons would be sacrificed to ensure stability to the masonry!

Traces of this curious and gruesome idea are to be found not only in the East but also in Europe, and much light has been thrown on this subject of late by such students of early history as Mr Tylor and Mr G. L. Gomme. It seems to have had its origin in the desire to appease the wrath of the earth-spirit for the intrusion, by digging, into its domain; and blood, especially human blood, was considered the highest offering it was possible to make. In primitive societies it held its place as one of the most cherished institutions, and it is still practised by many of the modern representatives of the first and rudest congregations of men. In Borneo, one is not surprised to find that it is, or was until quite recently, still in operation. At the erection of an important house a deep hole was dug and the first post suspended over it; a slave-girl was then placed in the hole, and at a given signal the post descended, crushing the girl to death. In New Zealand, human beings were first killed and then placed in post-holes; while in the Sandwich Islands it was the custom to bury children. The Fijians, who were in many respects the most advanced and intellectual of all barbarous races, varied the custom in a not unexpected manner, for they killed and ate men when setting up the pillars of a temple; and again held a similar feast when the building was complete. The unfortunate victims were, as a rule, criminals or prisoners taken in battle; but the noble savage was not over-scrupulous in his methods of obtaining the necessary victims, and would quickly make what anthropologists call in the matter of marriage an 'exogamous selection' in default of the usual supply. The Siamese used to adopt the rough and ready way of seizing the first unlucky pedestrian

who passed the newly-completed excavations. The Japanese, on the contrary, if we may credit a certain seventeenth-century account of these interesting people, believed that it was necessary to build on the body of a *willing* victim; and it is said that when a great wall was to be built, some wretched slave, tired of the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, would offer himself as a foundation, and 'lie down to pleasant dreams' in the trench to be crushed by the heavy stones.

In India, as we have seen, the belief still prevails, and the practice, it is thought, must have been very general at one time—perhaps until the British possession. 'The idea is, I believe, current throughout India,' says Captain R. C. Temple. 'It is certainly as strong in Rajputana and the Punjab as in Bengal proper. Every old or even comparatively modern fort or palace in the Punjab has some such tradition; and the people say it was only the advent of the British in the Punjab, some forty years ago, that stopped the practice.'

The ancient Irish seem to have been convinced of the efficacy of this 'strange architectonic principle,' as one writer puts it, as under the walls of the only round towers yet examined human skeletons have been found. Some authorities think an explanation may be found in the fact that the towers were perhaps built on the site of old churchyards; but the general opinion seems to favour the sacrificial theory. Anyhow, the belief in it is not uncommon in Ireland, and many patriotic natives still think that the early English settlers built their castles on the bodies of the slaughtered Irish; and often point out certain castles under the walls of which human bones have been discovered. Even in Scotland the belief still prevails in some parts that the Picts bathed their foundation stones with human blood. In England, bones have been discovered under the walls of several of the oldest churches, placed in such a position that there is but little doubt that the walls were built over them, though it is unlikely that human life was taken especially for that purpose.

During the dawn of Christianity in these Isles, the priests of the new religion, it is known, often had to effect a compromise between their own doctrines and heathen customs, in order to facilitate the introduction of their creed. But although many strange rites and ceremonies were not attacked, it is impossible to believe that human sacrifices were ever regarded with indifference by those noble 'sowers of the seed,' in spite of the following legend. It is said that when St Columba first attempted to build on Iona, the walls, by the power of some evil spirit, fell down as fast as they were erected. The saint received supernatural information that they would never stand unless a human victim was buried alive. According to one account, the lot fell on Oran, the companion of the saint. Others say that Oran voluntarily devoted himself to ensure the safety of the building. At the end of three days, St Columba had the curiosity to take a farewell look at his old comrade, and ordered the earth to be removed. Oran opened his eyes and said: 'There is no wonder in death, and hell is not as it is reported.' The saint was so shocked at this impiety, that he instantly ordered the earth

to be thrown in again, uttering the words: 'Earth! Earth! on the mouth of Oran, that he may blab no more.' This saying, in its Celtic form, passed into a proverb in the Highlands.

With the increasing spread of a higher religion, by slow modifications the human sacrifice was abandoned; and it is curious to read of the ingenious attempts made to circumvent the devil or local spirits by a substitute. In some places an empty coffin was walled up, and in others a lamb or horse would be sacrificed. By the Quop Dyaks, a chicken is thrown in the post-holes; and it is a remarkable coincidence that in France this kind of substituted sacrifice has survived. In a district of Normandy—La Neuville Chant d'Oisel—a cock is killed, and its blood shed upon the threshold of a newly-built house, in the belief that the neglect of the custom would cause the tenant's death within a year. From discoveries made in Italy, we find that the old Romans, with perhaps praiseworthy deceit, artfully substituted statues and busts for burial under foundations, and hundreds of such works of art have been found buried in this manner. In this case, the resources of art and civilisation effectually modified a grim old superstition. In Roumania, the builders, instead of immolating an offending unit of humanity, take the innocent course of laying down in his stead a rod of the same length as the man, which no doubt produces results equally satisfactory. There is a curious and fairly well known fact bearing on this point in connection with the Cistercian Abbey in Scotland which was founded by Devorguila, daughter of Allan, Lord of Galloway, and mother of John Baliol, the vassal-king of Scotland. Its name was originally New Abbey, but it was afterwards known as the *Dulce Cor*, or 'Sweetheart Abbey,' from the circumstance that on the death of John Baliol, the husband of Devorguila, his heart was embalmed, enclosed in a box of ivory bound with silver, and built into the walls of the church.

As many persons besides folklorists are doubtless aware, there exists in many country districts a popular notion that the first child baptised in a new font is sure to die. Mr Baring-Gould thinks this idea is 'a reminiscence of the sacrifice which was used for the consecration of every dwelling and temple in heathen times, and of the pig or sheep killed and laid at the foundation of churches.'

A corresponding belief is often discovered amongst certain peoples, the knowledge of which is apt to make the 'general reader' assent to the sweeping proposition of the poet, that 'only man is vile.' The foundation sacrifice, as we have seen, originated in the desire to mitigate the wrath of an earth-spirit for encroaching on his possessions; and naturally a water-spirit was regarded by our simple ancestors, with their imperfect knowledge of physical phenomena, as also expecting an occasional tribute. Hence the reluctance, or, rather, superstitious objection to save the life of a drowning man. The Hindu will not rescue a fellow-being, should he fall into the sacred Ganges, for it is thought that the spirit would be defrauded of his just dues. Mr Tylor quotes an account from Bohemia as late as the year 1860 to the effect that certain fishermen would not venture to snatch a drowning man from the water, as they 'feared that

the "water-man" (that is, water-demon) would take away their luck in fishing, and drown them at the first opportunity.' Every reader of this will of course remember the scene in Sir Walter Scott's novel of *The Pirate*, where the pedlar refuses to help Mordaunt to save the shipwrecked sailor. 'Are you mad,' said he, 'to risk the saving of a drowning man? Wot ye not, if you bring him to life again, he will be sure to do you some capital injury?' Scott thought it remarkable that 'so inhuman a maxim should have ingrafted itself upon the minds of a people otherwise kind, moral, and hospitable.' This belief, it is scarcely possible to doubt, was but a survival in a modified form of the above theory; and repulsive as it looks in the light of our present physical and moral theories, it had a certain value in the early days of mankind.

One cannot do better than conclude with the words of Mr Gomme. 'It is not too much to say that the foundation sacrifice—horrible in its most savage form, brutal in its later forms—had very much to do with the preservation of early society. So low down in the scale of man's history there is very little law, very little restraint upon the passions and temper of brute-force. But once placed as a barrier to lawlessness and license the sanctification by blood sacrifice, sometimes, as we know, human sacrifice, and at all events within the home, perhaps within the precincts of the home, what law has not done, the fear of offending local spirits, who have accepted sacrifice, will effectually do.'

'THE SIMPLETON.'

'QUIET to ride and drive.'

Such was 'The Simpleton's' recommendation in the auctioneer's list, and this it was which induced Harry Wentworth, farmer, of Bromford, to attend the auction next day in the adjoining market-town of Essleton. 'I reckon I'm about as good a judge of horse-flesh as any man in these parts,' he said to his wife; 'and if this mare is fit, I'll have her. I want a quiet animal for you and the youngsters to drive; but she'll have to carry me sometimes; and if she can't put on the pace a bit, I shan't buy her.'

The animal's appearance favourably impressed him. Harry Wentworth, though rather too fond of sounding his own praises, was no fool—as are many whose good points would be lost to the world were they themselves dumb—and the auctioneer's laudations fell on deaf ears when Harry sallied forth to purchase horse-flesh or cattle.

'I don't want other folk to judge for me, or to tell me what's what,' he was wont to say; 'I've got brains and eyes, and, thank Heaven, I know how to use 'em both.'

The auctioneer was an honest man. 'There's just one point about the mare, gentlemen,' said he, 'that I may as well tell you of before we begin. I like fair-play, and I don't want a man to come to me in a day or two, and say: "You took me in over that animal: she won't do this," or "she does the other." Now that mare, gentlemen, is perfectly sound in wind and limb. She hasn't a single vice about her; but, as I say,

there's just one thing some of you may consider a failing: she won't take a fence of any sort. And the reason is this. Her present owner rode her in the hunt nearly all last season; and one day, after taking several gates and hedges in grand style, she landed her master and herself in a deep pool, and they had a hard struggle for it, I can warrant you. He's often tried to coax her to jump since, but she always refuses, and that, gentlemen, caused him to name her "The Simpleton." "What's in a name," gentlemen? Well, I've explained it to you in this case. I may add that Colonel Phillimore is heartily sorry to part with her; but as his regiment is ordered abroad, he is thinning the ranks of his favourites.—Now, gentlemen, what shall I say for the mare? And so on.

After several minutes of spirited bidding, 'The Simpleton' was knocked down to Mr Wentworth for a good round sum, and he almost repented his expensive purchase when the excitement of competition was over, and immediately resolved himself into a committee of ways and means to see if he could cut down his expenses in certain quarters, in order to make up for 'this piece of extravagance,' as he called it.

'I reckon I'm the simpleton,' he told himself in confidence, as he handed his cheque to the auctioneer.

Scene—the bar-room of 'The Sow's Ear' at Bromford. Time—8 P.M. *Dramatis personæ*—Tom Lawford, otherwise 'Lazy Tom,' and 'Daft Sammy;' or, to be more exact, Samuel Barrett—the former a young man, till lately in the employ of Harry Wentworth, but discharged by that worthy for persistent idleness.

His companion, Daft Sammy, was about fifty-five, or, it may be, sixty years of age: a small evil-looking man, with cunning gray eyes, and an habitual sneer on his unpleasant countenance. He was the village fool, but shrewd enough where his own interests were concerned, and in reality more rogue than fool.

On this particular evening, Lazy Tom, sauntering through the village, met Sammy, and secured his good-will for an indefinite period by inviting him to partake of a glass of beer, or anything he liked, as he generously put it, in the bar-room of 'The Sow's Ear.' To Sammy's astonishment, but not less to his gratification, he had not one glass only, but several; and having carefully thought his plan out beforehand, Tom, seizing a fitting opportunity, opened fire.

'Ah, you're right, Sammy, my boy,' said he; 'times is 'ard an' work is scarce, an' folks is a starvin'. I daresay now, if a friend was to give you a chance of makin' up for some o' your misfortins, you'd be much obliged to that friend, eh?'

'Try me,' said Sammy, with a knowing leer.

'Well, maybe I will try you,' said Tom, 'maybe I will. I've taken a likin' to you, Sammy, an' I'd like to do you a good turn.'

'Ay, ay, an' Tom Lawford at the same time, I'll be bound,' returned the old man. 'Ah! now, you're a 'cute un, ain't you?' he added admiringly. 'What game be you up to now?'

'Sh! Can't you speak quietly?' said the 'cute un, glancing round cautiously. Then, seeing the coast was clear, he drew his chair nearer to

Sammy's, and whispered: 'You knows the colour o' gold, I suppose, Sammy?'

The restless gray eyes lit up with the fire of avarice. 'Gold!' he muttered—'gold, gold, yellow gold!' his voice rising higher and higher, till his companion roughly shook his arm. 'What was you a-sayin' of, Mr Lawford?'

'You're an old fool,' said Lawford savagely. 'If you can't keep your tongue quiet, you won't smell it even, let alone see it.'

'All right, Mr Lawford—all right; I won't make no noise. What is it?'

'Well, look 'ere, Sammy,' said Tom impressively, laying his hand on the other's arm; 'I'll tell you; but mind, if you wags that clapper o' yours to anybody about it, you'll not only lose your share o' that gold you likes so much, but maybe you'll get a good deal o' what you don't like at all: you knows what I mean?'

'Ay, I understand, Mr Lawford,' said Sammy submissively, and turning pale at the threat.

'That's right, then. Well'—and Tom glanced uneasily round the room again, then went on in a hoarse whisper: 'You knows Farmer Wentworth, Sammy?'

'Yes,' responded Sammy.

'An' I daresay you knows the bank at Essleton, in the High Street?'

'Yes, Sammy knew that too.

'Lor, how thirsty I be: 'ave a drop more, Sammy.'

Not until Sammy had twice seen the bottom of his glass did Tom Lawford proceed.

'Now, Sammy, I places a great deal o' faith in your intelligence, an' I don't think you needs to have things explained to you very much: you seems to see right through 'em at oncet, like, eh?'

'You're right there, Tom Lawford,' agreed Sammy, adopting a more familiar tone under the influence of the liquor Tom had primed him with. 'I can see about 'as fur through a brick wall as most folk.'

'Yes, I know'd it.—Listen to me, then. Farmer Wentworth's goin' to take a bag o' gold to the bank next Tuesday, an' it haven't got to get there.—D'ye twig?'

Oh yes, Sammy 'twigged,' but he had his doubts. 'I don't see how we be to manage it, Tom,' was his answer; 'farmer's a rough chap, an' carries a heavy ridin'-whip, an'—p'raps'—

'Then let somebody else see for you, if you can't see for yourself,' Tom interrupted. 'D'ye think I spoke to you afore I made my plans? Not likely. We can't do it by ourselves, nor in the open.—Here, I may as well tell you straight away, or you'll be a 'inderin' we wi' your opinions, if I tells you bit by bit. I ha' bin thinkin' it over ever since Harry Wentworth turned me off, Sammy, 'ow I might 'ave a bit o' that yellow stuff as 'e takes to the bank every now an' agen. It don't matter to you where I 'eard it, but there's a bit more'n usual goin' to Essleton next Tuesday, an' I thinks to meself, "Tom Lawford, you're out o' work, an' a bit o' that tin 'ud come in useful." Then I wondered 'ow I'd do it, an' who'd 'elp me, an' I thought o' you, Sammy, an' o' others. You're pretty strong, though you be so small, an' you ain't pertickler, I knows, when you're well paid, be you?'

'No,' said Sammy, 'p'raps not; leastways, if it don't get me into trouble.'

'Ah! you're precious careful about that old carcass o' yourn, I knows,' sneered Tom. 'It'll be a pretty good lump,' he added, as though referring to Sammy's diminutive figure; 'an' if he gets it, Tom Lawford won't be seen around 'ere for a long time to come. But you an' the rest can't 'ook it so easy; we should 'ave the bobbies down on us directly. They won't s'pect me, 'owever; I'll leave word I've got a place somewhere. There's Jack Smith an' Dirty Micky, an' three or four fellows as is down 'ere from Brummagem, an' as we've got to do it by daylight, we'll 'ave to disguise ourselves an' alter our clothes a bit, or we'll get copped as sure as you're sittin' in that chair.'

'There ain't goin' to be no murder, is there?' queried Sammy fearfully.

'Murder? No, of course not,' replied Lawford; 'not if we can manage without it,' he added to himself.

'You knows the old spinny, Sammy—"the plantation," as the Squire calls it—with a private road runnin' through it?'

'Ay, ay,' said the old man.

'Well, that's where we're goin' to do the trick, Sammy, my boy. Squire give Harry Wentworth leave to use it, 'cause it's a short-cut. There's a five-burred gate at each end o' the road, an' when Farmer Wentworth—curse him!—comes through the one gate, 'e'll be betwixt the two gates, won't 'e, Sammy?'

'For certin', Sammy replied.

'An' 'e'll 'ave the spinny on each side o' 'im, an' a 'orse under 'im—which means as 'e can't get through it—won't 'e, Sammy?'

Sammy nodded acquiescence.

'An' that ain't all,' said Lawford, rubbing his hands, and chuckling over his plot; 'for when 'e comes through the fust gate, an' gets near the second, 'e'll see a depitation o' four on us ready to wait on 'im.'

'Then he'll turn back,' said Sammy.

'Yes, o' course 'e will, Sammy, an' 'e'll find four more on us gents at t' other gate.'

'You'll be a-hiddin' in the spinny, I s'pose.'

'That's it, an' we shall ha' things o' this sort,' Tom continued, touching a thick oak stick; 'an' when 'e sees as there's no way out on it, 'e'll cuss an' swear a bit, an' then shell out. Then we shall tie 'im up, or 'e'll be at Essleton in a twinklin', an' bring the p'leece after us.'

'You tie Harry Wentworth up? Ha, ha, ha!' and Sammy laughed as loudly as he dared at the idea.

'No, ye daft coon, not me, nor you, but eight on us.'

'E might jump off, an' get away through the spinny,' said Sammy.

'E won't leave the mare till he's obliged, you can bet your boots,' was the reassuring answer.

'Ay, but the mare might jump the gate an' us,' persisted Sammy.

'Didn't I tell 'ee *er can't jump*? Well, 'er can't, or her won't, then; or we'd 'ave to alter our way o' goin' to work.'

'An' what be you goin' to do wi' the creetur?' asked Sammy.

'Oh, fasten 'er to a tree, for if she got 'ome wi' a empty saddle, we'd soon be found out.'

'W'y not seize the reins as 'e comes through the fust gate?'

'W'y not put ourselves in jail at oncet, you means? It's too near the 'ighway, Sammy Barrett. Besides, he'd be usin' that loaded whip o' hisn, an' we might 'ave to tap 'im a few times to keep 'im quiet, an' we wants to do it without that, if we can. 'E'll be fairly flummuxed accordin' to my plan.—Now, mind, if you shows the white-feather, an' don't turn up, you knows what to expect.'

'I'll be there safe enough, Tom Lawford; I'm always about, you knows, when there's any money to be got; but,' he added, a sudden thought paling his cheek, 'e don't carry no pistol, do 'e, Tom?'

'Never!' was the reply; 'never used to at least. But we shall be safe, we shall be safe,' and Tom Lawford thought, with satisfaction, albeit not unmixed with dread, of the two revolvers belonging to his Birmingham friends, which were to be used if needs be—at anyrate to intimidate their intended victim.

'Well, I'm off now,' he said presently. 'Bye-bye, Sammy, an' don't you breathe a word to no one.'

'Harry, dear, I wish you would go round the road instead of through the plantation. You really should be more careful with nearly two hundred pounds about you.'

'Oh, nonsense, Dolly,' said her spouse. 'What silly fear has crept into that pretty little head of yours now? Give me another kiss. I must be off at once. You may trust me to take care of No. 1. Nobody is likely to meddle with a man on horseback in broad noonday. I'll be back to tea—Good-bye, pet.' And he was gone.

Half-an-hour's easy riding brought him to the plantation gate. He opened it with his whip, and rode through, fastening it behind him, and was within fifty yards of the opposite entrance when from out of the thicket four figures appeared, and ranged themselves across the path-way in front of him, close to the gate. He could hardly believe his senses, and would scarcely have been more surprised if a voice had shouted in his ear—'And, Saxon—I am Roderick Dhu!'

The men's faces were hardly visible, being partly concealed by their caps, which were pulled down low in front, and also by their turned-up coat collars, and scarfs tied round the lower half of the face.

'What tomfoolery is this?' thought Harry. 'Well, I must turn back, I suppose. I'm not going to run the risk of a closer interview with those blackguards.'

But when he turned the mare's head round, a cold perspiration broke out all over him, for another quartet of the same stamp had sprung up, as it seemed, from out of the ground, and guarded the gate at which he had entered in the same silent yet unmistakably hostile manner as the others.

'What the deuce shall I do?' he exclaimed in an angry undertone, and half-a-dozen wild and absurd schemes rushed through his brain—a gallop through the thicket—a dash at those muffled figures at the gate—but he felt helpless, almost hopeless.

'The Simpleton,' too, seemed to know that

something was wrong. She fidgeted about, and champed her bit fretfully, as if, like her master, eager to do, yet not knowing what to do. All this occupied but a moment's space.

What was that? A voice behind him calling to him to dismount. He jerked the mare round again, and demanded—'What do you want?'

And the same voice replied: 'Get off that 'oss, an' we'll tell you.'

A bright idea occurred to Harry. 'If only they'll keep at a respectable distance, and I can parley with them a bit, somebody or other will surely be coming this way soon, and then the villains will decamp.'

But they had no intention of allowing him to gain time in that way. 'Look 'ere, mister,' said another, 'be you comin' down or not? 'cause if you don't get off in two shakes, we'll 'ave to make you!'

Wentworth made no reply, but gave a hasty backward glance, which showed him that those behind had not moved, and then, taking a firmer grip of his riding-whip, he sat still as before.

'You won't budge, I can see,' said the last speaker, 'so we'll come an' 'elp you off; an' mind, if you kicks up any fuss, I'll make a hole in you;' and he took a revolver from his breast-pocket.

Still Wentworth did not move.

'Come on, mates!' said the cowardly fellow. 'You there behind, close up,' he shouted to those in the background.

As they drew near, Wentworth made a desperate resolve to dash through them, and, if possible, open the gate, and escape.

They must have read his thoughts, for one of them, Tom Lawford, suddenly snatched a revolver from one of the others, and, turning back, posted himself by the gate again.

Poor Harry was in despair at this last move, but resolved to sell his life dearly, bullets or no bullets, and made a sudden plunge forward, riding-whip uplifted, when they came to within twenty yards of him.

The rascals, surprised at this unexpected attack, drew to each side of the path, with the intention of seizing the reins and striking him with their clubs as he passed, but Harry hit out vigorously right and left, dug his heels into the mare's sides, and shot past them at a mad gallop.

Ping! ping! Two or three shots whizzed by him harmlessly, and then Tom Lawford, in a fit of nervous excitement, took aim at the mare's head, intending to bring her to her knees, but only succeeded in grazing her neck.

Harry tried to check her speed, for they were almost at the gate, but failed.

She had taken the bit between her teeth!

He turned sick, shut his eyes, and clipped her firmly with his knees. As he did so, he felt himself lifted into the air, and the next moment, re-opening his eyes, to his unbounded astonishment, he and the mare were over the gate, and careering along the Essleton high-road at a speed 'The Simpleton' had never equalled when following the hounds in full cry.

When Harry Wentworth returned to the spinny, with a force of six armed and mounted constables, and a dozen volunteers from the

nearest public, he found only one man there, Tom Lawford, and he lying close to the gate, almost at his last gasp. They poured some spirits down his throat, and he looked around wildly. Then seeing the police, he murmured: 'Ah, the p'leece. Ye're cheated for oncet. That mare's done for me. She kicked me somewher as she cleared the gate, an' as I fell, I saw them cowards aflyin' for their lives.—Ah, ye wont 'ave to use the darbies this time. I'm goin'—goin' fast.—Oh, Mr Wentworth, sir, forgive me, forgive me!' Then, suddenly raising himself up, he shrieked: 'No! I won't die! Save me, oh, save me!' and fell back dead.

The rest were caught before forty-eight hours had passed, except 'Daft Sammy,' whose body was afterwards discovered in a brook some miles away.

'The Simpleton's' fame spread far and wide, and Harry had many handsome offers for her, but he refused them all.

'Perhaps she'll oblige me now by taking a gate or a hedge occasionally, Dolly,' he said to his wife.

But 'The Simpleton' was never known to jump again.

THE CHILD-SEASON.

O SUNNY life of childhood! blossoming
To gladden all the world: as if the Spring
Were captive made, and your soft hair unbrid
Had netted all Spring's sunshine as it stirred:
Your little nest has still its singing bird.

O youth! fast learning to be wise and vain,
Whose aims are lofty. In the race for gain
Great things seem possible—and yet to-day
Some grave that is a milestone on the way
Says o'er the world's loud voice, 'Kneel here and pray.'

O hearts that pain has chastened! well ye know
The song of thankfulness. Ye but forego
Your joy a little while. The leaves may tell
Of Autumn; yet be brave: ye have fought well.
Weep not: ye know that other fighters fell.

O aged heads that many a Yule-tide snow
Has whitened! Though the time be long ago
Since first ye laughed in childhood's golden ray,
The Child of Bethlehem takes your hand to-day.
God's blessing crowns your far more perfect way.

HARRIET KENDALL.

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THE VEHMGERICHTE.

THE absence of established laws, or of competent authority to enforce them, has at times given rise to anomalous institutions, which have sought to secure the public tranquillity by means themselves scarcely reconcilable with sound ideas of civil subordination. The Corsican Vendetta and the American Vigilance Societies alike derived their origin from social anarchy, and from the inability of the recognised authority to maintain order or to exact retribution for crime.

During the middle ages, most of the countries of Europe passed through a crisis when the authority of the monarch and of his judges fell into such contempt that the law was entirely without force, and no better protection was afforded by the city than by the open country. Every man's hand was raised against his fellow-man, the most holy sanctuaries were profaned, property was plundered, persons were violated, and the various fortresses scattered throughout the country, so far from sheltering the weak, were converted into dens of robbers, where knightly freebooters levied blackmail from the territories around their strongholds. Our own country passed through such a period of internal chaos in the troubled reign of Stephen, when, during nineteen years, according to the *Saxon Chronicle*, 'the rich men greatly oppressed the wretched people by making them work at their castles, and when the castles were finished, they filled them with devils and evil men. Then they took those whom they suspected to have any goods, putting both men and women in prison for their gold and silver, and torturing them with pains unspeakable; for never were any martyrs tormented as they were. Many were starved; many lived on alms who had previously been rich; others fled from the country. Neither church nor churchyard was spared by the plunderers; they robbed the monks and the clergy; and every man plundered his neighbour as much as he could. Such, indeed, was the misery, that

it was said openly that Christ and his saints slept.'

This state of affairs gave rise in several countries of Europe to popular confederacies, and even to secret tribunals, formed expressly to check such unbounded license, and to secure the ends of justice when its legitimate administrators were feeble or corrupt. The most terrible of those secret tribunals were the well-known 'Vehmgerichte'—or 'Fehmgerichte,' as the word is sometimes written—which existed in some parts of Germany, and especially in Westphalia. The exact significance of the title is disputed, but it is usually supposed to have been derived from 'feh'm,' punishment, and 'gericht,' court, meaning a court of justice. Others imagine, upon inferior grounds, that the term is obtained from the Latin 'fama,' as the tribunals too frequently acted on common fame or report. The origin of these courts has been ascribed to the age of Charlemagne; but there is no authentic record of their existence prior to the middle of the thirteenth century. It is certain that at that time a number of individuals were secretly associated together in Germany to punish crimes and offenders; to put an efficient check upon the lawlessness of the powerful barons, who defied the authority of the sovereign; and to redress cases of grievous wrong perpetrated by any member of the community.

The tribunals were divided into local sections, but recognised a central authority. Nominally, the Emperor was the chief officer; but in Westphalia the actual President was the Archbishop of Cologne. A person of position presided over each branch of the central court, and was known as a 'free count.' The other members were divided into the two classes of 'schöppen,' or ignorant, and 'wissende,' or knowing, the latter class including all those who were initiated into the hidden secrets of the Order. The most solemn oaths bound every one to secrecy as to the proceedings; and there is no evidence that these vows were ever broken, although it is supposed that at one time one hundred thousand

persons were members of these societies. For the determination of civil disputes, the meetings of the tribunals were held in a public place and in the full light of day; but such offences as robbery and murder were usually dealt with secretly. If common rumour ascribed the commission of a crime to any person, or if a charge were brought against him, he was cited to answer the accusation before the court of his district. The summons bore the seal of the *Vehmgerichte*, and was generally fastened to the door of the supposed criminal during the night. If he refused to attend, the citation was repeated; and disobedience to the second summons was considered as conclusive evidence of guilt. The members of the tribunal were bound by their oaths to put such an individual to death wherever they could find him. If, on the contrary, he attended the court, he was allowed to call witnesses, and to clear himself, if he could, by their evidence. Upon his failing to prove his innocence, he was punished, according to the nature of his crime, by fine or summary execution. No one was exempt by virtue of his rank, and the highest noble was as liable to citation as the poorest peasant in the land.

When capital punishment was inflicted, it was customary to leave a knife by the body, to show that the act was not one of a private murderer, but was due to the sentence of the *Vehmgerichte*. The 'wild kind of justice' of these irregular courts was long a terror to evildoers, and, as the tribunals were countenanced by the highest powers in the land, those obeying their decrees were independent of the regular authorities, while the large number of the members, and their wide dispersion, rendered any sentence passed almost certain of execution.

Such rude administration of justice is, however, peculiarly liable to abuse, and in course of time the inevitable deterioration set in. A Diet of the Empire was held at Trier in 1512, when it was declared that 'by the Westphalian tribunals many an honest man had lost his life, honour, body, and property;' and even the Archbishop of Cologne, their nominal chief officer, admitted that 'by very many they were shunned and regarded as seminaries of villains.' As the power of the State gradually consolidated, the irregular courts were suppressed, although they were never abolished by any formal enactment; and it is said that the last remnant of the old tribunals was found in operation in Westphalia when Jerome Bonaparte was king of that country, in the early part of the present century.

A very similar institution, celebrated as the 'Santa Hermandad,' or Holy Brotherhood, existed at one time in Castile, and assumed the most extraordinary functions. At an early period it consisted of a confederation of the principal cities, who were bound together by a most solemn league to defend their liberties in times of civil anarchy. Deputies were appointed, who met

at stated times, and transacted their business with all the forms of the most orthodox institutions. They impressed their documents with a common seal, and enacted laws, which they transmitted to the nobles, and even to the sovereign; and they enrolled an armed force to enforce their measures. The association, 'so characteristic of an unsettled state of society,' says Prescott, 'repeatedly received the legislative sanction; and however formidable such a popular engine may have appeared to the eye of the monarch, he was often led to countenance it by a sense of his own impotence, as well as of the overweening power of the nobles, against whom it was principally directed.'

During the times of lawlessness which preceded the establishment of a united Spanish monarchy under Ferdinand and Isabella, the authority of the sovereign and the royal judges fell almost to a minimum. No better way was seen of checking the unbounded license which had arisen than by reorganising the Holy Brotherhood, and a scheme for attaining this purpose was introduced into the Cortes of Castile in 1476, and was carried into effect the same year. The new institution embraced the whole kingdom, and was limited in its operations to the maintenance of public order. All cases of violence or theft committed on the highways or in the open country were reserved for its jurisdiction, and such offenders as escaped from the cities were pursued by its officers. The open country was specified as the scene for the operations, because it was plentifully studded with castles and fortresses, which offered every facility for the escape of a criminal from justice. The *Hermandad* was supported by an annual tax, levied upon householders; and courts were established in every town for the trial of offences committed within its jurisdiction, while an appeal lay from it, in specified cases, to a superior Council. Its laws were compiled into a code, in which penalties were laid down with the utmost precision. These laws were administered with extreme vigour; stripes, the loss of a member, or even of life, were adjudged for the most petty larceny. Executions were conducted by shooting the offender with arrows; and it was especially provided that 'the convict shall receive the sacrament like a Catholic Christian, and after that, be executed as speedily as possible, in order that his soul may pass the more securely.'

In a few years the *Hermandads* and the new military police established by them almost entirely cleared the country of the swarms of banditti, and of the robber chieftains who had long defied the law. Once again the ministers of justice found a sure protection in the independent discharge of their duties; and, in the words of the historian already quoted, 'the blessings of personal security and social order, so long estranged from the nation, were again restored to it.'

For many years these important benefits secured the confirmation of the institution by successive Cortes; but gradually, as the necessity

for an extraordinary tribunal ceased, the Santa Hermadad dwindled into an ordinary police, and, with such a modification of form, has existed into the present century.

THE IRONY OF FATE.

CHAPTER IX.—RETRIBUTION.

Two days had elapsed since Arabella's flight, and Major Bowyer was sitting alone in his study. Suddenly came a loud ring at the bell; the door was thrown open, and 'The Duke of Falmouth!' was announced.

'I am the bearer of a letter from Miss Arabella Alsworth,' he said, 'if you will kindly read it;' and the Duke placed the letter in the Major's hands.

'Take a seat, your Grace,' he continued, holding out his hand.

The Duke took the proffered seat, but he ignored the extended hand.

When he had read the letter, he turned to the Duke. 'I suppose you are aware of the circumstances which preceded Miss Alsworth's latest escapade?' he queried.

'Yes; you wanted her to marry my nephew, Lord Cransford.'

'That's true. But that is not what I mean. When she left this house, she took a quantity of jewellery with her, some of which was her own, and others were heirlooms, which at the death of Mrs Alsworth ought to have come to my wife, and which I claim as my property.'

'Make your claim in a legal form and the matter shall be investigated.'

'Where is Miss Alsworth staying?'

'In my house, and under my protection.'

'Thank you. I shall go to London at once and take out a warrant for her arrest. Meantime, I shall detain her clothes till the jewellery is restored.'

'Miss Alsworth's business is in the hands of Mr Ainsley, her late father's lawyer. I think you had better see him before you take any ulterior steps,' said the Duke; and taking up his hat, he bowed and left the room.

He was driven back to the station; and half an hour afterwards was on his way to London. When he reached home, he found a telegram awaiting him; it ran as follows: 'From Thomas Foreman to the Duke of Falmouth—Major Bowyer is dead. He was seized with an apoplectic fit shortly after you left. The result, the doctors say, of the agitation and worry of the last few days.'

When he had read it, he went straight to the Duchess's boudoir, where he found Arabella and his wife, told them of the failure of his mission, and read the telegram he had received from Thomas.

'Poor man!' ejaculated Arabella—'how sad.'

'Yes, very,' responded the Duke. 'But what about those jewels?'

'Oh! that was settled years ago. My mother was the eldest child, and they descended to me as her next of kin. Papa took legal advice, and Mr Ainsley knows all about it; besides, at the time, Uncle Bowyer pretended to be satisfied.'

'I think we had better send off to Mr Ainsley,' said the Duke, 'and get him to take such steps as he thinks fit. If your fortune has been in the hands of two such men as Major Bowyer and Lord Cransford, the chances are that matters will want looking into.'

'How good you are!' exclaimed Arabella. 'You think of everything.'

My story is almost ended. The Duke of Falmouth's suspicions were verified. On examining Major Bowyer's papers after his decease, it was found that he had been tempted to appropriate a considerable portion of Arabella's fortune to his own use; and it was supposed that Lord Cransford had been cognisant of, if not a participator in the fraud.

One afternoon in August the two Miss Scudamores were hurrying along High Street, panting and puffing under the broiling heat of the summer sun, evidently in a state of great excitement. They rang loudly at Mrs Montessor's bell, and on being shown into the drawing-room, found the lady and Miss Nugent in close confab.

'Oh my dears! such extraordinary news!' exclaimed Miss Prudence. 'Arabella Alsworth is married, and to whom, do you think?'

'Can't tell, dear,' responded Mrs Montessor. 'There is no telling what such a girl would do. But won't you take a seat?'

'You'll never guess,' said Miss Scudamore, as she seated herself in the proffered chair—'no, not if you were to go on guessing for a month; so I'll tell you—Lord Cransford!'

'But I thought he was dead!' exclaimed Miss Nugent; 'killed in America, to which he had fled from his creditors.'

'Yes, that is so. But this is the new lord, and you'll never guess who he is: somebody we all know.'

'Somebody we all know?' iterated Miss Nugent.

'Yes; but, as you'll never guess, I'll tell you—Frank Wallis!'

'Well, I never!' exclaimed Mrs Montessor. 'Frank Wallis. Then Mrs Wallis must be a lady in her own right.'

'Yes. It seems all like a dream. To think of that quiet Mrs Wallis being a Duke's daughter!'

'Well, I'm glad of it!' exclaimed Mrs Montessor. 'Arabella was always such a dear, kind, amiable creature; and I daresay we shall all be invited to the house when they come.'

Miss Puddicombe laughed sarcastically. 'That's the way the wind blows now, is it? There was

a time when she was a "horrid stuck-up creature."

'Circumstances alter cases,' interposed Miss Prudence.

THE END.

A NORWEGIAN WINTER'S DAY.

WE got to our destination mainly by the little Vossvangen railway from Bergen. It was as wild and eerie a journey as one could have in the depths of the Norwegian winter. A furious storm broke upon us just as we were leaving Bergen, and for all the five hours of our journey the wind howled about the little cars, patently checking our trivial speed when it caught the locomotive full in front in the rocky defiles, and making us tremble uncomfortably as it shot broadside upon us. There was no keeping the doors of the corridor car shut. As for the cold, in spite of the blazing stove, it was very great. Though we could roast our toes, the freezing wind took us in the back and at the sides, and each new incomer brought with him an arctic draught as he shook his shaggy coat free from snow and icicles and stamped hard upon the floor.

'Bad weather!' said each traveller, with emphasis rare in the mouths of the laconic Norseman. There was no doubting it. The lakes we passed were a deadly black where they had not frozen and got coated with snow. The mountain tops of course were deep in snow; so was the railway track. And the rock-sides by which we glided so closely were draped with icicles of many colours, thick as an elephant's leg. Never had I seen such icicles. If only the day had been bright, they would have been a glorious spectacle. But it was a dreadful day—nothing less. If the old Vikings had many such days—as who can doubt they had?—it was proof of their rare stamina that they existed so robustly in the teeth of them, and of their shrewd good sense that they took to the sea and sailed south by the thousand for piratical exercises.

One could not but admire the splendid physique of some of these country Norwegians on this Saturday evening. They looked monstrous as they entered the car in their rough wolf-skin jackets, belted, with large deer-skin moccasins to their feet, and wearing caps of seal or wolf skin. But their faces glowed with a sort of physical pride in their ability to stand against these shocks of winter, and their voices were musically resonant. Without exception they were blue-eyed. In Bergen one sees plenty of gray and hazel eyes. But then Bergen is in its way quite a cosmopolitan seaport, with a mixed breed of inhabitants; whereas here in the country the people still, as in the old days, mate with their neighbours, about the origin of whose stock there can be no question.

Vossvangen at last. We alight in a penetrating shower of fine snow, and darkness almost as penetrating. It is nine o'clock: the winter's night is already four or five hours old. The air feels exceedingly keen. Two or three lamps

glimmer among the few passengers and railway officials, and there is a murmur of speech. The sound of a sledge grating on the platform is heard before the sledge itself is seen. The next moment, however, a burly shape mantled in a fur coat and with a horn slung at its waist bustles forward. It is the mailman—one of the representatives of a class of Norwegians who in the winter have no little hardship to endure. He has a revolver on his hip. It may in extremity help him to withstand a couple of wolves, an infuriate bear, or (an even rarer peril) an unscrupulous fellow-countryman; or it may serve to give the *coup de grâce* to his horse if anything should happen of a very bad kind. The jingle of bells a moment later announces the mailman's departure with the letters. The wind howls and the snow whirls under the station cover. Truly a wild night, if you add twenty degrees of frost to its other engaging features. Yet, when we get outside, piloted through the drifts by a lad with a lantern, there is a glimmer of stars far, far away; and an instant afterwards the silver curve of a baby-moon declares itself magnificently from behind a great dark mass that must be a mountain.

'Bad weather now, but a fine to-morrow,' observes our guide with a slow sententiousness that tells of his consideration for us as strugglers with an unfamiliar tongue.

Never was a boy's weather-wisdom more superbly proven. Yet long ere we were in bed the portents had grown black as Acheron again. Sitting in the snug little parlour of the inn and wrestling for intelligible speech with the kindly landlady, who seemed to think it due to us that she should sit with us and make remarks at the meaning of which we could only guess as a rule, we heard the storm-fiend at work again. Such frantically discordant music as it favoured us with, I, for one, never wish again to listen to. A week of it would make the best of men an incurable maniac. There we sat, however, with our feet on the stove, smoking cigars, and drinking the punch our good dame insisted on mixing for us. She had given us ptarmigan for supper, at which we had rejoiced; and her husband—a lean subtle-eyed gentleman, who combined shop-keeping with the position of landlord of two inns, and who had—as we understood it—promised to outfit us in the proper Norwegian mode from his own store on the morrow—brought us his visitors' book, as if to emphasise the difference between Norway in August and Norway in the first week of January. The good man assured us by speech and gestures that in summer he filled two houses and a half with his guests. Now, however, the house and a half were absolved from all tax of hospitality, and of the remaining house we were the sole guests.

In going up-stairs to bed we trod into a snow-drift on the landing. Double windows had been unable to keep out the enemy. However, thanks to an excitable little stove, our room was warm enough for a Brazilian orchid; and ere getting into bed, we loaded it with pine-knots, so that the roaring of its flames in the chimney quite outvoiced the howling of the wind.

A pallid blue sky, clear as ice, greeted us when we turned out at nine o'clock the next morning. The gray wooden houses of the village looked

pretty in their snow-mantle. So did the villagers, ploughing through the snow of their thoroughfares—it was three feet deep at the least. So, too, did the Vossvangen lads, muffled to the ears by their discreet mothers in home-made comforters, as they shouted to each other to come out upon the hill-sides behind the village and enjoy a bout of snow-shoeing. There were divers enthusiastic collie and retriever dogs with the lads. These barked and rolled each other in the snow. It was evident they enjoyed it.

Then the sun stole over a mountain-top, just as the slip of a moon had done the evening before, and the valley was transfigured. The great lake was already frozen all over and dazzling white in its spotless counterpane of snow. The hill-sides, thick with pines, were a beautiful study in black and white, above which the cloudless blue of the heavens momentarily gained in intensity, so that at length we might have thought Norway had for the day borrowed her sky from Italy. While we breakfasted, the jingle of bells outside grew constant. One sledge after another shot into the village from the various homesteads which dot the slopes of Voss. They were not drawn by reindeer, but by those very independent and sturdy little ponies which summer travellers in the land know so well. Each sledge carried a family party, and very odd some of these parties looked, the women swathed in woollens, so that little except their rubicund frost-coloured noses could be distinguished; and the bright blue eyes of the maidens sparkling from the semi-obscurity about them. The church bell tinkled hardly more sonorously than the sledge bells; and group by group the sledgers and village folk entered the porch. They were fair to see for the variegated colours of their woollens—quite a tulip bed, in fact; and afterwards, when the cloaked sound of their responses inside the holy building could be heard, a man of felonious instinct might have carried off a hundred or two of pairs of clogs and galoshes, with which it is the vogue in winter to litter the church porches.

Our worthy host did not belie himself. When service was over, he took us into his store and compelled us to buy Scotch galoshes and German-made gloves, as well as other articles which were, he said, quite indispensable for our journey. This done, and the day continuing glorious—with the echoes of the happy shouts of the snow-shoeing boys and dogs reaching us from far up the valley—the sledges were brought to the door; and having been zealously muffled in our fur coats and bearskin knee wrappers, we left Voss amid the loud 'Godspeeds' of both our entertainers. The apothecary and the people at the post-office looked from their windows to see us pass; else we did not seem much to rouse the curiosity of the villagers. I do not think, however, that the Norseman is troubled like men and women of the south with the itch of inquisitiveness. There is much in the climatic phases which surround him that he cannot understand: Nature is nowhere as here so mysterious, alternately caressing and striking hard with clenched fist. Without a trustful faith the Norwegian would be the most wretched of individuals. His forefathers were stout fellows, with a firm belief in the pleasantness of Odin's im-

mortal banqueting halls. He for his part is just a simple sort of Christian who looks as far as possible on the bright side of life, and believes in Paradise. Like most sensible mortals, he takes short views, though at the back of all his hopes is the predominant faith in heaven as the reconciler of such vague doubts about terrestrial existence as may at times possess him, and the complete and satisfying atonement for his earthly troubles. He is far from being effusively religious or regardful of externals. Like the bear of his native land, he is somewhat phlegmatic and torpid during the winter; and, again like the bear, he is not an enemy to be despised. But whatever he is or is not, he is singularly devoid of the kind of curiosity that in America urges a man to put his fellow-man to the question as if he were a cross-examining advocate in a law-court.

Our sledges were light gay little affairs of iron and brass, each with a sort of bicycle saddle behind, upon which the driver sat with one foot on the runner, to serve as an accessory rudder. The official road-clearer—a triangular shape of wood drawn by the apex—had been abroad that morning and made a capital way for us. Up hill or on the level we went well; but downhill we seemed to go on the wings of the wind, with a furious clatter of bells and a nodding of the shaggy heads of our steeds that it made us giddy to watch.

Cold of course it was, in spite of fur coats, double gloves, and reindeer overshoes. We felt it most at the toes. After an hour, the nipping became very painful. A numbness succeeded; and when, having journeyed for two hours, we halted at a bright little *châlet*, the inn and post-house combined, for a moment we staggered as we tried to walk in the orthodox way. However, a couple of armfuls of hay put matters on a better basis for us in the subsequent journey; though a mysterious sort of ill humour that took us at times was distinctly traceable to these effects of the weather upon us.

It was an enchanting afternoon, and the scenes through which we passed were also akin to those of enchantment. Not a breath of wind stirred save that which we created in our brisk movement. The whole land was blanketed in snow. It stood eight and ten feet deep by the road-side, and the stones in the river-bed showed more than a yard of it upon them. Only the vertical face of the great rocks beneath which we glided was free from it. But in compensation there was here the fairest conceivable decoration of icicles. They hung by the fathom in broad parallel lines, and were of many hues, from brick red and purple to sea-green, turquoise, and silver gray. Some of them were pendent above us like the portcullis of an old castle, and we could have fancied the mere concussion of our horses and cars would shake them fatefully upon our heads. Of waterfalls there ought to have been great store along this road. In the green summer days and the bright summer nights their song is here a continuous lullaby. But now they were all silenced. Jack Frost had nailed them hard and fast to the rocks. It was magnificent to see the monstrous rigid masses frozen in waves that overlapped each other, each lap fringed with great variegated icicles.

At the inn where we tarried to ease the horses and imbibe hot coffee, while prowling round its precincts I came upon a lemming. The little rat-like creature stood on its hind-legs and barked in a babyish but very frantic manner at my legs. I could of course have crushed it to death with my foot. But this, equally of course, I forbore to do. The little animal was being plagued quite enough by the winter. It had wandered hither in search of food. Perhaps it was a herald of an entire army of its little fellow-mortals, which sometimes traverse the land in solemn procession tens of thousands in number, stopping at no obstacle, whether it be a fire, an arm of the sea, or even a boat with rowing-men in it which happens to intersect their line of progress. Their coming and going is inexplicable to the Norsemen, who have many strange notions about them.

Again wrapped up and stretched mummy-wise as to our lower extremities, we enjoyed the brief afternoon sunlight. The sun soon got behind the mountains, and as suddenly the air seemed to double in chilliness. It was wonderful how sombre our surroundings became all at once. The river, where it was unfrozen, was like a stream of ink, contrasted with the ineffable prevailing whiteness. And the dark faces of the cliffs seemed to lour menacingly. Above us, however, a few bright lines of crimson and gold told of the sunset elsewhere; and the coral glow about the snowy summits of the high mountains in the west was almost intense enough to warm us.

We passed one more inn ere the night wrapped us round. It was fast closed for the winter. A couple of magpies scurried across the road near, towards a pole, to the top of which the kindly peasantry had affixed a sheaf of oats. Then we plunged into a pine-forest, every twig of every tree in which was heavy laden with snow and icicles; and for half an hour sped through this eerie twilight scene in a silence that was almost sensational. Ere we were through it, the stars had begun to beam above the tops of the trees; and when we were again in the open, the great smooth space of a lake two or three miles square was to our right, with starlit mountains on the farther sides.

Even to us Britons, it was a great experience, this solemn, beautiful freezing progress through the land. Nor was my driver without his feelings of pride in his native country in its winter dress. 'It is cold,' he observed twice in my ear; 'but lovely—is it not?' You would not have thought this great red-bearded, massy-shouldered carl had a care for the picturesque. But it was evident he had a very strong appreciation of it.

Another hour passed, and then we rose amid the mountains. The stars had brightened amazingly in the meantime. But they only served to emphasise the tremendous gloom of the black defile in which we found ourselves. An icy breath of wind whispered down this ravine, and almost suspended the heart's action for an instant. Then suddenly a lamplight shone strongly before us. Our ride was at an end. Voices were heard above the music of our bells, which latter had twice or thrice set me dozing; and our welcome reached us from afar. The warmth of the house after the thirty degrees of frost through which

of late we had been driving, fairly made us pant while we were being helped out of our clumsy furs.

If you do not know what a Norwegian welcome in winter means, you cannot have a just idea of the Norseman's character. There was a household of people here, and yet one and all seemed consecrated to our service. Having first drunk off a glass of fine Cognac, we were taken straightway to the drawing-room, where cards and music were in full swing. A Norwegian Sunday allows these diversions in the evening. There could be no question about that, for there, taking his hand at whist, and having his glass of punch replenished oftener than any one else, was the pastor of the parish—a hearty old fellow, who drank loudly to us as soon as we were announced, and who later lost a crown or two to us at the cards with perfect serenity. Some people fancy the Norseman sleeps through the winter—or rather spends twice as many hours in bed during the short days as in summer. It is an error. Midnight came and caught us still at our pleasure. But by this we travellers were drowsy to the last degree. And so, to a chorus of 'Sleep well,' we set the example of retiring to our snug rooms, lit by the glow of the resinous pine splinters in the stove.

THE VALLEY OF SHEITAN.

A STORY OF THE BHORE GHÁT INCLINE.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART II.

THE settlement of Lonauli round about the station at the head of the Bhore Ghât Incline has occasioned a pang of home-sickness to many an exile from the old country, wearied of teeming native cities and red-taped military cantonments. It is the only purely English village in all the vast peninsula. Here may be seen the trim cottages of the humbler railway employees, each with its bit of garden-ground; and here it is possible on occasion to walk a good half-mile and meet never a Hindu or Mohammedan, but only good honest Britons, whose working-clothes and grimy faces bewray them as toilers for a weekly wage. The pretty Gothic church, the tiny post-office, a genuine English grocer's shop, and last, but not least, the Railway Hotel, complete the picture of home-life. Away on the outskirts, removed from the daily and nightly roar of the engine, and sheltered by magnificent groves of mangoes, lie the white-washed bungalows of the higher officials.

Lonauli is the rural Crewe or Swindon of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway. It is here that the locomotive works are established, giving employment to some two hundred Europeans; but the white population is increased by the wise foresight of the company in choosing this healthy site on the edge of the great Sahyadri range as the residence of their travelling servants. Engine-drivers and guards in goodly numbers inhabit the better class of cottages in the village, or rather their families do, while the bread-winners are away up the line to Madras or down the Ghât to Bombay in charge of the 'arg-gari'—the mighty 'fire-carriage' which is fast civilising India.

In a neat little bungalow a quarter of a mile

from the station, James Hudson and his daughter Sibyl were seated at breakfast. No one, to look at the upright handsome elderly man, would have guessed the nature of his employment; and Sibyl would certainly have been placed higher in the social scale than the rank she filled. The surroundings, too, were out of keeping with the position occupied by the head of the house. An open piano by a good maker stood in a corner of the room, and there were books—French, German, and Italian, as well as English—scattered about in profusion.

‘I have heard from Mr Heygate this morning, father,’ Sibyl was saying; ‘he is coming over from Poona to say good-bye. I am so sorry it is one of your duty-days; he would have enjoyed a chat with you, and now you will not see him before he sails for England.’

Hudson looked up and scanned the girl's face intently before replying. Then he said: ‘I do not think he will miss me much to-day, Sibyl. —Tell me, my daughter, and tell me truly, has this young man's coming amongst us meant more to you than the making of a pleasant acquaintance whom in six months we have both grown to like? Does his departure mean more than the departure of a friend?’

The guard got his answer from the tears which he saw were very near Sibyl's eyes. ‘I—I hardly know, father,’ she said; ‘three months is such a long, long time. I am very sorry he is going away—and I think he is sorry too.’

‘He has not spoken to you, Sibyl, has he—in a way, I mean, that would make a great change in my little girl's life?’

‘No, father; there have been no words of that kind between us. Mr Heygate has always treated me as a gentleman should treat a lady; but’—and Sibyl stammered painfully—‘I have sometimes wondered whether in his heart he does not remember that we are only railway people after all. Now that his elder brother is dead—it is that which takes him home, you know—he is heir to the baronetcy.’

Hudson thought deeply for some time without replying; then he rose and went to a small side-table where there were writing materials, and wrote rapidly for a few minutes. Having placed what he had written in an envelope and sealed and addressed it, he handed it to Sibyl, saying: ‘There, dear; give that to Mr Heygate when he comes. I should like to have seen him and spoken to him before he sails; but that is impossible, as I have to make the long trip to Madras, and shall not be back till the day after to-morrow. He leaves Poona for Bombay by to-night's mail, does he not?’

‘Yes, father,’ said Sibyl. ‘He is going back to Poona after he has said good-bye, and will pass through the station here about midnight on his way down the Ghât to Bombay.’

‘Well, tell him I was sorry to have missed him, and give him my note. I hope my little girl will find everything come right, just as she wishes—now,’ said Hudson, with an involuntary pause before, and emphasis on, the last word which made Sibyl start.

‘Oh father!’ she said reproachfully, ‘surely, surely you have not mentioned me in the letter?’

‘There is not a word about you in it, dear,

on the honour of an—— I mean, on my own honour,’ said the guard, pulling himself up rather lamely. ‘And now I must be off to the station. —Good-bye, Sibyl; God bless you, now and always.’

Hudson kissed his daughter, and left the room by one of the windows that opened on the veranda; but he had not been gone a minute when he returned. ‘That fellow Carnac,’ he said, ‘has he been annoying you lately?’

‘No, father. Why do you ask?’ replied Sibyl, looking surprised.

‘Only, because he passed the bungalow just now, and I thought he was miles away on day-duty down at the reversing station. He has got a holiday, I suppose. If he has given up his idiotic pretensions, though, it doesn't matter. Anyway, he wouldn't dare come to the house.—Good-bye again.’ And the guard hurried off to make good the lost time, leaving Sibyl to tidy the house before the arrival of her visitor.

Six months had passed since the adventure at the reversing station, and now she only looked back to it as the incident which had brought her Lionel Heygate's friendship. Luke Carnac, the half-caste pointsman, who before that day had annoyed her with his attentions, had made no sign since Heygate's iron grip had flung him aside. Sibyl had well-nigh forgotten his importunate wooing—a wooing which she attributed to the man's impression that his ‘Europe clothes’ entitled him to a ‘Europe’ wife, rather than to any romantic attachment to herself. When she thought of the pointsman at all, it was more with apprehension on Heygate's behalf than on her own; for on the day after he had attempted to take her hand at the reversing station, in order to press his suit, she had met him in Lonauli street, and he had whispered in passing: ‘Tell your fine friend from Poona that we Eurasian gentlemen never forget an injury.’ There was something so ludicrous in the man's assumption of European manners as he hissed out his implied threat, lifting the seedy felt helmet from his oily jet-black hair, and referring to himself as a gentleman, that Sibyl had laughed at the time. It was not till afterwards that she thought of the vengeful glare in Carnac's eyes, and wondered if he might plot some secret mischief. Open violence he would never dare; he was too much of a coward for that.

As Sibyl tidied the pleasant sitting-room, her thoughts turned to the impulsive young officer who had sprung, as it were from the jungle, into the very heart and centre of her none too eventful life. Often and often since that chance meeting Lionel Heygate had been a visitor at the guard's little bungalow—at first making the excuse that sport had brought him to the neighbourhood, but after a while, in no way concealing that he came on purpose, because he found pleasure in the society of both father and daughter. Poona, where his regiment was stationed, was only twenty miles along the line from Lonauli, so such visits were easy. Sibyl, fresh from the quiet school in England to which her father, stinting himself to provide education for his only child, had consigned her when little more than a baby, knew nothing of the world. Lionel Heygate was the only young man with whom she had ever been brought into close contact, and it was

perhaps in the nature of things that her heart passed out of her own keeping almost before she was aware of it. Of late, their relations had grown closer; Heygate had taken to calling her Sibyl, and his manner suggested a feeling warmer than friendship; but the all-important word had never been said. This was the position when, two days before, a hurried line had informed Sibyl that Lionel was called home on three months' leave, owing to the death of his elder brother; and now he was coming to say good-bye. Would he have anything else to say? she wondered. Was it not more than she could hope for? At anyrate, it was more than she, a railway guard's daughter, had a right to expect.

Then she fell to thinking about the letter her father had written. He had pledged himself that it did not mention her; but she dreaded lest it might have some indirect bearing on the secret he had surprised. She would die of very shame if there were anything in that letter calculated to force Heygate's hand. She knew that though her father chose to remain in India as a railway guard, he was by birth and education a gentleman. Was it possible that he had disclosed his past in that letter, to show Heygate that socially they were his equals? Sibyl was a proud girl, and she felt that even such an indirect hint as this would be unbearable.

However, she had promised to give the letter, and give it she must. She turned to the piano, on which she had placed it, and behold the question was solved for her, whether she would or no: the letter was clean gone! High and low did Sibyl search amongst the music, behind the piano, everywhere; she felt in her pocket, in case she should have placed the letter there without thinking, but all with no result. It had vanished as completely as though it had never existed. Only for half a minute had she been away in her adjoining bedroom, and yet in that brief space some one must have entered by the window and stolen the letter. Their one Portuguese servant was not in the house at all; he was gone down to the bazaar to buy fruit; and, besides, Pedro was an old and faithful servant of her father's. Had he been there, she could not have suspected him.

Sibyl went out into the veranda and looked round the compound. There was only an old Hindu of the 'Mehteh,' or sweeper, caste to be seen, busy about his work in the far corner. He was not the usual sweeper who attended the bungalow, Sibyl noticed; but she could not suppose that the ragged scavenger had abstracted the note. Then suddenly she remembered that Luke Carnac was off duty that day, and that he had been seen passing the bungalow. It was just possible that the pointsman might have been prowling about and had got the letter. She called to the old sweeper, and asked him, in imperfect Hindustani, whether he had seen any one in the compound. He merely raised his hands to his dirty turban, stooping the while in deep salaam, and shook his head. There was no information to be got in that quarter, evidently.

As Sibyl was hesitating what to do next, a quick step sounded on the road, and Heygate turned in at the compound gate. Sibyl advanced to meet her visitor, for the moment dismissing

the letter from her thoughts, and half glad, perhaps, that some mysterious influence had made its delivery impossible. Side by side they returned to the bungalow; but after the first greetings, neither spoke till they had passed into the cool sitting-room, now so familiar to both of them. And then is there need to tell what followed? Half-a-dozen words settled everything, as half-a-dozen words are wont to do when a young man has found out that he knows his own mind and a maiden's heart is touched. Before they had been there two minutes, Sibyl was shedding mingled tears of joy and grief on Lionel's breast—of grief that he must leave her for a while; and of joy that, when he returned, it would be to claim her as his bride. This is no story of love-making. Let us step out on to the veranda while these two pledge over again the vows which have been pledged so many million times before.

But if we have no desire to listen to lovers' talk, some one else has, it would seem. What is that crouching figure doing outside the 'cuss-cuss tatty' which veils the window? The tattered red turban is bent close to the wall; one dusky hand is thrust into the folds of a filthy cummerbund—as if to make sure that something concealed there is still safe—while the other hand is clenched on the upright post of the window-frame. It is the old sweeper, who a moment ago was busy about the compound, converted into a stealthy eavesdropper, and with a vengeful glare in his eyes wonderfully like that of Luke Carnac the pointsman. For a full half-hour the crouching figure remained at the window, and then crawled snake-like along the veranda and disappeared.

Inside the room the time passed all too quickly, and the moment came for last words to be said. Lionel had to get back to Poona to make his final preparations before starting by the night-mail.

'I shall be passing through Lonauli to-night while you are asleep, Sibyl,' he said. 'I shall feel inclined to get out of the train from sheer force of habit. But at anyrate I shall have the satisfaction a little later of seeing the place where we first met.'

'The Ghât will look grand to-night in the full moon,' said Sibyl. 'I have not been at the reversing station since that day; father does not like me to go so far alone now.'

'I should think not indeed, with that creepy-looking pointsman about,' said Heygate. 'By the way, I should not care to make the journey down the Ghât if he was at the points and knew that I was in the train; but that is impossible, of course.'

Sibyl looked thoughtful for a moment before she replied: 'Yes; he could not know; besides, he is on day-duty now; he has a holiday, too, father said.'

Then there was a gentle leave-taking, and Sibyl was left alone to her dreams. It was not till she was awakened by the entrance of Pedro with her modest tiffin that she remembered that she had not mentioned her father's letter and its mysterious disappearance to Lionel. She was rejoiced that he had spoken without receiving it; but still she was annoyed at having forgotten to tell her lover of its existence. Perhaps, after

all, it was only an ordinary farewell, and would not really matter.

Suddenly the startling reflection flashed across her mind that her father might in his letter have alluded to Heygate's departure by the night-mail. If her vague surmise that Carnac was the purloiner were correct, the pointsman would be in possession of the very information she would most have desired to keep from him. What was to prevent him from arranging to go on duty that night with a view to promoting some terrible catastrophe? Sibyl trembled at the thought, and her dread was aggravated by the knowledge that she was absolutely powerless. She had nothing but a vague alarm to combat; and even if she knew for certain that Carnac was to be in charge of the points at the reversing station that night, there was nothing to justify her in speaking to the station-master at Lonauli. To that official she was but a guard's daughter, and he would laugh in her face at such an unwarrantable interference.

One thing she could and would do: she must know who was to be pointsman at the top of that awful precipice when her lover's train passed down the incline. Sibyl quickly made her way to Lonauli Station, and sought out a foreman of platelayers to whose wife she had done many kindnesses. The man happened to be in the tool-shed, and gave her his attention at once. The information she wanted was not in his department; but he knew where to obtain it, and quickly returned to the shed, where Sibyl waited for him.

'The pointsman at the reversing station to-night should have been Simmons, Miss Hudson,' the platelayer said; 'but he has exchanged his turn, and his duty will be taken by Luke Carnac. Carnac goes down by the 6.40 from here, and will not come off till six o'clock to-morrow morning.'

It was as she feared, then! Sibyl went back to the bungalow and sat herself down to think. Hour after hour went by, and she could come to no determination. She did her best to persuade herself that there were no real grounds for apprehension, and she went about her usual occupations in the hope of stilling the anxiety that had taken hold of her; but ever and anon there recurred the vision of the yawning abyss—the terrible Valley of Sheitan, between which and her lover's safety would stand but the jerk of a lever entrusted to the hands of his deadly foe. If only her father were at home!

The afternoon waned into evening. Sibyl heard the whistle of the 6.40, and knew that Carnac had gone to his post. Eight, nine, ten o'clock passed, and still Sibyl sat on, unable to retire for the night with any prospect of sleep, and yet undecided what course to take. At last, when the clock had struck eleven some time, she could bear the suspense no longer, and determined to go down to Lonauli Station, and then be guided by circumstances. The mail-train by which Heygate was to travel was due at Lonauli at 12.10, and stopped there ten minutes to change engines before starting again on its journey down the incline. It was just possible she might summon up courage to speak to the guard or the engine-driver, at the risk of being laughed at for her pains. It never crossed her mind to

speak to Heygate himself. Though he had half jestingly alluded to the possible consequences of the pointsman being on duty, she knew that the young soldier would be the last to be influenced by any real fear.

Pedro had retired to his hut in the compound long ago, so Sibyl left the bungalow unobserved. The full moon had risen, and all the landscape was bathed in a soft mellow light. The stately palm-trees, the groves of mangoes, and the white buildings of the sleeping village stood out clear as by day, casting long shadows across the silent street; while far off the jagged peaks and bold escarpments of the Ghât, glistening white in the pale beams, marked the descent of the great range into the valley below. It was even possible to trace the course of the railway line, here running threadlike along the brink of a mighty chasm, and there plunging into the bowels of the earth to reappear on some lofty viaduct, but tending downwards—ever downwards towards the lonely plateau where Luke Carnac stood at the levers waiting for the approach of the mail-train.

In five minutes Sibyl was at the station. Looking at her watch, she saw that it was just midnight—ten minutes before the train was due. Again and again she tried to nerve herself to enter the station and lay her fears before the station-master, but again and again she saw that she had no case. How could she explain, except by saying that she was engaged to Mr Heygate of the Westshire Regiment, who was in the train, and that she had refused the half-caste pointsman who was on duty down the incline; that because of this complication she was positively certain that the pointsman would wreck the train and kill a hundred unoffending passengers. She would be the laughing-stock of India, in the event of the train going down in safety; and what was worse, her lover would have to share the ridicule. And yet—

While this was passing and repassing through her mind, Sibyl had wandered into the locomotive yard, which was situated on the side of the station nearest the commencement of the incline, and consequently farthest from that which the train was approaching from Poona. Suddenly her eyes fell upon a trolley—one of those miniature trucks which platelayers use for transporting themselves and their tools from one part of the line to another, and which are propelled on level ground and up-hill by lever-power, and down-hill by their own weight. The inspiration came to Sibyl like a flash, and as quickly was her resolution taken. She would go down the incline in the trolley to the reversing station, and herself ensure by her presence the safety of the train. With a witness standing at his side, Luke Carnac would not dare the perpetration of a great crime. For after-consequences she cared nothing; her action would be accounted for as a girlish freak, and she could go on in the train to Karjat, and return at the first opportunity.

The trolley stood on the metals close to the main line. Luckily for Sibyl's project, the engine which was to be attached to the train was getting up steam inside its shed, whence the driver could not see her. Otherwise, the yard was deserted. Cautiously she pushed the trolley on to the main line, and, to her satisfaction, found that it ran

quite easily. When she had gone a hundred yards, the ground began to dip at the commencement of the incline, and the trolley no longer needed assistance. Giving it a final push, Sibyl sprang on, and began her journey. As she did so, a whistle far away to the rear heralded the approach of the train to Lonauli, and told her that she had a little over ten minutes' start.

Soon the trolley gathered speed as the gradients grew steeper, and Sibyl found herself flying along the dizzy track at a breakneck pace. One moment she was whirling along the brink of a sheer precipice over which a stone dropped would have fallen five hundred feet without meeting an obstruction; the next she was rounding a sharp curve which suddenly plunged her into the resounding gloom of a tunnel, only to come rushing out into the moonlight a moment later high up on an archway spanning some rock-riven water-course. At last two-thirds of the distance was passed; and after another curve and a short tunnel, the trolley would shoot out on to the narrow cornice-like ledge that approached the reversing station. Sibyl looked back as she entered the last tunnel, and high up the mountain side, not two miles behind, she saw the glare of the engine coming down the incline in hot pursuit. Then and then only did the thought of possible danger to herself, and of the consequent failure of her purpose, strike her. Horror of horrors! if Carnac were in truth plotting mischief, she herself would be the first victim, and would be powerless to save the train. She was ignorant that there was a brake apparatus on the trolley which would have stopped it at will. Supposing the half-caste had fixed the points so as to connect the main line with the siding, the trolley would to a certainty go over the horrid brink.

Down at the reversing station Luke Carnac stood with his hand on the switch, gazing up the moonlit track towards the mouth of the distant tunnel where the mail-train would appear. With a ghastly smile on his swarthy features, he pulled the lever which connected the line with the fatal siding instead of with the level ground of the reversing station. Then, still chuckling to himself, he set the signals at 'safety' and waited for his revenge. The man was half-mad with rage and jealousy, and recked nothing of the fearful catastrophe he was about to cause. What mattered it to him so long as the mangled form of Lionel Heygate was among those relics of poor humanity which another five minutes would send crashing down the mountain side!

Suddenly a faint rumbling in the distance told his practised ears that wheels were approaching along the metals. But not a train, surely! The heavy mail-train would make more noise than that. Ten thousand furies, what could this mean? What strange combination of circumstances was this? That was no train, but only a trolley speeding down the incline towards him, and on it surely that was a woman seated—a woman waving her hands and crying out wildly unintelligible words. By all the powers of darkness, it was Sibyl, come to see her lover die. *She* must not be sent over the precipice—not yet, at least—her presence there would double the sweetness of his revenge.

Carnac caught hold of the switch just in time

to divert the trolley from the siding and send it spinning merrily along the level of the reversing station, where it would come to a stand-still in a hundred yards. So soon as it had flashed past him, he ran as hard as he could in its wake. At all hazards he must tell Sibyl of his project, so that she should miss none of the agony of anticipation, and he might the better gloat over her distress. The trolley ran nearly the length of the reversing station before it stopped, and he had only time to pant out, 'I am going to send your lover over the cliff,' when a loud whistle told him that the train was approaching. In a second he remembered that in his excitement he had omitted to replace the points after turning the trolley into the reversing station. Unless he could reach the points in time, the train would glide safely on to the plateau, and his revenge would be lost to him.

That was a wild race between the man and the train. Straining every nerve, Carnac rushed towards the switch, but the ground in the six-foot way was rough and stony, and he had to cross the line in front of the advancing train. As he sprang across the metals, with hand extended to grasp the lever, his foot slipped, and the engine was upon him. Crushing the fallen body as if in scorn, it went clanking and snorting over the points on to the safety of the plateau. Luke Carnac's plot had failed.

The letter which Hudson had written to Heygate was found on the dead man's body. When the train went on again, Sibyl accompanied her lover to the station at the foot of the Ghât, and she watched him curiously as he read the missive which had been instrumental in saving his life. When he had finished, he handed the letter to Sibyl, and this is what she read:

DEAR LIONEL—As you are about to return to England, I think it is due to you, after our very pleasant intimacy, to know who I really am. My name is James Heygate; and I am your father's first-cousin, his grandfather having been my grandfather also. You will oblige me by conveying my kind remembrances to your father, Sir Gerald. He will remember the circumstances which led to my adopting my present mode of life after the unfortunate duel at Madras. The world acquitted me of blame; but I could not forgive myself for the consequences of the quarrel that was thrust upon me, and I have therefore effaced myself. I have no desire to change my condition now, and I beg of you not to let this go beyond the family circle.—Wishing you a safe voyage and a speedy return, I continue to sign myself yours,
JAMES HUDSON.

'So you see I am really your second-cousin, Sibyl,' said Lionel; 'and your father is the Captain Heygate who mysteriously disappeared so long ago. I remember the story well. He was, as he says, dragged into a duel with a quarrelsome brother-officer, and killed his man. But his remorse would not allow him to remain in the regiment, and he has not been heard of till this day.'

Sibyl sat silent, for she was thinking how glad she was that Lionel had not seen that letter till after he had asked her to be his wife. It was better, far better, to have been wooed and won

as Sibyl Hudson, the guard's daughter; though she rejoiced that her birth would not now be a source of reproach to her husband's relations.

But above all she was thankful that the letter had been written and afterwards abstracted, because otherwise she would never have supposed that Carnac knew of her lover's journey to Bombay, and the fears which led her to interrupt the pointsman in his fiendish work would never have been aroused. As a matter of fact, Carnac had obtained his information from a half-caste friend in Poona—not, as will have been seen, from the letter—and had laid his plans the day before. But this was not ascertained till after Lionel had returned to India, bringing the congratulations of the family to his bride—the bride who met with a warm welcome from those stern autocrats, the 'ladies of the regiment,' as the Heroine of the Incline.

NOTES ON BOARD A MAN-OF-WAR.

ON a Monday morning in the spring of this year I was in one of Her Majesty's powerful ironclads, lying in a large harbour in the Mediterranean. It must have been about five A.M., and I was turning round for a final nap, when my half-awakened senses were invaded by the cry: 'Hands abandon ship.' Still half asleep, I at first thought that some fearful mishap must have reached us, and it was not till I heard a knock at my cabin door and a voice saying, 'They've piped it twice, sir,' that I was reminded that this early hour had been fixed on for exercise in the rapid carrying out of what would be necessary should such an emergency arise as in my dreams I had pictured. Slipping on my clothes, I hurried on deck, my ideas not yet quite clear, with visions running through them of the ill-fated *Birkenhead*, and the gallant red-coated band on her decks, steady as on parade, 'presenting arms' as the ship made her final plunge—and found the work of getting out the ship's boats in full swing, the engine rattling away as each was raised from its cradle and lowered into the water alongside, to be at once taken in hand by a portion of its crew, who rapidly and without confusion provide the stores and provisions—lanterns and candles, spirit-breakers, boxes of biscuits and tinned meats, 'boats' bags,' with small articles for boat's use, and pass them into the boat, while the coxswain examines his water-breakers and sees them filled with fresh water. A carpenter and a signalman, the one with his tools, the other with his flags, get into each boat. The paymaster, with his assistants carrying the bags of gold in his charge, joins those officers whose duties do not call them elsewhere in the principal steamboat, which has got in its coal and water already and has steamed up; and the Medical Staff follow the sick, who on the first sound of alarm have been passed in their cots into the roomy cutter told off for their use.

All being ready, the word 'Clear ship' is given; and each party, rapidly mustering on deck near its appointed boat, passes out of the ship, which is left, noble and deserted, denuded of every sign of the teeming life on her decks ten minutes before. The last to go over the side is the Captain, who takes charge of this little army

let loose upon the waters, and from his galley inspects as they go by him the long line of boats with their complement of over five hundred officers and men, most of whom, twenty minutes before, were unconsciously asleep in their hammocks.

The next morning I was again fated to be roused at an early hour, though a little farther from the middle of the night than the day previous. As I was thinking whether it was not time for me to turn out and wondering why my bath was not set out in its accustomed place, the wild clang of the firebell, followed by the bugle call to attention, and the announcement, 'Fire in the engine-room flat,' came on my ears. To tumble on a few clothes was the work of a moment; but by the time I emerge from my cabin, half the men are at their stations, hoses are screwed on, branch-pipes are fixed, hatchways and watertight doors closed, and all communication with the seat of the supposed fire cut off; while in another minute a couple of hundred men are forcing round the pump-cranks and the water is pouring out through the hoses. The spirit and store rooms have been locked, their keys taken in charge by a responsible officer, and sentries posted on them and on the ship's boats; and in two minutes every powder magazine in the ship would have been full of water if required.

That same evening I was to have another surprise—my first experience of night-quarters, or general call to action at night. Midnight had just struck eight bells of the first watch, and I was sitting in my cabin in 'pyjamas' and slippers finishing off my daily contribution to the bi-weekly budget sent home, and thinking of laying my head on the pillow, when there rang out on the still night-air that portent call to arms, the thrilling 'Action' bugle. When I get to the battery deck I meet the half-awake sailors and marines, running along in bare feet with their lashed-up hammocks under their arms, to be put away clear of the working of the guns. Electric lights are got ready and turned on, guns cast loose, ammunition brought up from below, big guns in their turrets whir round to where the search-light shows the advancing enemy. In ten minutes from the first alarm, when men were asleep in their hammocks, every gun is loaded and on its required bearing, and the ship is completely prepared for fighting. The exercise being over, fighting gear returns to its normal repose, hammocks are brought out again and unslung, and we adjourn to the wardroom, command sardine sandwiches—the dish *de rigueur* on such occasions—from the sleepy steward, and with a little refreshment of a fluid nature to assist, fall to discussing the delinquencies of our sister-ships in the fleet, while each present endeavours to explain how by a mysterious intuition he himself, if no one else, was quite certain all the evening that on this particular night this exercise would be practised, and that it was no surprise to him—oh, no!

But after so much work, a holiday. Thursday afternoon in the British navy is the sailor's half-holiday. On that day no work is done on board from noon till after supper at five P.M. The commander ceases from troubling and the blue-jacket is at rest. Men can do as they please the

afternoon through, and the smokers have their wicked will, the smoking lantern and the spit-kid holding their own, instead of being peremptorily removed at the close of the dinner hour; while the officer of the watch, paraphrasing Gray's lines, can say: 'The ship is left to stillness and to me.' Repose, indeed, has possession of the ship. The first-lieutenant to-day puts aside his soap and soda, and is content to leave in peace his army of scrubbers, while he thinks complacently over the morning's inspection of his snow-white decks and bright paint-work. The lieutenants of divisions forget their usual occupation of overhauling 'bags'—receptacles doing duty as cupboards and travelling chests for the seamen's kits, always to be kept up to service pitch—as, with kit-book and footrule in hand, they number the articles, seeing that everything is regulation size, with exact width of braid and depth of collar—calling from a sailor once the remark, *sotto voce*: 'When we say that we are in uniform, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.'

Officers sit about in easy-chairs, the latest paper or a novel in their hands, pipes between their teeth, eyes gradually closing. Hands below are taking a rare 'stretch off the land,' lying anywhere, in all attitudes, with a coat, an iron ring, a coil of rope for pillow, sleeping, reading, yarning to each other in low voices. All is peace—even the master-at-arms has one eye shut. Here and there the soothing hum of the sewing-machine is heard, or an industrious sailor is seen at work tailoring—cutting out, piecing together, and making up a pair of those roomy trousers, the width of whose extremities and tightness of upper region are the especial pride of the wearer; or an old hand is at work netting a pair of twine curtains, the ship substitute for those piece-rugs of variegated pattern beloved by the old soldier on shore. The voice of the bo'sun's mate is stilled between decks, and the buglers have laid aside their instruments, all but he of the watch, who with one hand always on his bugle, stands idly on his post, letting his thoughts wander to the home he left behind him when he enlisted under the Globe and Laurels, and the day when he promised to 'serve Her Majesty, Her Heirs, and Successors as a Marine for a period of sixteen years.' (Buglers enlist at fourteen years of age.) The engines alone will not rest, but steadily, monotonously, throb out their beat by beat as the ship glides on through the calm waters, adding mile to mile of her way.

And so the afternoon passes on. Men give a stretch, a shake, life once more appears between decks, supper is piped, and another week's work begins. The Thursday afternoon, or Make-and-Mend-Clothes-Day, as it is called, is a time whose sanctity is never violated, and whose repose is complete.

Each afternoon at sea the ship is hove-to and hands are piped to bathe; a boat is lowered, and the water is soon a seething mass of heads. In board again, a game of cricket or rounders on the quarterdeck winds up our afternoon. In this the gunroom essentially takes the lead. A net is rigged above the ship's side to prevent too great an expenditure of balls. Two buckets of sand are placed to receive the wickets, and a supply of bats and balls—the latter made during

the afternoon watch of twisted spun yarn—is provided. We pick up sides; and for an hour or two a wildly invigorating and enthusiastic game is kept up, additional zest being afforded by the many obstacles all over our cricket-ground, such as guns, hatchways, and windsails, which cause the same delightful uncertainty as to the final direction of a ball as is given by the pepper pot in a fives court. Besides the ordinary rules for the fall of a wicket, one additional is of universal acceptance—the batsman who shall hit a ball overboard is at once declared out—and, I may add, takes with him no small invective from the other players.

In the evening we have a dinner-party. The wardroom officers have requested the pleasure of the captain's company, and several officers from the gunroom have been invited to meet him. The guests are received with the ordinary salutations of shore-life: 'How do you do, sir?' 'Glad to see you, old chap.' 'Have a sherry and bitters?'—as if we hadn't all parted but a quarter of an hour previously, after having spent the whole day and the whole of many, many days before this in the closest of company. We take our seats; the chaplain says grace; dinner is commenced; the band plays its cheeriest melodies; and after the Queen's health has been drunk and coffee passed round, guests and hosts adjourn to smoke, play whist, listen to the band, or discuss the never-ending points of interest which naval officers manage to keep fresh even to the end of the close intercourse of a three years' commission.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A VERY important part of our naval defences is comprehended under the term 'Armour-plates,' without which our modern ships of war would be impossible. Hitherto, these plates have been made in this country of steel; but favourable reports from America of the new 'High-carbon Nickel Harveyised Armour' have recently induced our Admiralty authorities to test this new material. Messrs Vickers & Co. of Sheffield were commissioned to produce a nickel steel plate by the Harvey process; and the plate thus made was recently put to the test at Portsmouth. This plate, measuring six feet by eight feet, with a thickness of ten and a half inches, was fired at with different projectiles, five shots in all being aimed at different parts of its surface. The result justified the favourable reports which had previously been received concerning the new plates. The shots indented the metal, and either broke up or imbedded themselves in the armour; but not a single crack was produced. It is believed that some of our war-vessels, which by reason of the thinness of their armour are regarded as obsolete, may once more be regenerated by receiving a covering of the new material.

The inauguration of a telephone line between New York and Chicago, which has rendered conversation possible between two cities which are nearly one thousand miles apart, is an event worthy of being recorded. It is interesting to note that Professor Bell, to whom the modern science of telephony is chiefly due, was one of

the first to talk through this long line of communication. A photograph of the Professor in the act of talking to the receiver, surrounded by many well-known men of science, was taken by flash-light, and has been reproduced as an illustration in one of the New York journals devoted to things electrical.

The snow-sweeper is a very useful and necessary adjunct to the electric railways which are now becoming so common in the cities of the United States. The sweeper consists of a car to which are attached at either end revolving steel brushes, which are geared to the motor which drives the vehicle. The cylindrical brushes revolve at a rapid rate, and scatter the snow to the side of the line, leaving a clear track for the trains which follow. There is decidedly a want of something of the kind on our railways in this country, and it is easy to imagine that a device of the same kind to work by steam could be constructed without much difficulty.

Dr Peterson and Mr A. E. Kennelly have been carrying out some experiments at the Edison Laboratory, says the *Scientific American*, with a view to determine whether any therapeutic effects result from the application of magnetism to the animal system. Removing the armature from a powerful dynamo (its magnets being excited, we presume, by another machine), a dog was confined in the vacant space for a period of five hours. When the animal was set at liberty, he seemed to be not in the least affected, except that he exhibited much joy at being again at liberty. The next prisoner was a boy, who was also quite unaffected by the powerful magnetic field in which he was placed. From these experiments, it is assumed that the human organism is quite unaffected by the most powerful magnets known to science. Were it otherwise, we should probably have heard long ago of the effects produced upon the many hundred persons who are daily engaged in tending dynamo-machines.

Another great railway across Canada is in contemplation. The new road, which would be called the Canada Western Railway, would have a length of more than one thousand miles, and would open up thousands of miles of valuable grazing, timber, and mining lands. The cost is estimated at five million six hundred thousand pounds, and the promoters believe that the sale of lands adjoining the railway, together with the cash subsidy of the Dominion Government of six hundred and forty pounds per mile, would produce not far from double that amount. Possibly they lose sight of the circumstance, of which we have had so many painful instances of late years, that estimates for big engineering feats are untrustworthy.

One of the latest developments of the 'coin in the slot' device is an automatic railway-ticket selling-machine. It has for some little time been in use on the Berlin City and District Railway, and is said to give satisfaction to the public as well as the railway company.

British dairy-farmers will probably not be too well pleased to learn that the first instalment of this season's Australian butter has arrived in this country in fine condition, and that consumers are promised for the next four or five months a consignment of about one hundred tons per week from the antipodes. Experience shows that it is

not necessary to freeze the butter during transit, but that it will keep in perfect condition in a cool chamber.

A process of a very promising description has been patented by Mr Frank Shumann of Philadelphia by which he produces a material called wire-glass. The new material consists of a sheet of glass, in which in course of manufacture is enclosed a layer of wire-gauze. The metallic gauze is literally imbedded and hermetically sealed within the glass, and will stand any amount of rough usage without breaking. The new material can be made of various thicknesses, and in sheets of large size; and there is little doubt that it will prove a valuable substance for skylights, roofs of railway stations, horticultural buildings, and will find employment in a variety of ways. Windows made of the material will be burglar-proof, and will be resistant enough to stop the progress of a pistol bullet. The American Wire-glass Company of Tacony, Philadelphia, which has been formed to develop the new invention, hope, by the beginning of next year, to be turning out five thousand square feet of wire-glass per day.

An interesting paper is contributed to *Science* by Dr Gibbs, who has been making an inquiry into the food of the humming-birds of Michigan. These birds are not insectivorous, as has been supposed; and although the author thinks that they may eat insects if flowers be scarce, there is no room for question that their normal nourishment is derived from honey.

The hydrophone is an ingenious telephonic instrument which will give audible and visible signs of the approach during the night, or in foggy weather, of a torpedo boat or other hostile vessel, and has been designed for the protection of roadsteads and harbours. It consists of two parts, one of which is sunk at any chosen spot in the water, at a depth of from five to fifteen fathoms; the other part being on shore, and joined to its fellow by electrical cable. A vibratory apparatus is contained in the submerged part of the instrument, and this is of such a sensitive nature that it will move in sympathy with the pulsations of the propellers of any vessel within the radius of a mile. This device has recently formed the subject of experiments by our War Department at Portsmouth, and has been found to give satisfactory results. The inventor of the instrument is Captain M'Evoy, who hopes to employ it to warn vessels of their proximity to dangerous coasts, as well as for war-like purposes.

It is well known that a floral clock can be made by selecting certain flowers which close their petals with some approach to regularity at certain hours of the day. But a floral clock of another kind has recently been started at Paris. A circular plot of ground thirty feet in diameter forms the dial of this strange timepiece, and flowers are so arranged upon it in plots as to make the figures and minute marks stand out upon it as clearly as upon an ordinary clock face. The two hands which move over this highly ornamental dial are also covered with growing flowers from end to end, and motive-power is provided for them by means of a small turbine concealed beneath the ground.

In a paper recently read before the American

Society of Civil Engineers, Mr A. F. Sears compared the cost and efficiency of different motive-powers for street tramways. According to this gentleman, who has made a study of the subject dealt with, haulage by horses is the most expensive. Next in order comes electricity, where, in spite of all precautions, a large quantity of the steam generating power must run to waste. Cable roads come next in order of cheapness; but these are not recommended except for steep gradients, where often no other form of haulage is available. Lastly, as the cheapest, comes steam; but here there is the disadvantage that the engine is necessarily heavy, and has to bear the additional weight of fuel and water. Two other systems Mr Sears believes are promising—namely, engines moved by compressed air, and those actuated by steam 'from water charged at high temperature at convenient stations *en route*.' We are not aware that this last method has been brought to practical test; but with regard to compressed air, the system was tried for some months on one of the London tramways, but the cars have now been withdrawn, and the line is worked by horses. This looks as if the compressed-air method is less satisfactory in practice than it appears to be in theory.

Some months ago, when the last giraffe at the Zoological Gardens (London) died, it was reported that the animal could not be replaced until the Mahdists once more opened the Sudan. But it would seem from letters which a correspondent has communicated to the *Times* that the habitat of the giraffe is not so circumscribed as was imagined. The letters were written by Mr W. Ellerton Fry, at present enjoying a trip to the Victoria Falls of the Zambesi River, and he tells of having seen and met with the tracks of many giraffes. We may therefore hope that the giraffe houses at the Zoological Gardens are not destined to remain untenanted for long. A good specimen of the animal is worth about five hundred pounds, and this price is sure to attract the attention of hunters of big game to the district indicated in Mr Fry's letters.

The history of Arctic exploration is a record of heroism, self-sacrifice, coupled with dismal failure, and it is to be hoped that the new enterprise of Dr Nansen, of which he gave the details to the Royal Geographical Society a few weeks ago, has a better chance of success than previous attempts to reach the ice-girdled Pole. His scheme is a comparatively simple one. Starting next spring in a vessel specially constructed to withstand the pressure of the ice, he will endeavour to be carried across the Polar region by the current which he asserts is constantly running from the north of Siberia to Franz Josef Land. Drifting with the ice, instead of attempting to force a passage through it, he hopes to be carried in the needed direction. The only difficulty which he seems to anticipate will be to get within the influence of the current referred to. Dr Nansen's wonderful journey across Greenland has already proved his fitness for the undertaking, and all will wish him God-speed in an expedition of such hardship and danger.

A remarkable steam-launch, probably the fastest vessel of its class which has ever been

built, was recently destroyed by fire at Philadelphia. The measurements of this vessel were as follows—length fifty feet, beam six and a half feet, displacement four tons, and draught fifteen inches. Its engine was of one hundred and sixty horse-power, and its two-bladed screw worked at five hundred and fifty revolutions per minute. The speed attained by the launch was nearly thirty miles an hour, and its builders hope to replace it by another vessel of superior attainments in this respect.

The Director of the Meteorological service in Canada has in a recent Report urged upon the authorities the necessity for periodical inspection of the different stations under his control, and the instruction of employees in the use of the various instruments required. He points out that in Great Britain and Ireland the stations in communication with London are constantly inspected, and in that way kept in a state of efficiency—and that it has been proved here and elsewhere that only under such conditions can trustworthy and satisfactory results be attained. He urges upon his Government the advisability of devoting funds to this purpose.

At a recent meeting of the Field Naturalists' Club of Victoria, it was shown that rain-making experiments are not unknown among savage peoples; that is to say if a superstitious practice can be dignified by the name of experiment. Among certain tribes of Central Australia a belief prevails that droughts are caused by the swallowing up of all available moisture by a 'rain-devil,' and that the occurrence of rain can only be thereafter possible by the capture of the demon, who must be made to disgorge. In order that this evil spirit may be tracked without detection, the rain-maker is equipped with feather boots, so that his footfalls may be noiseless. A pair of these boots was exhibited at the meeting referred to.

Now that the electric light for domestic purposes has come within the boundary-line of things practical, every one is anxious to know its cost as compared with the forms of illumination it is superseding. Some information upon this important point is afforded by a Presidential address delivered last month before the Junior Engineering Society by Dr John Hopkinson. He estimates the initial cost of supplying a number of customers from a central station at eleven pounds per annum for every kilowatt—that is, for every unit per hour. After this installation the cost will not be very much more than one halfpenny per unit. This estimate is either wrong, or the companies who are charging their customers sevenpence per unit are seeking an inordinate profit. In one case in London the parish authorities have themselves undertaken to supply the district under their control with electricity, and the enterprise is said to be a successful one. In this case the price charged to consumers is threepence per unit.

An instrument called a Schisophone has recently been presented to the Paris Academy of Sciences by M. de Place. Its purpose is to afford indications of the existence of any unseen or internal flaws in a mass of iron or steel, and would be invaluable in testing the soundness of girders or crank axles. It has a strong analogy to the induction balance invented some

years ago by Professor Hughes of microphone fame.

In many of our manufacturing districts the streams are polluted to such an extent that they have all the appearance of being rivers of ink. It has been lately pointed out by a contemporary that in Algeria, Spain, and India, there are rivers which are not only inky in appearance, but have the same chemical composition and valuable qualities of true ink. They are produced when a stream strongly impregnated with iron combines with one flowing through a peaty district, the gallic acid in the latter forming with the iron a true ink which can be used for writing purposes.

By international agreement, the use of explosive bullets in warfare is forbidden, and the prohibition is creditable to civilisation. But the new Lebel rifle bullet—which is now the adopted weapon of the French army, and has been used lately in Dahomey—is said to inflict wounds quite as terrible as any possible by the use of explosive projectiles. The rending action on the human body is said to be truly horrible, and the penetrating power is so great that a tree of even large dimensions forms no protection for a man concealed behind its trunk. It is evident, if this be true, that one such bullet might kill three or four men if they happened to be within the line of fire.

Some years ago there was a detailed Report in one of the American papers of a man having been killed by a meteorite. The man's name was given, the exact spot where the fatality occurred was described, and the meteorite was said to have struck its victim 'just under or on the right shoulder, passing obliquely through him to just above the left hip.' The stone was described as being of about the size of a wooden water-bucket, and its composition was stated. The *Scientific American* now states that the occurrence never took place, and that the story was invented by a reporter. There is certainly nothing impossible in such an event as that described, and it is somewhat curious that a death from a meteoric stone has never been recorded.

ON LIGHTNING FIGURES.

By CHARLES TOMLINSON, F.R.S., F.C.S.

IN *Chambers's Journal* for the 16th of July last, some effects of lightning are described, from a work published in 1857 by M. Andres Poey, Director of the Observatory at Havana, entitled *On the Photographic Effects of Lightning*. The author supposed that when a person or an animal is struck by lightning, and certain marks are produced on the body, it is by the electricity photographing the image of some neighbouring object on the living surface. In addition to the cases mentioned in your article, the following may be cited. At the village of Combe Hay, near Bath, six sheep were reposing in a meadow surrounded by woods, when they were struck by lightning and killed. 'When the skins were taken from the animals, a fac-simile of a portion of the surrounding scenery was visible on the inner surface of each skin.'

Such statements as these, which were of frequent occurrence, did not fail to attract the atten-

tion of the early electricians. In 1786 MM. Bossut and Leroy made a report to the French Academy of Sciences on the subject of some singular marks found on the body of a man who had been killed by a stroke of lightning. These marks were accounted for on the supposition that the electricity in its passage through the body had forced the blood into the vessels of the skin, and thus made all the ramifications of those vessels visible at the surface. The reporters, in fact, adopted the theory of M. Besile, who had examined the case medically—namely, that the effect was due to the irruption of blood in the vessels of the skin, producing an effect like that of an injection. M. Arago adopted a similar explanation in a case which occurred in France in July 1841, when two persons standing near a poplar tree were struck by lightning, and on the breast of each were found ramified marks said to be like the leaves of the poplar.

Cases of this kind continued to be repeated in the newspapers down to the year 1862. One was given in the *Times* of September 8, as having occurred at Whalley Range, near Manchester. A boy had taken refuge under a tree, when it was struck by lightning, and there was found on the boy's body 'a perfect image of the tree, the fibres, leaves, and branches being reproduced with photographic accuracy.' The Meteorological Society and the medical papers also published such cases. One such was given in the *Lancet* in 1860, in which ramified figures were traced from the trunk down both limbs of the patient, so regular as to lead to a conclusion 'that the phenomenon must have been regulated by some fixed law.' Cases also occurred in which these ramified figures were impressed on a man's body, under circumstances in which no tree was present, as in the *Lancet* case. Hence it seemed to me probable that these marks were due to the fiery hand of the lightning itself; and it appeared likely that if I could reproduce on any given surface the form assumed by the disruptive discharge of a Leyden jar, I should have a miniature representation of the passage of a flash of lightning. With this end in view, I procured squares of common crown window glass, about four inches to the side, and steeped them in a strong solution of soap and water; and before making an experiment, a plate was taken out and wiped dry with a duster, thus leaving an exceedingly thin film of soap on the surface of the glass. A Leyden jar of about a pint capacity was charged, and the plate being held by one corner, was brought up to the knob of the jar, while one knob of the discharging rod was placed on the outer coating of the jar, and the other knob was brought opposite the knob of the jar in contact with the glass. The discharge passed over the surface of the plate and over its edge to the upper knob of the discharging rod. On breathing on the surface of the plate, a tree-like figure, consisting of trunk, branches, and spray, was beautifully made out, because, wherever the electricity touched the plate, the soapy film was burnt off, and the plate rendered chemically clean; so that the breath condensed in watery lines on those parts, and in minute globules of dew on the parts where the film still remained. On the other side of the plate there was also a figure, but it was marred

by contact with the knob of the discharging rod.

At the meeting of the British Association at Manchester in 1861, I read a paper before the Physical Section on this subject, and exhibited a number of my figures. The Astronomer-royal, Airy, was in the chair, and he said that 'any one of these figures would pass for a tree all the world over.' After the meeting he continued to examine the figures, and patting me on the back, said: 'You have settled this matter!' My colleague, Professor Miller, of King's College, on breathing on one of the plates, exclaimed: 'There's the tree capitally made out, bird's nest, and all'—referring to a little circular blot on one of the branches, which might easily be taken for a bird's nest, as in one of M. Poey's cases.

The lightning that strikes is incorrectly termed a thunderbolt; it is usually a nearly vertical, jagged, trembling line of vivid light, known as 'ribbon' or 'chain lightning.' We often have an inaccurate idea of the form of a flash of lightning from the stereotyped zigzags with which artists represent this terrible element. Jupiter's thunderbolts have as conventional a form as the French carpenter's scarf-joint, which he names 'traits de Jupiter;' but Nature does her work with more fatal precision than these zigzags would imply. The Meteorological Society of London has some hundreds of photographs of lightning discharges, impressed by the lightning itself on

the sensitive plates, and they are all of the same character as the figures produced by the discharge of a Leyden jar.

There is a very curious point connected with the main discharge—namely, a number of branches or feelers are sent out, in order to find the line of least resistance, or the easiest path for the principal discharge. Thus, we read of seamen and travellers, previous to the lightning-stroke, having the sensation of cobwebs being drawn over their faces, and hearing hissing, crackling, roaring noises, and seeing branches of electric fire. This is precisely what takes place in the case of the miniature flash of lightning produced by the Leyden jar. Should the glass plate be too thick, or its surface too good an insulator, or if the jar be not fully charged, or the electricity deficient in tension, the main discharge will not pass; but there will be a brush discharge, producing these beautiful ramifications or feelers which chalk out, as it were, the principal line of discharge. In some cases these ramifications produce a division of the discharge into two or three main lines, corresponding with the bifurcations and trifurcations which are well known in the thunder-storm, so that the same lightning stroke may strike two or even three objects at once. In such cases, each principal line is accompanied with its own ramifications, which become more delicate as they spread and more difficult to define and delineate.

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